

Keynote Lecture

What is morphology? Theoretical linguistics meets computational modelling

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Outline

What is morphology? Theoretical linguistics meets computational modelling. Morphology is conceived as the study of word structure, which traditionally has involved the postulation of structural units together with mechanisms that manipulate and combine these units. This categorical view of morphology has recently been challenged by gradient approaches, in which what is generally called ‘morphological structure’ emerges from gradient associations of form and meaning in language use and language acquisition.

In this presentation, we will take a closer and more general look at the mapping form and meaning in words and develop an alternative to the traditional ways of treating morphology as the combination of structural pieces below the word-level: Morphology is not about the structure of complex words, it is about complex relations of form and meaning in the mental lexicon. We will discuss computational models that implement this view, and which can be used to test predictions of this lexicon-based and usage-based view of morphology.

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