The Word and the Morpheme
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Venue
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Description
The word is a central notion in descriptive linguistics but has persistently resisted theoretical analysis. As Bolinger put it in 1963, "Why is it that the element of language which the naive speaker feel that he knows best is the one about which linguists say the least?" Phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic diagnostics all too frequently misalign, leading to multiple overlapping but imperfectly matching notions of word.

In Lexicalist approaches to grammar (including variants developed and pursued by Kiparsky 1982, Williams 1981, 2003, Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995, 2005, and others) the word is an axiomatic unit, the encapsulated output of a word formation component (WF), with phonological, syntactic, and semantic properties, and input to the syntax. On such accounts, morphemes are the minimal listed sound-meaning pairings which are building blocks for WF (see also Wunderlich 1996 and later work).

The Lexicalist approach is also compatible with an 'inferential,' "amorphous," or process-based approach to morphology (Anderson 1992, Beard 1995), it is said that there are no morphemes, rather exponence is the effect of morphophonological rules applying in WF. Müller (2013) goes one step further in dissociating syntactic content from morphophonological exponence, by allowing rules of exponence greater access to the phonological properties of exponents.

Lexicalist accounts, whether morpheme-based or inferential, posit two distinct components in natural languages in which complex structures with syntactic and semantic properties are built, namely WF and the syntax, with many similarities between them. Syntactic approaches to word formation eliminate the redundancy by allowing word formation to take place in the syntax. Distributed Morphology (DM) is the most prominent and influential of these (Halle & Marantz 1993, Marantz 1997, Alexiadou 2001, Embick & Noyer 2007, Harley 2014, Embick 2015). DM proposes that lexical stems are built from uncategorized roots by merging them with a categorizing head. Each functional head, including both derivational and inflectional elements, is a morpheme, and various operations combine them into maximal X^0s, which are words.

Starke's (2009) Nanosyntax follows DM in eliminating the WF component and building all words in syntax, but deviates from DM in allowing exponent insertion to target phrasal nodes. Each head corresponds to a single feature, and a morpheme is a phrasal constituent created by syntactic operations of merge and move.

A different view is pursued by Borer's (2005a, b, 2013) Exo-skeletal Syntax (ES). In ES as in DM, lexical words are based on categoriless roots, with category being implied directly by

the functional structure. Unlike DM, ES distinguishes sharply between derivational morphology and inflectional morphology. Derivational heads correspond to morphemes, but inflectional heads are realized amorphously. A bound inflectional affix is not a morpheme, but is rather the phonological material added to a stem by a morphological rule.

Heads in the extended projection therefore have a special status in ES for the purposes of word formation. This is also true of Spanning (Ramchand 2008, Svenonius 2012, 2016), a development of Mirror Theory (Brody 2000), in which there is a strong bidirectional correlation between words and spans, or sequences of heads in an extended projection. Spanning shares with nanosyntax the proposal that morphemic exponents can be larger than a syntactic head, and also follows it in cleaving closer to DM than to ES when it comes to treating morphemic exponents as lexical items rather than rules, the treatment of morphology as essentially concatenative (Bye & Svenonius 2012), and the downplaying of the distinction between inflection and derivation.

These approaches all yield different definitions of what a morpheme is and consequently what a word is. The invited speakers will present different views and approaches, and together with a limited set of accepted papers, the workshop will hopefully further our understanding of the nature of the word.

Invited speakers and commentators
Elena Anagnostopoulou, University of Crete
Hagit Borer, Queen Mary University of London
David Embick, University of Pennsylvania
Gereon Müller, University of Leipzig
Heather Newell, UQAM
David Pesetsky, MIT
Dieter Wunderlich, ZAS

Organizers
Artemis Alexiadou, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin
Terje Lohndal, NTNU Trondheim & UiT The Arctic University of Norway
Peter Svenonius, UiT The Arctic University of Norway

Call for papers
Papers on any issue related to the morpheme are invited for this workshop. Each presenter will get 30 minutes to present his/her paper followed by 10 minutes for discussion. Abstracts should be at most 2 pages written in Times New Roman, 12pt font, on A4 or letter paper. Numbered examples should be included in the text and not added separately at the end.

Anonymous abstracts need to be submitted by midnight (CET) on May 1, 2016 to terje.lohndal@ntnu.no. Please include author information and affiliation in the e-mail. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out by June 15, 2016.

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