MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGE (Part 1)

Morphology is not isolated from other components of the grammar -- it integrates with phonology and syntax.

Phonological processes may become morphologized, e.g., *foot - feet* : historically, this alternation was part of phonology

\*fo:ti > OE fe:t > ME feet [fi:t]  
the Pl. marker: -i conditioned an umlaut process.

**Study 15.60, pp. 359-360.**

The loss of the final -i meant that the changed stem vowel was no longer predictable, becoming instead a morphological fact about a particular word.

Syntactic features may become morphological: e.g., pronouns may become person markers (in many FU languages):

\[ V + -m \ (< \text{me}) \text{ Sg1} \]  
\[ V + -t \ (< \text{te}) \text{ Sg2} \]

This process is termed *grammaticalization*: the morphologisation of syntactic elements.

Morphological facts cannot therefore be divorced entirely from phonology and/or syntax. As a result, theories of morphological change are not well developed within the context of a full grammar; most research concentrates on one well-documented internal morphological change: **analogy**.

a linguistic process involving generalization from one set of conditions to another set of conditions

Examples of the interaction of the two principal bases for morphological change: (i) phonological change, (ii) analogy.

**PIE *bher- bear**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skr.</th>
<th>PIE</th>
<th><strong>Sanskrit</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bhar:mi</td>
<td><em>I bear</em></td>
<td>I bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bharasi</td>
<td><em>thou bearest</em></td>
<td>thou bearest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bharati</td>
<td><em>he/she/it bears</em></td>
<td>he/she/it bears</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Skr.  bhar- (root) + thematic vowel + endings: -mi -si -ti

The root conveys the lexical meaning, the –m- -s- -t- are person markers and the –i indicate the Prs. tense.

Greek:

phero  I bear (compare: Latin fero:)
phereis  thou bearest
pherei  he/she/it bears

PIE  Prs Sg1  *bhero:

What about the Skr. form  bhara:mi  ???

-mi -- by spread from the conjugation: speakers of Skr. aimed at achieving parallelism between the three Sg forms ---analogy! (-mi survived in English:  am  as in  I am).

Sg. 2 in Greek:

Deletion of intervocalic  s  *PIE  bheresi  >  Gk.  *pherei

\[ \downarrow \]

Phonological change!
Gk. imperfect Sg2:  epheres
The  s  from this form was influencing the Prs Sg2 form  →  analogy!

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Leveling  consists in the complete or partial elimination of morphophonemic alternations within paradigms (paradigm: set of inflected forms of a given word).

The motivation for leveling is the “one meaning - one form” principle.

*Alternations which do not signal differences in meaning tend to be eliminated.*

Two examples: English  and Latin

English strong verbs:

OE  strong verbs: seven classes based on word-internal vowel alternations; four principal parts.
Infinitive (I)
Sg 1 and Sg 3 preterite indicative (II)
Preterite indicative Pl (III)
Preterite Participle (IV)

Examples:

Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I.</th>
<th>II.</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. dri:fan</td>
<td>dra:f</td>
<td>drifon</td>
<td>drifen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ce:osan</td>
<td>ce:as</td>
<td>curon</td>
<td>coren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. findan</td>
<td>fand</td>
<td>fundon</td>
<td>funden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. beran</td>
<td>bær</td>
<td>bæ:ron</td>
<td>boren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. sprecan</td>
<td>spræc</td>
<td>spræcon</td>
<td>sprecon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. standan</td>
<td>sto:d</td>
<td>sto:don</td>
<td>standen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. feallan</td>
<td>fe:oll</td>
<td>fe:ollon</td>
<td>feallen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the strong verbs in OE there was a large number of weak (or regular) verbs, with fewer forms; they were *productive!*

> every new verb was conjugated in accordance with the regular conjugation paradigm.

Weak verbs had fewer forms, and the preterite Sg and Pl differed only in the ending:

lufian lufode lufodon lufod love

Analogical reduction of the strong verb set → leveling! Several ways may be observed, for example: selecting either the Sg or Pl vowel in the preterite (e.g., in “drive” the vowel in the Sg was generalized, NE *drive drove driven*), or generalizing the vowel of the preterite participle (e.g., in NE “bear” *bear bore borne*).

Latin:

*Stage 1: Before 400 BC*

honos (Nom.) ‘honour’
honoi-is (Gen.)
honoi-em (Acc.)
etc.

Later, a sound change took place: \( s > r / V___V \)
The effect of the sound change was to create two different forms of the stem, *honos-* and *honor-*
Stage 2: rhotacism

honos (Nom.)
honoir-is (Gen.)
honoir-em (Acc.)
etc.

The resulting paradigm was irregular in having two stem shapes. Analogy: a regular paradigm was created in Latin, matching the r of the rest of the paradigm.

Stage 3: after 200 BC

honor (Nom.)
honoir-is (Gen.)
honoir-em (Acc.)
etc.

Proportional (or four part) analogy: the mechanism of extension involves the construction of a proportion, encoding a relationship between four terms.

The proportional model operates by generalizing a pattern of morphological relationships between given forms (a and a’) to forms such as (b and X) which previously did not exhibit this pattern.

Example: it is the result of this process that the Pl. of cow today is cows instead of the earlier kine (which now survives only marginally in old-fashioned poetic usage).

\[
\begin{align*}
a & : \quad a' \\
b & : \quad X = b' \\
\text{stone} & : \quad \text{stones} \\
cow & : \quad X = \text{cow-s}
\end{align*}
\]

For proportional analogy to take place, there must be a morphological relationship between the words which make up the proportion. Proportions based on purely phonetic/phonological similarities such as one between ring (verb) and king (noun) do not undergo this type of change:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ring} & : \quad \text{rang} \\
\text{king} & : \quad X = \text{kang}^*
\end{align*}
\]
The proportional model for change should be a pattern of derivation not limited to one lexical item.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{stone} & : \quad \text{stones} \\
\text{arm} & : \quad \text{arms} \\
\text{dog} & : \quad \text{dogs} \\
\text{...} & : \quad \text{...} \\
\text{cow} & : \quad X = \text{cow-s}
\end{align*}
\]

The condition most conducive to systematic application of proportional analogy is *productivity*. 