Lexical Semantics
Assignment 3

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Due by: 2pm on November 19, 2019.

You can submit your assignment by email to `prerna.nadathur@phil.hhu.de`, hand it in in class next week, or turn in a paper copy to the Lexical Semantics box in the Linguistics department office (24.53.00.86). Let me know in advance if you will need to complete assignments in German.

Reminders:

- Typed assignments are strongly preferred, unless you have very neat handwriting
- You may work with one another or consult additional resources in completing the assignment, but remember to cite your sources, and to write up your answers alone.
- You will NOT be penalised for mistakes related to English grammar
- You may ask questions about the homework in class on November 5. You can also email me, or request a time for office hours.

You should attempt to answer all three questions.

Question 1: Mass/count mappings in Welsh and Russian

We saw in class that Welsh has a suffix that can be added to certain mass nouns to form count nouns. Russian has a similar suffix, which takes either the form *-ina* or *-inka* (for phonological and morphological reasons that do not involve semantic meaning). List 1 provides some nouns that take this suffix, as well as the meanings of the nouns before and after the suffix is added.[1] Note that when the base forms (in the left column of List 1) appear in a sentence, they have singular, not plural, agreement with the verb; in other words, despite their English translations, they are mass nouns in Russian.

[1] Addition of the suffix sometimes triggers changes in the final consonants of the base noun, as well as dropping the final vowel. These changes reflect the phonology of Russian and can be ignored in your discussion.

List 1	čeresnja	'cherries'	čerešina	'one cherry'
	černika	'blueberries	černičina	'one blueberry'
	eževika	'blackberries'	eževičina	'one blackberry'
	fasol	'beans'	fasolina	'one bean'
	gorox	'peas'	gorošina	'one pea'
	grad	'hail'	gradina	'a hailstone'
	klubnika	'strawberries'	klubničina	'one strawberry'
	malina	'raspberries'	malinina	'one raspberry'
	pesok	'sand'	pesčinka	'one grain of sand'
	pyl'	'dust'	pylinka	'a speck of dust'
	soloma	'straw'	solominka	'one straw'
	trava	'grass'	travinka	'one blade of grass'
	trostnik	'reeds'	trostinka	'one reed'

List 2 contains verbs that cannot take the *-ina/-inka* suffix. (Remember that when the symbol * precedes a word or sentence, in indicates that that construction is impossible and ungrammatical.)

List 2	grjaz	'mud'	*grjazina
	moloko	'milk'	*molokina
	mylo	'soap'	*mylina
	sup	'soup'	*supina

a. Characterize the function of the suffix *-ina/-inka*, and explain why the mass nouns in List 1 can take the suffix, while the mass nouns in List 2 cannot. To do this, you might start by describing any requirements that the suffix has for the nouns with which it combines. You can use the features [± sg], [± c], and [± a], as specified in the class handout from Week 5.

b. The parallel Welsh suffix from the class notes has the form *-en/-yn*. List 3 provides additional data from Welsh.

List 3	afan	'raspberries'	afan-en	'one raspberry'
	ceirios	'cherries'	ceirios-en	'one cherry'
	cenllysg	'hail'	cenllysg-en	'a hailstone'
	clor	'ground nuts'	clor-en	'one ground nut' (e.g., peanut)
	cnau	'nuts'	cneu-en	'one nut'
	cylion	'flies'	cylion-en	'one fly'
	ffa	'beans'	ffa-en	'one bean'
	gwellt	'grass/straw'	gwellt-en	'a blade of grass/one straw'
	gwenyn	'bees'	gwenyn-en	'one bee'
	llwych	'dust'	llych-yn	'a speck of dust'
	llygod	'mice'	llygod-en	'one mouse'
	malwod	'snails'	malwod-en	'one snail'
	mogrug	'ants'	mogrug-en	'one ant'
	mwyar	'blackberries'	mwyar-en	'one blackberry'
	picwn	'wasps'	picwn-en	'one wasp'
	pilcod	'minnows'	pilcod-en	'one minnow'
	pys	'peas'	pys-en	'one pea'
	tywod	'sand'	tywod-yn	'one grain of sand'

Compare the Welsh nouns taking the *-en/-yn* suffix to the Russian nouns that take *-ina/-inka*. Assume that if the Russian counterpart of a Welsh noun from List 3 does not appear in List 1, then it is a count noun: for instance, Russian *mysh'* ('mouse') is a count noun, unlike Welsh *llygod* ($\sim$ 'mice'). Identify and describe any major or systematic differences between Welsh and Russian in terms of what they take to be mass and count nouns. Are these differences to be expected, cross-linguistically speaking? Or are they surprising, given what we know about the mass/count distinction?

c. Based on your analysis of the Russian suffix *-ina/-inka*, and assuming that Welsh *-en/-yn* is analyzed in the same way, do you think that these suffixes represent instances of the Universal Packager? Why or why not? Do you have enough information to decide? If not, what data do you need to help you decide?
[Note: We didn't discuss the Universal Grinder or Universal Packager in formal detail, so you don't need to get too specific here. As a starting point, you might consider whether or not a Universal Packager would be expected to apply to the List 2 nouns or not.]

Question 2: Specifying noun features

Give features specifications for the nouns *deer, furniture,* and *cattle* that accounts for the data in (1-4). Specifically, your feature specifications should account for number agreement with the verb, the acceptability or unacceptability of these nouns with different quantifiers and cardinal modifiers, and their acceptability as direct objects of the verb *count*.

(1) a. A deer was crossing the road.
b. Two deer crossed the road.
c. Every deer was crossing the road.
d. Many deer were crossing the road.

(2) a. The furniture was on the sidewalk.
b. *Two furniture was on the sidewalk.
c. *Every furniture was on the sidewalk.
d. *Many furniture was on the sidewalk.

(3) a. The cattle were grazing in the meadow.
b. *Two cattle were grazing in the meadow.
c. *We saw every cattle.
d. *(??)Many cattle were grazing in the meadow.[2]
e. *(??)We saw many cattle grazing in the meadow.

(4) a. We counted deer.
b. We counted cattle.
c. We counted furniture.

[2]The ?? notation here indicates that some speakers find these sentences to be grammatical. Can you think of any way of accounting for this variation in judgement?

State how your feature specifications predict these data. You can use the features [± sg], [± c], and [± a]. You can introduce new features if you feel that you need them, but make sure to explain why you need them, and what they represent.

Question 3: Gradable adjective types

In combining with the modifier *completely*, the adjective *cool* patterns like *tall* in (5), but like *flat* in (6. Explain what the difference between the two cases is. Hint: start by identifying the difference between the scales associated with *tall* and *flat*, and then consider the meaning of *cool* in each case. (Remember that the # sign indicates that something is semantically uninterpretable, even though it might be grammatically acceptable.)

(5) a. The morning air is cool.
    b. #The morning air is completely cool.

(6) a. After I took the bread out of the oven, I left it on the table for two hours and now it's cool.
    b. After I took the bread out of the oven, I left it on the table for two hours and now it's completely cool.

(7) a. #The building is completely tall.
    b. The yard is completely flat.