
AG 6: Deconstruction and reconstruction of portmanteau morphemes (Kurz-AG)

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Portmanteau morphemes combine more than one meaning into a single form. As a theoretical concept a portmanteau is an unanalyzable unit, which cannot be split up into separate forms corresponding to the individual meanings. In actual linguistic data this strict criterion is hardly ever met. Most portmanteau-like forms are at least partly analyzable. Often they can be understood synchronically and/or diachronically as non-portmanteaus, either because they are formed by concatenation from two different forms, or because they are identical in form to non-portmanteau forms and one component of the meaning is understood through implicature.

Given this observation, portmanteaus are of vital interest for a wide range of linguistic subfields. Of course, first of all morphology comes to mind. Here the question arises how portmanteaus are integrated into paradigms, especially if they are alternating with non-portmanteau forms. Beyond this the study of portmanteaus is also highly relevant for our understanding of syntactic analysis, both from a theoretical and a psycholinguistic point of view. Related to this is the question of whether portmanteaus are stored as one unit or whether they are derived from their components at each utterance. Even though portmanteaus might be analyzable in a number of languages by linguists, that does not necessarily mean that they are actually analyzed by the speakers of that language. If one analyzes at least some portmanteaus as holistically stored by speakers, how and when does the switch from analyzing portmanteaus as separate forms to a unified representation come about -- given that portmanteaus originate from simplex morphemes? And how is linguistic theory able to represent this switch? This is only one of the many questions concerning the diachronic development of portmanteaus. >From a typological perspective the question arises if there are any systematic restrictions on the distribution of portmanteaus in lexical inventories within and across languages? Furthermore, is the development of portmanteaus constrained by any other features of the language, and how?

We invite contributions from the following areas, but not restricted to them:

- formal analysis of portmanteau systems
- diachronic studies of the development of portmanteaus
- the syntactic behavior of portmanteaus
- psycho- and neurolinguistic insights on the parsing and storage of portmanteaus
- case studies of portmanteau systems, especially previously undescribed systems
- typological studies of the distribution of portmanteau systems across languages