Construction Morphology

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Word formation patterns can be seen as abstract schemas that generalize over sets of existing complex words with a systematic correlation between form and meaning.

$$[[x]_V \text{er}]_N$$ ‘one who Vs
“In Construction Grammar, the grammar represents an inventory of form-meaning-function complexes, in which words are distinguished from grammatical constructions only with regard to their internal complexity. The inventory of constructions is not unstructured; it is more like a map than a shopping list. Elements in this inventory are related through inheritance hierarchies, containing more or less general patterns.” (Michaelis and Lambrecht 1996: 216)
Ingredients of Construction Morphology

Both individual complex words and abstract generalizing schemas are part of the lexicon;
Hierarchical lexicon with layers of subgeneralizations;
Paradigmatic relations between (sets of) complex words can be expressed;
Constructional meanings
Word formation patterns are constructional idioms at the word level, and individual complex words are hence word-level constructs.
Default inheritance
hoofd-ingang  hoofd-bezwaar
head entrance  head objection
‘main entrance’  ‘main objection’

[[a]_X[b]_Y]_Y

[[a]_N [b]_N]_N

[[hoofd]_N [b]_N]_N  ‘main x’
Semantic concentration

scharrel-kip  scharrel-vlees
scratch-chicken  scratch-meat
‘free range chicken’  ‘free range meat’

(5) \([scharrel]_V[x]_N)_N \text{ ‘free range x’} \)
**Intensifyier prefixoids**

reuze- ‘giant’  reuze-leuk ‘very nice’, reuze-slim ‘very smart’
wereld- ‘world’  wereld-meid ‘fantastic girl’, wereld-vrouw ‘fantastic woman’

Repetitive coordination: *in- en in-triest* ‘very sad’, *dood- en dood-ziek* ‘very ill’

Noun Prefixoid > Adjective: reuze
Affixoids

(6)  -baron ‘baron’  
     afval-baron ‘lit. trash-baron, rich dealer in trash’

-marathon ‘marathon’  
     jazz-marathon  
     ‘jazz marathon’

bliksem- ‘lightning’  
     bliksem-bezoek  
     ‘lit. lightning visit, fast and short visit’,  
     bliksem-actie ‘lit. lightning action, fast and short action’

mammoet- ‘mammoth’  
     mammoet-wet ‘lit. mammoth-law, all-encompassing law of education’,  
     mammoet-tanker ‘lit. mammoth-tanker, huge tanker’
Affixoids are constructional idioms;

\[[\text{reuze}]_N [x]_A \]_A \text{ ‘very x’}
\[[x]_N [\text{baron}]_N \]_N \text{ ‘rich dealer in x’}
Constructional idioms in Japanese: *suru*-compounding (Kageyama 1982)

kenyuu-suru
research-do
‘to do research’

hoo-bei-suru
visit-USA-do
‘to visit the USA’

saikuringu-suru
cycling-do
‘to cycle’
[VN] \([\text{suru}]_v\)_v ‘to perform the act denoted by VN’

Variants of suru:
dekiru ‘to be able to do’
nasaru (honorific)
itasimasu (humble form)
Lexical prefixes in Japanese

Paradigmatic word formation

(7) deverbal noun

arbeid-ster 'female labourer'  
spreek-ster 'female speaker'  
werk-ster 'charwoman'  
zwem-ster 'female swimmer'

Idiomatic meaning, recurs in female derivative

(8) bet-wet-er 'lit. better knower, pedant'

pad-vind-er 'lit path finder, boy scout'

bet-weet-ster 'female pedant'

pad-vind-ster 'girl scout'
Agent nouns without base word

(9) rederijk-er 'rhetorician'
    rederijk-ster 'female rhetorician'
reizig-er 'traveler’ reizig-ster
 'female traveler'

(10) $[X \text{- } \text{er}]_{N_i} \text{ ‘human agent’ } \leftrightarrow$
     $[X \text{- } \text{ster}]_N \text{ ‘female } N_i \text{’}$
Short cuts and template conflation

(11) \([\text{un}-\text{A}]_A + [\text{V}-\text{able}]_A = [\text{un}[\text{V}-\text{able}]_A]_A\)

unputdownable / ?putdownable
uncomeatable / ? comeatable
unsayable / ?sayable
unmentionable / ? mentionable
unbeatable / ? beatable
\[[de\,[[N]\,ate]\,v]\,v] \quad [de\,[[x]\,A\,ize]\,v]\,v\]

(possible words as intermediate step)

**noun**
- caffeine
- moral
- nuclear
- Stalin

**verb**
- decaffeinate
- demoralize
- denuclearize
- destalinize
Participia praeverbalia (pre-verbal participles) in Dutch

a. tand ‘tooth’
   ge-tand ‘toothed’
   tak ‘branch’
   ge-tak-t ‘branched’
   spits ‘point’
   ge-spits-t ‘pointed’

b. rok ‘skirt’
   kort-ge-rok-t
   ‘short-skirted’
   wit-ge-jas-t ‘white-
   jas ‘coat’
   coated’
breed-ge-schouder-d ‘broad-shouldered’

N to V conversion
[[x]_N]_V

Past participle conversion
[ge [x]_V t/d]_V

AA compounding
[[ge [x]_V t/d]_V]_A

Left A has scope over base N- of right A
[[breed]_A [[ge[[schouder]_N]_V d ]_V]_A]_A
*Embedded productivity:* In Germanic NV compounding is not productive, but Dutch NV compounding is productive within VN compounds:

(16) [[[[aardappel]_{N}[schil]_{V}]_{V}[mesje]_{N}]_{N} ‘lit. potato peel knife, potato peeler’

[[[brand]_{N}[blus]_{V}]_{V}[installatie]_{N}]_{N} ‘lit. fire extinguish installation, fire extinguisher’

[[[koffie]_{N}[zet]_{V}]_{V}[apparaat]_{N}]_{N} ‘lit. coffee make machine, coffee maker’

Morphological idiom [[NV]_{V}N]_{N}
brand-bluss-er ‘fire extinguisher’
gif-meng-er ‘poison mixer, poisoner’
kinder-verzorg-ster ‘children’s care worker (fem.)’
kranten-bezorg-ster ‘newspaper deliverer (fem.)’
kinder-verzorg-ing ‘child care’
tempel-reinig-ing ‘temple cleansing’

[[[N][V]]_V er]_N
[[[N][V]]_V ster]_N
[[[N][V]]_V ing]_N
Construction-dependent morphology: morphological elements as markers of constructions

Determiner genitive

(19) Jan-s hoed ‘John’s hat’
Amsterdam-s rijke verleden ‘Amsterdam's rich history’
ieder-s huis ‘everybody’s house’
iemand-s vriend ‘someone's friend’
koning Salomo-s reputatie ‘king Solomon’s reputation’
The Determiner -s Construction

[[ …. [N-s]]_{NP_i} N_j]_{NP} ‘the N_j of N_{Pi}’

Condition: N_{Pi} is

a (simplex or complex) proper name, or,
a (pro)noun denoting human beings (the noun must preceded by a definite article or possessive pronoun).
Partitive -s Construction

\[ \text{[NP } [... \text{ [x-s]}_A]_\text{AP}]_{\text{NP}} \text{ ‘an indefinite quantity}_N \text{ with the property expressed by the AP’} \]
Conclusions

word formation schemas can be conceived of as constructional idioms, and complex words as constructs instantiating these constructional idioms;

both complex words and abstract schemas form part of a hierarchical lexicon;

in this conception of the lexicon we can account for the rise of affixes from compounds, effects of paradigmatic relationships between words, the co-occurrence of word formation processes, and embedded productivity;

the distribution of morphological forms requires constructional schemas in which morphological markers are specified.