The theses of László Kristó's PhD dissertation entitled
"The restructuring of Early English morphology: Theoretical foundations and some consequences"

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As indicated by its title, the dissertation is concerned with the transformation of English morphology, more precisely, inflectional morphology, in Old and Middle English. Apart from the discussion of the topic, I offer a detailed theoretical background and take a look at some of the consequences that flow from my proposal.

Chapter 1 of the dissertation is concerned with the most basic theory of historical linguistics: the Neogrammarian model. I give a detailed presentation of comparative reconstruction, and I argue for the following. First, as well known, the aim of comparative reconstruction is to prove relatedness, i.e., to establish language families by identifying the common ancestor. The procedure is based on setting up regular sound correspondences as a first stage, but this is clearly not enough: historical derivations are inevitable. In other words, proto-forms must be reconstructed, which are subject to what Roger Lass calls the Uniformity Principles:

(1) (a) *General Uniformity Principle*
Nothing that is now impossible *in principle* was ever the case in the past.
(b) *Principle of Uniform Probabilities*
The general distribution of likelihood in a given domain was always the same in the past as it is now.

Both the reconstructed forms and the overall shape of the sound system of the proto-language must respect the typological restrictions we observe in the present. The attested forms must, therefore, be derivable from the ancestral one exclusively and exhaustively via sound laws. Based on these, I propose a technical definition of cognateness:

(2) Item X_1 in language L_1 and item X_2 in language L_2 are **cognate** if and only if both can be derived from a hypothesised proto-form X' in L', the ancestor of both languages, **exclusively and exhaustively** with reference to sound laws in such a way that X_1 must be derived from X' via sound laws that apply regularly in L_1 and X_2 must be derived from X' via sound laws that apply regularly in L_2. Derivations must, furthermore, respect the regular temporal

sequence of sound laws.

In order for this definition to work, another one is needed: that of sound laws. As the terms sound law and sound change are generally used interchangeably, I propose, based on Nikolaus Ritt's interpretation of sound changes, the following definition of sound laws:

(3) A **sound law** is the set of conditions under which a sound change operates, including the change itself.

Chapter 2 provides background information on generally observed facts regarding morphological effects on the phonology, that is, the non-uniform phonological behaviour of morphologically complex forms. I present a fairly pre-theoretical classification of alternations and affix types. The second part of the chapter describes the classical generative treatment of how morphological information is represented in the phonology, and it also discusses the wide role assigned to the phonological component in the model.

Chapter 3, too, is a background chapter: it presents the essentials of Strict CV or CVCV Theory, an offspring of Classical Government Phonology. The presentation is based chiefly on Tobias Scheer's version of CVCV. The essence of CVCV is that skeletal representations, in all languages, consist of strictly alternating CV units, where C's and V's host consonantal and vocalic segments, respectively. Languages which display surface syllables other than CV allow given positions to remain empty. The distribution of empty positions is subject to serious restrictions, expressed in terms of lateral relations holding, for the greater part, between positions on the skeletal level. An important exception is the licensing of final empty nuclei (FENs) in languages where words can end in a surface consonant.

The issue of FENs takes us to Chapter 4, devoted to the way morphological information is represented in the phonology in the Government Phonology tradition. I first describe the theory of domains associated with Jonathan Kaye. Kaye claims that if morphological complexity is not handed down to the phonology, the phonology will treat the complex form in question as if it were monomorphemic. Kaye calls such forms non-analytic domains. Analytic domains, on the other hand, may phonologically reflect the morphological complexity, e.g., by displaying clusters not allowed monomorphemically (or in non-analytic polymorphemic — henceforth: synthetic — forms). An important use of domains is the licensing of FENs: its context is "the end of a domain".

Tobias Scheer argues that the brackets Kaye uses to represent domain edges are, in fact, objects, even though Kaye denies this interpretation. Scheer, based on Ray Jackendoff's Representational Modularity, claims that any morphological (syntactic, semantic) information which is shipped off into the phonology must be translated into phonological language. In other

words, brackets and boundary symbols, which are not phonological objects, must not be used. He proposes (following Jean Lowenstamm) that "the beginning of the word" be represented as the insertion of an empty CV unit (as opposed to Lowenstamm, Scheer claims that whether this object is projected into the representation is parametric). FENs, he claims, are the phonological expressions of "the end of the domain", whereby the morphology gives licence to empty nuclei, which they could not receive via phonological action. Scheer is not explicit in his published work on how exactly the analytic/synthetic difference should be formally encoded. I thus offer a possible interpretation. Based on the observation that synthetic concatenations display the same phonological behaviour as monomorphemic ones, I propose that they should be represented in precisely the same way (this is basically Kaye's position, too, but in a different representational theory). This, however, leads to an apparent violation of a basic principle of CVCV: that the skeleton of all morphemes is (CV)*. In my version, bound roots are C-final, and synthetic suffixes are V-initial (in a framework which otherwise usues CV, rather than VC skeletons). I claim, however, that synthetic concatenations are lexically stored and are in fact not "concatenated" by the morphology. There is thus no reason to assume that the morphemes in such forms must have a Strict CV skeleton. Instead, I propose that it is lexical entries (free stems as well as analytic suffixes) that are subject to this restriction:

(4) *The Lexical Entry Principle (LEP)*
Lexical entries are organised along a (CV)* skeleton.

It has long been noted that synthetic suffixes are typically V-initial, whereas analytic ones are more often C-initial. My model makes a distinction between the skeletal structure of synthetic vs. analytic suffixes, hence it expresses this basic observation. Furthermore, it establishes a clear link between boundedness and skeletal structure: bound roots are bound because they have an incomplete skeleton. This analysis can also be extended to Word-and-Paradigm type morphologies (e.g., of the "classical Indo-European kind), where lexical roots are typically bound morphemes. I propose, following Joan Bybee, that in such languages lexemes are stored as a particular inflected form on the basis of which the paradigm is constructed.

The model I propose gains support from the Words and Rules Model proposed by Steven Pinker et al., who claim that irregular and regular inflection is fundamentally different: irregular forms are retrieved from memory while regulars are constructible with the help of blind, symbolic rules, such as the one in (5):

(5) $[[X]_V ed]_V$ 'X-PRETERITE'

I propose that forms produced by such symbolic rules are phonologically analytic. As the stem X is a free form, it is subject to the LEP (4). If it ends in a FEN, so will it if concatenated with the suffix. This suggests that the morphology, after all, is not an autonomous decision-maker regarding when it sends boundary information to the phonology: regular morphology in the Pinkerian sense cannot choose to conceal morphological complexity from the phonology.

In the final part of Chapter 4, I give a brief overview of classical morphological typology, more precisely, the distinction between agglutinating and fusional affixation. The exising definitions are often contradictory: some of them define fusional morphology on the basis of morphophonological behaviour, while others rely on correspondences between morphs and functions as well. My proposal is that fusional morphology be identified exclusively with reference to the latter. I define fusion as follows:

(6) *Fusion means the exponence of two or more meanings in one morpheme.* It can manifest itself in two ways:

1. *Affixal fusion:* an affix morpheme represents two or more meanings.
2. *Radical fusion:* a root morpheme represents two or more meanings.

It must be pointed out that I adhere to a non-abstract conception of the "morpheme": I do not regard categories such as Accusative or Plural morphemes but functions; a morpheme must have phonological substance. A concatenation is understood to be fusional if it displays either kind of fusion. For example, Russian *stol-am* 'table-DatPl' is fusional because it exhibits affixal fusion; English *written* is fusional because it exhibits radical fusion. I make the specific claim that if a root exhibits radical fusion, it is best considered a morpheme in its own right. For example, *fed* simultaneously expresses 'feed' and 'Preterite'. As a result, *feed* and *fed* are different morphemes. There are cases, nonetheless, such as *kept*, where radical fusion is not the sole exponent of 'Preterite', since an overt suffix is present. I consider such forms fusional by adopting the following principle:

(7) *The Uniform Interpretation Principle (UIP)*

If a morphosyntactic category *x* for a given word class *Y* is expressable by radical fusion *only*, where α is the alternation formally realising the fusion, then all occurrences of α for members of *Y* specified for *x* are to be interpreted as realisations of the same fusion.

The definition of fusion and the UIP make it possible to separate fusion, at least in principle, from syntheticness. A form is synthetic if its morphological complexity is phonologically invisible. A result of this stance is that fusional forms may be analytic and vice versa. I provide several

examples in the final part of Chapter 4. To take a specific example, ME *kepte* 'kept' is not fusional, because the shortness of the vowel in Preterites is never the sole exponent of the category 'Preterite': there is always an overt suffix, cf. *fed-de* 'fed'. The shortening is a morphophonological effect: it happens because the concatenation is synthetic. In other words, ME *fēd-* as in *fēd-an* 'feed' and *fed-* as in *fed-de* are allomorphs of the same morpheme.

Chapters 5 and 6 are devoted to the development of regular nominal and verbal morphology, respectively, from OE to ME. I analyse both systems in terms of analyticness and come to the conclusion that the verbal morphology of both OE and ME is predominantly analytic. As for OE nouns, the situation is by far not unambiguous: the majority of inflected forms lend themselves to a synthetic and an analytic analysis, too. The possibility, however, of analytic interpretation is clearly present, and it undoubtedly represents the transitional nature of OE nominal morphology: it is on the way from a stem-based (synthetic) system to a word-based (analytic) one. I point out that the high degree of optionality of Syncope in polysyllabic inflected forms may also be taken as a reflection of the ambiguous nature of OE nominal inflection. In ME, the system becomes more clearly analytic, as well as agglutinating. I make the claim that already in early ME, the plural/possessive allomorph /s/ is to be taken as the regular, productive variant rather than /əs/. I support this stance with several arguments, including the appearance of Inorganic *e*, the plural/genitive formation of French loans, as well as the behaviour of nouns with regard to Syncope.

Finally, I point out that the development of nominal inflectional suffixes in English contradicts the Unidirectionality Hypothesis, a claim often made about grammaticalisation. Notably, it is generally assumed that fusional affixes tend not to become agglutinating, and that affixes do not become clitics. The latter claim is contradicted by the possessive suffix, which is a clitic in Modern English. This fact has been noticed earlier, but the fate of the plural suffix exhibits a violation of Unidirectionality, too, since it becomes an agglutinating and analytic suffix from an earlier stage when it was both fusional and synthetic. I provide a brief overview of the development of West Romance nominal inflection, which goes along the same path as that of English. Yet, I propose that the path from grammatical word to clitic to affix is not part of a general grammaticalisation process. If grammaticalisation is understood in the sense that a lexical content item becomes a function (grammatical) word, the suggested Unidirectionality Hypothesis can probably be maintained.

Chapter 6 is about verbal inflection. All OE verbs, in my analysis, at least in the Anglian dialects (which are the ancestors of present-day standard English), take the Imperative Singular as a free base. I provide arguments for such a view based on OE as well as by taking similar examples from other languages. The fact that it is Class 2 of weak verbs which remains by late OE as the only regular pattern is explained with reference to the following:

1. Class 1 is non-uniform, displaying subtypes, while Class 2 is uniform.

2. Class 1 weak verbs may only have front root vowels: no such restriction holds for Class 2.
3. Class 1 weak verbs appear to have a templatic restriction on the shape of their stems, which does not characterise Class 2.

Therefore, Class 1 Preterites (which are mostly analytic in OE) become non-productive, that is, irregular by ME. As a result, they are lexicalised. By ME times, the members of Class 2 become wholly analytic, with their base ending in a schwa. The gradual deletion of schwas from word- and domain-final position leads to what is basically the modern system.

The final part of the thesis discusses the change known as Pre-Cluster Shortening or Closed Syllable Shortening. I argue that this change was not a sound law. Instead, forms which exhibit shortening are lexicalised ones, either suffixed or compounded. I point out that no sure example of early ME shortening can be given in monomorphemic forms. The discussion is also concerned with when particular items underwent shortening. I show that several of them, which are assumed to have undergone early ME shortening must have fallen victim to shortening much earlier, possibly as early as Pre-OE. The fact that irregular weak Preterites exhibit early ME shortening is very probably due to the fact that such inflected forms became synthetic in about that period. To sum up, I argue that Pre-Cluster Shortening is a consequence of lexicalisation, which means, structurally, that the forms become synthetic.

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