0. Introduction

Lexemes may have an internally consistent paradigm, or the paradigm may be split into segments. Splits may be ‘motivated’, that is they may correspond to morphosemantic, morphosyntactic or phonological specifications. Alternatively the split may lack such motivation, in which case we have a morphomic split, one which arguably increases the complexity of the system with no obvious corresponding return. We shall focus on the difference between these two types, so that we can recognise morphomic splits. There are some properties which the two types of split share: for instance, both motivated and morphomic splits can be viewed in terms of Wurzel’s Paradigm Structure Conditions (1989: 118), that is, there can be predictive relations within the segments; and both types can persist over long periods of time. But they are also interestingly different, which makes drawing the distinction valuable. It bears on the important notion that syntax is morphology-free. Our main question, then, is ‘how do morphomic splits differ from motivated splits?’

0.1. Recognizing motivated and morphomic splits

We recognize a split as motivated if the paradigm cells comprising the segments form natural classes, or if the specification is referred to by a non-morphological rule. We begin with two noun paradigms:

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1 The support of the ESRC (grant RES-062-23-0696), the European Research Council (grant number ERC-2008-AdG-230268 MORPHOLOGY) and the AHRC (grant AH/1027193/1) is gratefully acknowledged. I thank Matthew Baerman, Oliver Bond and Anna Thornton for enlightening discussion, Olivier Bonami, Marina Chumakina, Sebastian Fedden, Enrique Palancar, Vito Pirelli, Erich Round and Greg Stump for helpful comments on various drafts, and Bulbul Musaeva, our Archi consultant, for her considerable input. A version was read at the Workshop ‘Perspectives on the morphome’ University of Coimbra, 29-30 October 2010; I am grateful to those present for their reactions.

2 Morphosemantic features are semantically charged and are reflected in morphology, but are not relevant in syntax; tense and aspect are often of this type. By contrast, at least some of the values of a morphosyntactic feature must be distributed according to syntactic constraints (agreement or government). Typical examples are gender and person. This distinction is discussed in greater detail in Corbett (2012).

3 See, for instance, Maiden (2005) and Meul (2010).
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(1) Motivated split: paradigms of two nouns in Serbo-Croat
(Browne 1993: 319; Corbett & Browne 2009: 338)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>zákon 'law'</td>
<td>zákoni</td>
<td>grâd 'city'</td>
<td>grâdovi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC</td>
<td>zákone</td>
<td>zákoni</td>
<td>grâde</td>
<td>grâdovi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>zákon</td>
<td>zákonem</td>
<td>grâd</td>
<td>grâdove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>zákona</td>
<td>zákóna</td>
<td>grâda</td>
<td>grâdovâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>zákonu</td>
<td>zákonima</td>
<td>grâdu</td>
<td>grâdovima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INS</td>
<td>zákonom</td>
<td>zákonima</td>
<td>grâdom</td>
<td>grâdovima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>zákonu</td>
<td>zákonima</td>
<td>grâdu</td>
<td>grâdovima</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we compare these nouns we see that the inflections are the same, but that grâd 'city' has a stem augment -ov-, which splits its paradigm into two segments. The split runs neatly along the number divide, splitting plural from singular. This is a motivated split: the cells with the augment make up a natural class – the plural; in terms of rules, these cells are all those which would require a plural relative pronoun (the relative pronoun koji ‘who, which’ is sensitive to the number of the antecedent, and controls number agreement, but its case is determined within the clause).

Contrast the motivated split in (1) with the picture in (2):

(2) Morphomic split: the Russian verb peč’ ‘bake’ (present tense)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>pek-u</td>
<td>peč-êm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>peč-êš</td>
<td>peč-ête</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>peč-êt</td>
<td>pek-ut</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here too we see a split in the paradigm, since we have two different stems. This split does not run along any motivated divide. The cells involved do not form a natural class, and they do not figure in any morphology-external rule. (The split was once phonologically motivated, but the relevant rule of palatalization is no longer a phonological rule of contemporary Russian.) Hence this is a morphomic split.

Typically the two diagnostics for motivated segments, namely forming a natural class or being referred to by a non-morphological rule, coincide. This is because we set up the features, whether morphosemantic, morphosyntactic or phonological, precisely

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4 I use ‘Serbo-Croat’ here to cover Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin and Serbian (Corbett & Browne 2009).
5 The evidence for recognizing a locative case value is somewhat limited: grâd ‘city’ is one of the few nouns with a distinct form, and then the evidence is prosodic and is found in the singular number only.
6 Another possible type of natural class would involve the cells sharing a case value, say the dative, rather than a number value. There is no example of a split induced by a case value in our example paradigms.
because they enable us to state generalizations. Nevertheless, we shall see that the two
diagnostics may diverge in an interesting way (§4).7

0.2. Distinctions between motivated and morphomic splits

We wish to know how morphomic splits differ from motivated ones. Four types of
difference will be reviewed; these vary from conjectures to well-documented cases. We first consider the issue of nesting (§1), and suggest that there is an asymmetric
relation between motivated and morphomic splits in that morphomic splits may be
nested within motivated ones, but not vice versa. Next we look at interactions with
splits determined by semantics (§2), and then move on to the issue of optionality (§3).
The most substantial and challenging section (§4) examines whether all splits are
internal to the lexeme (as we might assume) or whether there are splits which have
relevance outside the lexeme (within syntax); the evidence strongly supports the latter
position. As we review the differences between morphomic and motivated splits, the
issue of segments which consist of singletons (single cells) will need our attention.
And indeed, the question of definitions, which originally seemed a minor chore in
setting up the paper, turns out to be intriguing, and has driven the investigation (§5).
While our examples so far have both involved differences in the stem, we are
interested in splits more generally, as we shall see shortly.

1. A morphomic split can be nested within a motivated one, but not
vice versa

We will discuss nesting using Russian verbs, and it will first be helpful to discuss a
key aspect of their paradigm. Russian verbs are split in terms of their incoming feature
sensitivity: that is, given the externally determined feature specification (the
agreement specification determined by the syntax) they reflect different parts of this
available morphosyntactic specification in different segments of their paradigm (see
(3)):

(3) Split in incoming feature sensitivity: Russian *govorit* ‘speak’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENT</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>govorj-u</td>
<td>govor-im</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>govor-iš’</td>
<td>govor-ite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>govor-it</td>
<td>govorj-at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAST</td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt; person and number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>govoril</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>govoril-a</td>
<td>govoril-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>govoril-o</td>
<td>&lt; gender and number</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the non-past tenses, like the present in (3), Russian verbs mark person and number.
In the past tense segment of the paradigm, however, they mark number and gender
(gender being distinguished only in the singular, but that need not concern us here).
The agreement controller can well be specified for each of the three features, but the

7 It would be possible in some instances to meet one of the definitions by allowing
arbitrary decomposition of features; we shall avoid that step.
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Russian verb is sensitive to different parts of these incoming feature specifications according to the segment of the paradigm involved.

This split is clearly a motivated one: the difference in feature sensitivity follows a tense divide. Now consider a more complex pattern.

(4) Nested splits: Russian peč’ ‘bake’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PRESENT</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>pek-u</td>
<td></td>
<td>peč-ēm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>peč-ēš'</td>
<td></td>
<td>peč-ēte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>peč-ēt</td>
<td></td>
<td>pek-ut</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbs like peč’ ‘bake’ have a comparable split according to tense, dividing non-past and past (indicated by A in (4)). These verbs also have a morphomic split: a stem alternation involving the 2SG, 3SG, 1PL and 2PL versus the rest. This split is found only in the present tense. Thus the morphomic split (indicated by B in (4)) is nested within the motivated one. More specifically, the motivated split based on tense isolates two segments, and the morphomic split further divides one of these segments. The claim is that a lexeme may show this type of nesting (morphomic within motivated), but that the reverse (motivated nested within morphomic) is excluded. I stress that the claim is about possible lexemes (not about the inventory of patterns within a given language).

1.1 Definitions of nesting

Though the notion of nesting may seem straightforward, we need to consider the definition. Recall that a split divides the cells of a paradigm into two segments. Here is a natural possibility for nesting:

*Nesting: definition 1:* the cells of a segment isolated by a split B are nested within those of a segment isolated by a split A iff they form a proper subset of the cells of a segment isolated by A.

Thus in (4) above, split (A) is a motivated one, according to tense. The second split (B), is a morphomic one, and the cells of a segment isolated by B do indeed form a proper subset of the cells of a segment isolated by A.

We should be clear about what a lexeme claimed to be impossible would look like, that is, with a motivated pattern nested within a morphomic one. Here is an example. In (5) we have a clearly morphomic pattern, more extensive than the one in (4) above.
In this hypothetical instance, we have a morphomic pattern forming our primary split. (Note that the same sub-pattern is found in different parts of the paradigm: that is not essential; the effect would be the same if, for instance, the pattern (shaded) in the past involved the first singular rather than the first plural, and/or the third plural rather than the third singular.) Let us now nest a motivated split within it:

(6) *Hypothetical motivated split nested within a morphomic split

In (6) we see a complex morphomic split, and then nested within it we have a split which involves just the second person (irrespective of tense or other features), and which is therefore motivated (the cells form a natural class). This motivated split is nested within the morphomic one, according to our definition above. However, the situation in our hypothetical example differs from the one in (4) in an interesting way. To specify the morphomic split in (4), we required also the motivated one; that is, the cells involved are present tense (the motivated split), second singular, third singular, first plural, second plural (the morphomic split). In (6) the subset relation is accidental. That is, we can specify ‘second person’ independently of the morphomic split. The difference can be seen clearly in a larger paradigm:
Hypothetical nested and non-nested splits

In (7a) the segment involving the second person is nested within the morphomic pattern. In (7b) the second person segment is independent, overlapping with the morphomic pattern, but not nested within it (see §1.5). When we looked at (6) above, there was insufficient evidence to say which type it belonged to.

There are two options. The more restrictive one is to leave the definition as it is, so that (6) is excluded by it; thus even potentially ‘accidental’ nesting of the wrong type is excluded. The more liberal option is to tighten the definition, to ensure that there is a necessary connection between the two segments. The key point is that to define the nested segment in (7a) requires reference to the other segment (just as was the case with (4)). In other words, to specify the motivated pattern we first need the morphomic pattern and then we add a further specification (second person within this pattern). Then our definition would look like this:

Nesting: definition 2: the cells of a segment isolated by a split B are nested within the cells of a segment isolated by a split A iff:

(i) they form a proper subset of the cells of a segment isolated by A; and
(ii) the featural specification of the cells in the segment isolated by B requires reference to the featural specification of the split A.

Our claim that a motivated split cannot be nested within a morphomic one is weaker if we base it on Definition 2, rather than on Definition 1; however, this weaker claim also appears more realistic.

To date I have found no counter-examples, either to the weaker or to the stronger claim: that is, we find morphomic splits nested within motivated splits but not motivated splits nested within morphomic splits.

1.2 Nesting and Pirelli & Battista’s ‘Schema Transition Hypothesis’

Pirelli & Battista (2000) provide a careful and detailed account of stem allomorphy in the Italian verb. They identify the set of basic stems required to account for the variety
of Italian verb conjugation; they give criteria for identifying a default stem (2000: 352-356), which perhaps surprisingly need not be the simplest in terms of morphophonological alternations. They list the possible distribution schemata, and can then give this constraint (2000: 357):

**Schema Transition Hypothesis**
The only set operation involved in the transition from one distribution schema to another one with fewer BSs [basic stems – GGC] is set union of partition classes.

In the abstract, the Schema Transition Hypothesis has the same effect as nesting (our first definition). But it is used for rather different purposes. Pirelli & Battista are concerned with the relations between patterns of stems; each more complex pattern can be collapsed onto one of the simpler ones. Their concern is not to differentiate stems according to whether they are motivated or morphomic, and they allow for exceptions (2000: 360). Our concern is with possible lexemes (see §1 above); within lexemes we are looking more narrowly at the possible relations of morphomic and motivated splits. This means that the similarity with Pirelli & Battista’s paper, interesting though that paper is, turns out to be more apparent than real.

### 1.3 Nesting and Stump’s ‘Privileged Category Restriction’

Nesting has an interesting relation to Stump’s (2006) work on heteroclisis. This needs a couple of preliminary remarks. Stump treats heteroclisis more broadly than most, including fully regular items which can be analysed as sharing inflectional material from other paradigms; for example, he counts German adjectives as heteroclitic, even though the mixture of inflectional material which they show is shared by all regular adjectives. So the paper has wider scope that we might imagine from the title. And indeed, Stump says that we may be able to extend the use of his Privileged Category Restriction beyond heteroclisis. In addition, Stump takes morphosyntactic splits as the starting point, while we are attempting to contrast motivated splits (of which morphosyntactic are the prime examples) and morphomic splits.

The key definition is this:

**Privileged Category Restriction (PCR):** If a rule of paradigm linkage applies to lexemes belonging to a privileged syntactic category (C) and this rule is sensitive to the value of any inflectional category, then it is sensitive to the value of a privileged inflectional category for members of C.

(Stump 2006: 316)

Suppose we have an inflectional category (morphosyntactic feature) which splits paradigms perfectly, in terms of heteroclisis. That feature is said to be privileged. If a syntactic category (part of speech) has such a feature in a given language, that part of speech is said to be privileged. The effect of the PCR is to say that a privileged feature cannot be ignored. As we shall see, this restriction is consonant with but not identical to the nesting constraint.

The relevant section of Stump’s paper is relatively technical (2006: 308-319), and I cannot do it full justice here. A good way to grasp the essentials of the PCR is to look
at an example of what it excludes (2006: 318); I preserve Stump’s layout of the features here, which differs from that given in examples above:

(8) Hypothetical cooccurrence of cloven and fractured paradigms prohibited by the PCR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TYPE-I LEXEME</th>
<th>TYPE-II LEXEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present/Past</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= inflection class A  = inflection class B

In this hypothetical example, lexemes of type I show an absolute correlation between heteroclisis and number: the split is between singular and plural. Number is thus a privileged feature for this part of speech. In type II, the correlation is with the third person in the past tense. This split in heteroclisis is not sensitive to the privileged feature (number) and so is ruled out by the PCR.

The effect of the PCR, if as suggested we extend it to a wider range of phenomena which induce splits, will be to encourage nesting. If privileged features cannot be ignored, then we will often find the right conditions for the type of nesting we discussed. However, the predictions are not identical, as we see if we look back at (7a). If tense is privileged for this part of speech, then (7a) is fine in terms of the PCR, because to state both splits we need to refer to tense. It falls foul of nesting (definition 2), however, because a segment isolated by the motivated split is nested within a morphomic one.

1.4 A further example (dependent on singletons)

Suppose we have a gender/number paradigm and just the feminine plural is split off in some way. Is that a morphomic split? I would argue that it is, since the segment consisting of this single cell does not form a natural class and, presumably, does not figure in a syntactic rule. Aronoff (1994: 25) specifically allows for singletons, while saying that they are not the best evidence for morphomes.

It can be argued that a single cell is described in featural terms and so it cannot be used to argue for the morphomic status of a split. The issue boils down to the boundary between morphosyntax and morphology. Clearly syntax manipulates the features gender and number. If that is the end of its involvement, then a split involving just the feminine plural is morphomic. If syntax has access to the specific combination of values feminine-plural, and not just to the two features, then the argument for morphomic status fails. One argument in favour of the first position comes from resolution rules, which determine the agreement to be used with conjoined noun phrases. Here there is every opportunity to deal in combinations of feature values. But
the resolution rules regularly keep the features separate, giving values for person, number and gender independently of each other (Corbett 2003: 308), and this suggests that syntax deals just in the features. A second argument (due to Greg Stump) is that if one does not accept a singleton as a morphomic segment, then the complement of the singleton (the remaining cells) is a morphomic segment. Thus if we are dealing with two genders and two numbers, and it is argued that the feminine plural is not a morphomic segment, then surely the segment consisting of masculine singular, feminine singular and masculine plural does form a morphomic segment.

If we accept that singletons can induce morphomic splits, then in (4), in the past tense, the masculine singular pēk ‘baked’ is split from the rest of the singular forms, which have the stem pekl-. We then have a morphomic singleton nested within the motivated segment separated off by tense split. (We shall see another singleton in §4.1.)

1.5 No nesting

We should note, however, that nesting is not essential: we can find orthogonal splits, one motivated and the other morphomic, without any nesting effect. Thus in Burmeso, verb paradigms are split by patterns of syncretism; for instance, object (absolutive) agreement prefixes are identical for genders (Donohue’s noun classes) I singular, III plural, IV singular and plural, and V singular. This pattern is observed irrespective of the inflectional class of the verb. Verbs are also distinguished for tense, for instance -maru signifies today’s past, and -ko yesterday’s past. However, the syncretic pattern is orthogonal to the tense distinctions: it carries across the different tenses (Donohue 2001, and personal communication).

2. Interaction with semantic splits

It seems natural to look at splits which are based on semantics, and to check how these correlate with the splits based on morphological form. Semantic splits may, but need not, run along the line of a morphological split. When a semantic split coincides with a morphological split, we would suggest that such splits would be of the motivated type. However, as a short discussion will indicate, the analytic problems are severe, and unambiguous examples are hard to find.

We first consider two extreme situations, each of which can be set aside as not providing instances of semantic splits.

At one extreme we have canonical inflection. We find lexemes which are semantically divided according to the relevant features: for example, a verb may have a set of forms with past tense meaning. That is straightforward and normal: the meaning of such forms is compositional, consisting of the lexical meaning of the lexeme plus the grammatical meaning of the feature value. There are numerous instances where such a featural distinction coincides with a morphological split (for example, tense matching a stem alternation). This would not count as a semantic split, since it does not go beyond normal inflection. The situation we would be interested in is that where some
cells in a lexeme’s paradigm do not have the meaning that would be predicted given their lexical and grammatical meaning.\(^8\)

At the other extreme we have semantic splits which are so severe that they are analysed in a different way. Take, for instance, Russian \textit{rebënoù} ‘child’, whose plural forms \textit{rebjata} have an unpredictable meaning, namely ‘lads, guys’. To express ‘children’, the plural forms \textit{deti} (and its oblique forms) are used. We would not talk of a semantic split between \textit{rebënoù} ‘child’ and \textit{rebjata} ‘lads, guys’; rather we say that there is a lexeme \textit{rebënoù} \textsc{−} \textit{deti} ‘child’, with suppletive stems and regular semantics, and some ‘remainder’ forms \textit{rebjata} ‘lads, chaps’ which are plural only, and connected only historically to \textit{rebënoù} ‘child’ (Corbett 2007: 26-27), as shown in (9):

(9) Russian \textit{rebënoù} ‘child’ and remainder \textit{rebjata} ‘lads, chaps’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>\textit{rebënoù} ‘child’</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>\textit{rebjata} ‘lads, chaps’</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOMINATIVE</td>
<td>rebënoù</td>
<td>\textit{deti}</td>
<td>rebjata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCUSATIVE</td>
<td>rebënoùka</td>
<td>detej</td>
<td>rebjat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENITIVE</td>
<td>rebënoùka</td>
<td>detej</td>
<td>rebjat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATIVE</td>
<td>rebënoùku</td>
<td>detjam</td>
<td>rebjatam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL</td>
<td>rebënoùkom</td>
<td>det’mi</td>
<td>rebjatami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE</td>
<td>rebënoùke</td>
<td>det’mi</td>
<td>rebjatax</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having set aside the two extremes, we should look for interesting instances between them. We can find apparent examples of semantic splits within a lexeme when we look at certain items which seem to have alternative inflectional forms. For instance, Serbo-Croat \textit{tel-o} ‘body’ has \textit{tel-a} ‘live bodies’ and \textit{tel-es-a} ‘dead bodies’, according to Đordević (1989: 141). This shows a split running between singular and plural (since there is an additional semantic distinction, as well as a formal one, in the plural).\(^9\) However, this too is not really a semantic split: the singular has both senses. One reasonable analysis would have two related lexemes, sharing a singular stem but with different plural stems: \textit{tel-o} \textsc{−} \textit{tel-a} ‘live body’ and \textit{tel-o} \textsc{−} \textit{tel-es-a} ‘dead body’. The second of these has a split of a common type; again it is motivated.

More systematic examples such as the Germanic preterite-presents offer better material (Birkmann 1987: 94, Baerman 2007: 17).\(^10\) We find forms in Gothic like \textit{wait}

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\(^8\) At first sight this might seem to be a contradiction, since it is often assumed that a hallmark of inflection is that meaning differences between inflected forms are fully predictable (see, for instance, Wurzel 1989: 36 and references there). However, we should distinguish the overall system of a language from individual lexemes, which can be exceptional. Thus I would allow for a particular opposition to be semantically predictable and hence inflectional within the system as a whole, but for individual lexemes to show a meaning split in respect of that opposition. For example, a language could have inflectional number, but individual lexemes within that language might show unpredictable semantic differences according to number.


\(^10\) See also Zoëga (1910: 543) for such verbs in Old Icelandic and their paradigms, and Einarsson (1945: 102-104) and Jörg (1989: 125-128) for Modern Icelandic.
Greville G. Corbett
Morphomic splits

‘I know’, which is preterite in form (as though it meant ‘I knew’), and wis-sa ‘I knew’, which is preterite in form and in meaning. Such verbs have two sets of preterite forms, from different conjugation classes, one used as a present and the other as a preterite. A plausible scenario is that verbs of a particular semantic class had a semantic split, in that the preterite forms took on a meaning that was not fully compositional. Preterite forms were used in the present, and new preterites replaced them for preterite meanings. The split here did indeed, unsurprisingly, run along a morphological split that was motivated.

Thus lexical semantic splits offer difficult material. Apparent examples may well be better analysed in a different way. Where we do find semantically based splits, they may well coincide with a morphological split, and this will be a motivated split.

3. Optionality: the diachronic conjecture

As a result of their different origins, the two types of split are rather different in terms of optionality. This suggests the following conjecture:

- morphomic splits start out as obligatory and may become optional;
- motivated splits start out as optional and may become obligatory.

For example, Old Russian nouns like ruka ‘hand’ (nominative) had a morphomic alternation in the prepositional singular vъ rucě ‘in (the) hand’.\(^{11}\) This alternation was originally the outcome of a regular phonological rule (second palatalization of velars), and hence at that earlier stage the split was motivated. The morphomic alternation arose when the regular rule ceased to operate. Later we find vъ rucě / vъ rukě with an option – an instance of overabundance (Thornton 2011). This option was later resolved as vъ rukě (a new regular form, removing the split in the paradigm); see Matthews (1960: 107, 191), Kiparsky (1967: 85-88, 89-90).

(10)  Old Russian morphomic palatalization (schematic/simplified)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ruka ‘hand’</th>
<th>NOMINATIVE SINGULAR</th>
<th>LOCATIVE SINGULAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vъ ‘in’</td>
<td>ruka</td>
<td>vъ rucě</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage I</td>
<td>ruka</td>
<td>vъ rucě</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage II</td>
<td>ruka</td>
<td>vъ rucě</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage III</td>
<td>ruka</td>
<td>vъ rucě / vъ rukě</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage IV</td>
<td>ruka</td>
<td>vъ rukě</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus when the morphomic split arose it was obligatory, but became optional. In contrast, it is plausible at least that the motivated split induced by Germanic preterite-presents, considered in §2 above, would have arisen as an option, and become obligatory.

There may not always be sufficient data on splits of this type. By good fortune,

\(^{11}\) The symbol vъ is the back jer; it is not relevant to the point being made here, but the interested reader is referred to Timberlake (1993: 833-834).
however, there is extensive data on one relevant split. It involves the rise and fall of an instance of suppletion. The Common Slavonic word for ‘eye’ was *oko, found in all the Slavonic languages. In Russian, however, it has been replaced, except in archaic or poetic use, by glaz. In this case we have a helpful source, the Kabal’nye knigi of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries; these documents include numerous descriptions of debtors, including their eyes (so that they could be identified in the future). The complete picture is as follows. In the earliest sources, right through to the substantial Uspenskij sbornik of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries, we find ok-o, with the plural oč-i. In the Kabal’nye knigi (16th-17th centuries) in the singular forms we find the borrowing glaz ‘eye’ as the singular stem, with oč-i as the normal plural (though we do also find instances of plural glaz-a). So the complete paradigm was being invaded by a new singular stem, along primarily a motivated line (singular-plural), and we arrive at a suppletive lexeme. In modern Russian we see the result of a new stage: the forms are glaz in the singular and glaz-a in the plural (forms of ok-o and oč-i are rare and stylistically marked). For fuller details see Chumakina, Hippisley & Corbett (2004), which draws on work by Sokolova (1952) and Unbegaun (1969). The progression seems to have been: new stem optionally within the singular, only later in the plural, through to the present situation where the new stem is established and the suppletion is resolved.

(11) Old Russian development of motivated split (schematic/simplified)
   see Chumakina, Hippisley & Corbett (2004), drawing on Sokolova (1952) and Unbegaun (1969)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>oko</em> ‘eye’</th>
<th>NOMINATIVE SINGULAR</th>
<th>NOMINATIVE PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage I</td>
<td><em>oko</em></td>
<td>oč-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage II</td>
<td><em>oko</em> / <em>glaz</em></td>
<td>oč-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage III</td>
<td><em>glaz</em></td>
<td>oč-i / (glaza)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage IV</td>
<td><em>glaz</em></td>
<td>glaza</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the motivated split was originally optional, but it became obligatory before being replaced by forms with no split.

The conjecture that morphomic splits start out as obligatory (and may become optional) while motivated splits start out as optional (and may become obligatory) relates to the origin of splits, outside the morphological system. These splits may cover larger or smaller numbers of lexemes (even a single one, as in (11)). Once such splits become part of the morphological system, their development can be highly complex as shown, for example, by Maiden (1992).
4. Relevance: internal vs external splits

We would not expect a split within a lexeme’s paradigm to be externally relevant, that is, relevant to syntax; rather a lexeme “should” have constant properties. Yet we do find splits which are externally relevant. We need to be careful first to distinguish instances where a split is induced by differing sensitivity to incoming feature requirements (this is an interesting type, discussed in §1, but is still internal to the lexeme). Such a split may be morphomic, as in the case of the Archi verb paradigm, which is sensitive to gender and number except in the first/second person plural (Chumakina & Corbett 2008: 187). Here is the set of gender/number markers, where C- indicates a prefixal marker and <C> an infixal one:

(12) Gender-number markers for verb agreement in Archi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>SG</th>
<th>PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I (male human)</td>
<td></td>
<td>w-/&lt;w&gt;</td>
<td>b-/&lt;b&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II (female human)</td>
<td></td>
<td>d-/&lt;r&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III (some animates, all insects, some inanimates)</td>
<td></td>
<td>b-/&lt;b&gt;</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV (some animates, some inanimates, abstractions)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are some illustrative examples; unless indicated otherwise, Archi examples were elicited from our consultants during field work by Marina Chumakina in Archi in July 2005. Note that Examples (13)-(16) show the four genders in the singular and the verb agrees with the absolutive argument (Archi has ergative syntax):

(13) bošor a<\w>\chiu\textsuperscript{12}
    man(I)[SG.ABS] <I.SG>lie.down.PFV
    ‘the man lay down’

(14) ğ:onnol a<r>\chiu
    woman(II)[SG.ABS] <II.SG>lie.down.PFV
    ‘the woman lay down’

(15) \chi’on a<b>\chiu
    cow(III)[SG.ABS] <III.SG>lie.down.PFV
    ‘the cow lay down’

(16) motol a\chiu
    kid(IV)[SG.ABS] [IV.SG]lie.down.PFV
    ‘the goat kid lay down’

We now turn to the same four genders in the plural (examples (17)-(20)); in each instance it is the absolutive argument which matters since it controls agreement:

\textsuperscript{12} Realized as /uw\chiu/.
The Morphome Debate

(17) klele a<b>χu
   man(I)PL.ABS <I/II.PL>lie.down.PFV
   ‘the men lay down’

(18) χom a<b>χu
   woman(II)PL.ABS <I/II.PL> lie.down.PFV
   ‘the women lay down’

(19) buc’i aχu
    cow(III)PL.ABS [III/IV.PL]lie.down.PFV
    ‘the cows lay down’

(20) motol-um aχu
    kid(IV)-PL.ABS [III/IV.PL]lie.down.PFV
    ‘the goat kids lay down’

There are two instances of suppletion, see the nouns in (13) versus (17) and (14) versus (18). Note that as indicated in (12), we find syncretism for the agreement of genders I and II in the plural, and of genders III and IV in the plural too (and here agreement is indicated by the bare stem/lack of a marker).

Consider now examples where we might look for person agreement:

(21) zon jas:ana ϋat:ọra a<b>k’a-s
    1SG.ABS this.year herd(II)SG.ABS <III.SG>drive-INF
    uq’a-li e-w-di
    go.I.SG.PFV-CVB <I.SG>be.PFV
    ‘This year I went with the herd (of cows)’ (man speaking)

Example based on Kibrik, Kodzasov, Olovjannikova & Samedov (1977: 107) with thanks to Bulbul Musaeva

(22) un hanžugur d-aq’a?
    2SG.ABS what.way II.SG.come.PFV
    ‘How did you get here?’ (to a woman)
    from Kibrik, Kodzasov, Olovjannikova & Samedov (1977: 121)

We find agreement in number and gender, but no sign of person. The only place we find agreement for person is in the first and second persons plural, where there is a single form, distinct from the third plural:

(23) nen aχu
    1PL.EXCL.ABS [1/2PL]lie.down.PFV
    ‘we lay down’

(24) ž’en as:ar-ši
    2PL.ABS [1/2PL]tremble.IP-CPB [1/2PL]be
    ‘you (plural) are trembling’
Greville G. Corbett
Morphomic splits

The zero marker here is not a regular number and gender form. It is identical to the plural of genders III and IV, namely the non-human genders, but treating the forms in (23) and (24) as irregular gender forms is not the analysis that I would maintain. Rather, I would argue, we are dealing with a person form, which realizes the first and second persons plural. More data and argument would need to be provided to prove the point, for which see Corbett (2012: 239-251, and references there). The conclusion is that the Archi verb, and indeed other agreement targets, are split like this:

(25)  Person agreement in the Archi verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SG</th>
<th>PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2 person</td>
<td>gender/number agreement</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 person</td>
<td>gender/number agreement</td>
<td>gender/number agreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This split is a morphomic one, since there is no motivation for dividing the paradigm between the 1/2 plural form and the rest of the paradigm. The split involves an incoming feature specification, and there is no difference in the stem. This split deserves further comment, for which see §5 below. A split induced by sensitivity to incoming feature specification may also be motivated, as shown by the Russian verb which, as noted earlier (see example (3)), marks person and number in the present, but number and gender in the past.

Having set aside examples which involve only incoming features specifications, let us now turn to those splits where external feature specification is involved: that is, particular segments of the paradigm require different external feature specifications. For instance, different segments of the paradigm govern different cases.\textsuperscript{13} A particularly dramatic example is Georgian, where verbs have different case alignment according to their tense, aspect and mood. In a more restricted way, the Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian noun \textit{oko} ‘eye’, a regular descendent of the Common Slavonic form mentioned above, has a singular-plural split, having the irregular plural stem \textit{oči} ‘eyes’. The different stems belong to different inflectional classes (making the lexeme heteroclitic). This split is externally relevant in that it brings with it a change of gender (neuter in the singular but feminine in the plural).\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{13} This is not the same as saying that, for instance, the plural part of a noun’s paradigm will control plural agreement, unlike the singular; that is a matter rather of the featural specification for number, whether or not there is any split in the paradigm motivated by number. We are concerned instead with instances where the external relevance of the split is seen in a feature different from that directly involved in the split (for instance, government of case based on a split induced by tense).

\textsuperscript{14} The implied causality here can be justified in two ways. Specifically in Serbo-Croat, there are different types of stem alternation, and these do not necessarily involve a change of inflectional class or of gender. On the other hand there are no instances of nouns with neuter gender in the singular and feminine in the plural which do not have different stems. More generally, in typological terms, we have instances of gender assigned by semantic criteria (which do not apply here) and by formal criteria. Inflectional class is a common formal criterion; the class to which the singular \textit{oko} belongs typically leads to the assignment of neuter gender, while that to which \textit{oči} belongs typically leads to the assignment of feminine gender. In terms of
(26) Serbo-Croat
    njezin-o ok-o
    her-SG.N.NOM eye-SG.NOM
    ‘her eye’

(27) njezin-e oč-i
    her-PL.F.NOM eye-PL.NOM
    ‘her eyes’

Both the Georgian and the Serbo-Croat examples are motivated splits.

Surely it could not be that a morphomic split could have external relevance. To see what an example would be like, imagine a Romance dialect in which the forms of the morphomic pattern known as the “N-pattern” required one auxiliary and the remaining forms took another.¹⁵ Yet possible examples have been found. The first, admittedly, involves a single lexeme and a single cell in a small paradigm (§4.1). The second is more extensive (§4.2).

These phenomena have potentially wider significance. An important claim about the nature of natural language grammars is that syntax is morphology-free (Zwicky 1992: 354-356). This interesting constraint entails, for instance, that syntactic rules cannot make reference to morphological features (such as inflectional class markers). A surprising and initially convincing counter-example appeared in descriptions of Serbo-Croat; see Corbett & Baerman (2006) for a re-analysis avoiding an appeal to inflectional classes and giving better coverage of the data. Another potential counter-example, also from Serbo-Croat, is considered in Corbett (2009). We should look at morphomic splits from this perspective too.

4.1 Gaelic

One of the most unusual examples of a split is found in Gaelic. Gaelic has three cases, the dative being reserved for prepositional government (and not all prepositions require it). Consider the noun for ‘sea’.

(28) *muir* ‘sea’ in Gaelic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘sea’</th>
<th>inflection</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOMINATIVE</td>
<td>muir</td>
<td>MASCULINE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENITIVE</td>
<td>mara</td>
<td>FEMININE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATIVE¹⁶</td>
<td>muir</td>
<td>MASCULINE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

gender assignment, therefore, the noun is regular. For more on the resulting agreements see Corbett (2011).

¹⁵ For the N-pattern see, for instance, Maiden & O’Neill (2010: 113).
¹⁶ There is evidence for distinguishing the dative (or prepositional) from the nominative provided by definite noun phrases (MacAulay 1992: 210-211). But see the comment about the loss of this distinction.
This example is cited in various sources, including Konstantopoulos (1998: 17) and Adger (2009). For instance: “There are a small number of nouns with defective gender marking which may be either masculine or feminine (depending on dialect), or treated differently depending on case. An example of the latter is muir ‘sea’ which is often masculine when nominative and feminine when genitive (mara G.).” (Lamb 2001: 27); a similar point is made in Lamb (2008: 206).

While there are various statements in the literature stating the genders as above, it is harder to find examples. William Lamb (personal communication) kindly offers these as demonstrating the forms of the paradigm in (28):

(29) \begin{align*}
\text{tha} & \quad \text{am} & \quad \text{muir} & \quad \text{thall} & \quad \text{an} & \quad \text{sin} \\
\text{be.PRS} & \quad \text{DEF.M.NOM} & \text{sea.NOM} & \text{over.there} & \text{there}
\end{align*}

‘the sea is over there’

(30) \begin{align*}
\text{tha} & \quad \text{fuaim} & \quad \text{na} & \quad \text{mara} & \quad \text{àrd} & \quad \text{an} & \quad \text{seo} \\
\text{be.PRS} & \quad \text{sound} & \quad \text{DEF.F.GEN} & \text{sea.GEN} & \text{high} & \text{here}
\end{align*}

‘the sound of the sea is high (loud) here’

Thus we have a split in the noun’s paradigm, splitting genitive from the other two case values (and when there is irregularity it typically affects the genitive). However, this split is externally relevant, in that agreement in gender is different for the genitive. (To demonstrate the gender of the noun in the dative requires adjectival agreement; Will Lamb points out (personal communication) that for younger speakers the gender distinction here tends to be lost; it is only for older speakers that gender in the dative could be established.) Not all dialects are alike (Gillian Ramchand, personal communication). Thus in Dwelly’s famous dictionary (1902-1911), he states that “In Lewis the nom. is f. and the gen is m.” This means that Dwelly gives the Lewis dialect as having the opposite situation to that described above.

The Gaelic data are indeed surprising, since it is vanishingly rare to find gender dependent on case. The paradigm is very small, and a singleton cell is affected. The origin of the phenomenon is claimed to be in this noun having earlier been neuter (Mackinnon 1910: 302). While fascinating, this item does not speak unambiguously to the issue of morphology-free syntax. Clearly the lexical entry must have exceptional specification, giving the form for the genitive singular and the unexpected gender; if these two specifications can be linked, then the general typology of gender would lead us to expect that the irregular gender might follow from the irregular form (Corbett 1991: 33-69). One view would be that this is all internal to the lexeme, and does not pose a problem for morphology-free syntax. In any case, it is not clear whether the singleton cell in this almost minimal paradigm should be considered motivated (since a good argument could be made for the genitive being motivated). Sadly, despite their considerable interest, the Gaelic data do not give an unambiguous indication on the issue of morphology-free syntax.

4.2 Marsalese
Consider now these data from Marsalese, a dialect of western Sicily.\(^{17}\) They come from Cardinaletti & Giusti (2001); there is further detail on the construction in Cardinaletti & Giusti (2003), and the transcription has been amended there, but the key data for us are found in the 2001 publication. There is additional interesting information on the construction in Cruschina (2010). The construction involves three verbs *iri* ‘go’, *viniri* ‘come’, and *passari* ‘come by’ together with a second inflected verb. However, as the forms given show, not all possibilities are acceptable:

\[(31)\] The present tense paradigm in Marsalese (Cardinaletti & Giusti 2001: 380)

\[\begin{array}{ll}
a. & \text{Vaju a}^{18} \text{ pigghiu u pani. } \\
& \text{go.1SG to fetch.1SG ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘I go to fetch bread.’} \\

b. & \text{Vai a pigghi u pani. } \\
& \text{go.2SG to fetch.2SG ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘You go to fetch bread.’} \\

c. & \text{Va a pigghia u pani. } \\
& \text{go.3SG to fetch.3SG ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘(S)he goes to fetch bread.’} \\

d. & \text{*Emu a pigghiamu u pani. } \\
& \text{go.1PL to fetch.1PL ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘We go to fetch bread.’} \\

e. & \text{*Iti a pigghiati u pani. } \\
& \text{go.2PL to fetch.2PL ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘You go to fetch bread.’} \\

f. & \text{Vannu a pigghianu u pani. } \\
& \text{go.3PL to fetch.3PL ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘They go to fetch bread.’} \\
\end{array}\]

\[(32)\] The imperative (Cardinaletti & Giusti 2001: 380)

\[\begin{array}{ll}
a. & \text{Va pigghia u pani! } \\
& \text{go.IMP.2SG fetch.IMP.2SG ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘Go to fetch bread!’} \\

b. & \text{*Iti pigghiati u pani! } \\
& \text{go.IMP.2PL fetch.IMP.2PL ART.SG.M bread} \\
& \text{‘Go to fetch bread!’} \\
\end{array}\]

---

\(^{17}\) I am very grateful to Anna Thornton for bringing Marsalese and the relevant sources to my attention, and for her help with glossing of the examples.

\(^{18}\) The origin of *a* is discussed by Cardinaletti & Giusti (2001) and Cruschina (2010); but see also Ascoli, who maintains that *a* is from Latin *ac* ‘and’, but concedes that speakers have lost consciousness of this origin (1898: 468).
Greville G. Corbett  
Morphomic splits

(33) Illustrative other forms (Cardinaletti & Giusti 2001: 381)

a. *Ii a pighhiai u pani.
   go.PST.1SG to fetch.PST.1S ART.SG.M bread
   ‘I went to fetch bread.’

b. *Ia a pighhiava u pani
   go.IMPRF.1SG to fetch.IMPRF.1SG ART.SG.M bread
   ‘I was going to fetch bread.’

c. *Si ti=nn’ issi a accattassi u pani
   If 2SG.REFL=LOC go.SBJV.SG to buy.SBJV.SG ART.SG.M bread
   ne sta butìa, spinnissi chiù picca.
   in this.SG.F shop, spend.SBJV.SG less
   ‘If you go to buy bread in this shop you spend less.’

The pattern is striking. The construction is not available in an odd selection of cells of the paradigm. It is available when the stem is va-, but not when the stem is i-/e- (and those verb forms are available for other uses). The verb has suppletive stems, and they follow a familiar Romance pattern. If we are indeed dealing with a single lexeme iri ‘go’, we would not expect its licensing properties to vary according to its stem in this way. The verb viniri ‘come’ is similar, in that it has alternating stems ven- and vin-; they are split into similar segments as with iri ‘go’, and they give the same set of acceptable and unacceptable examples. But then there is the verb passari ‘come by’. This verb has no similar stem alternation; and yet the possibilities for the construction under discussion are as with iri ‘go’ and viniri ‘come’.

This means that we have a construction which is available provided the controlling verb stands in a form from one segment of a morphomic pattern, but not if it is in a form from the other segment. However, one of the verbs does not have the morphomic pattern. Thus we have a syntactic rule, which has to make reference to a particular set of cells. For passari ‘come by’ this is simply surprising. For iri ‘go’ and viniri ‘come’ it seems, paradoxically, that their apparently morphomic pattern is motivated.

The data are challenging, and deserve further investigation. However, it is worth thinking further about their possible implications, particularly for the claim that syntax is morphology-free. We know that lexemes are not necessarily homogeneous: different parts of their paradigms may control different agreements or govern different cases. The situation in Marsalese is more interesting in two ways, compared with other splits which are externally relevant: first, the other splits mentioned from outside Marsalese concerning agreement or government are almost always motivated (in a non-controversial way); and second, the syntactic rules involved are quite general: what is special to the split is the particular feature values required (as in Archi, discussed in §4). In Marsalese the split is (apart from the rule we are discussing) unmotivated, and the rule in question is not a more general one, rather it is tied to the verbs under discussion (and to the third verb which has no split). So long as the cells which license the syntactic construction make up one list, identical for the three verbs (with and without suppletion), then that list is a condition on a syntactic rule (involving three verbs) and it coincides with a morphomic pattern. It is not, however,
a counter-example to morphology-free syntax (because of *passari* ‘come by’, which has the syntactic effect without the morphological pattern).

It is generally unwise to suggest what could not occur in an Italian dialect, but the evidence showing that the morphomic pattern was primary for the rule, would be a situation in which different verbs extended or contracted the split in the morphology in different ways, making the segment larger or smaller, with the extent of the syntactic rule following the segment for the individual verbs. That, surely, would not be “allowed” by morphology-free syntax.

There is a further twist to the story. Thornton (2007), following from and improving on Dressler & Thornton (1991), suggests that regular Italian verbs have a morphomic split (the N-pattern mentioned earlier), as shown by the distribution of the thematic vowel, and its attendant stress (found precisely in the first and second persons plural). It needs to be established whether such an analysis would carry over to the Marsalese data. If it did, then *passari* ‘come by’ would also have the N-pattern, and the construction in question, for Marsalese, would be available just according to that pattern.

5. Reprise: definitions

Our definitions have proved helpful in taking the investigation forward. We review briefly some definitional issues.

5.1 Motivation

Consider again the two overlapping ideas about motivation: motivation is justified by appeal to a natural class or to a rule external to morphology. These often coincide but, as we have just seen, they can diverge in an interesting way. The Marsalese data suggest that the natural class criterion is the appropriate one.

In §4 we looked at Archi, and saw that person marking split the paradigm, giving first/second plural (one form) versus the remainder. I suggested there that the split is morphomic. That split is part of the evidence for the feature person in Archi; can we therefore suggest that it figures in an external rule? No: there is agreement with the controller (the absolutive argument) in all available features. There need be no special rule here to handle person agreement as opposed to gender or number.

Now consider these further data from Archi (Kibrik 1994: 349):

(34) buwa-mu       b-ez       dit:a<\b>u       χ״alli
    mother(II)-SG.ERG  SG.III-1SG.DAT  early<SG.III>  bread(III)[SG.ABS]
    a<\b>u
    made<SG.III>PFV
    ‘Mother made bread for me early.’

We see that the dative pronoun, like the adverb and the verb, agrees with the absolutive argument. Here is a partial paradigm for the personal pronouns (Chumakina & Corbett 2008, following Kibrik 1977: 257-260); further cases are omitted:
The personal pronouns of Archi (partial paradigm)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1ST PERSON</td>
<td>2ND PERSON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EXCLUSIVE</td>
<td>INCLUSIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>zon</td>
<td>un</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ERG          | za-ri      | nen          | nen-a-w  | nen-a-r-u
|             |             |              | nen-a-b-u | nen-t’-u etc |
| GEN          | wiš         | wiš          | wiš       | wiš |
| DAT          | 35         | 35           | 35        | 35 |
| COMIT        | za-l’u      | wa-l’u       | la-l’u    | ŵa-l’u |
| SIMILAT      | za-q’di     | wa-q’di      | la-q’di   | ŵa-q’di |
| COMP         | za-ţur      | wa-ţur       | la-ţur    | ŵa-ţur |
| SUBST        | za-kl’ena   | wa-kl’ena    | la-kl’ena | ŵa-kl’ena |
| SUPERESS     | za-t         | wa-t         | la-t      | ŵa-t |
| SUPERLAT     | za-t-i-s    | wa-t-i-s     | la-t-i-s  | ŵa-t-i-s |
| SUPERTERM    | za-t-i-kana  | wa-t-i-kana  | la-t-i-kana | ŵa-t-i-kana |
| CONTELAT     | za-ra-s      | wa-ra-s      | la-ra-s   | ŵa-ra-s |
| CONTLAT      | za-ra-k      | wa-ra-k      | la-ra-k   | ŵa-ra-k |
| CONTALL      | za-r-i       | wa-ra-i      | la-ra-i   | ŵa-ra-i |
| CONTTERM     | za-ra-kana   | wa-ra-kana   | la-ra-kana | ŵa-ra-kana |

The cells with multiple entries show the gender and number forms available. There are four singular forms; according to the regular syncretisms of Archi, the plural forms are: genders I/II plural in b-/<b> and genders III/IV plural in Ø. These cells mark agreement with the absolutive argument, as in (12). Other forms cannot show agreement. Clearly the cells involved in agreement do not form a natural class. Are they defined by an agreement rule? Not directly; it is rather that certain cells are sensitive to “incoming” features, but the agreement rule does not refer to those cells.

The important point for the current discussion is that the dative first person singular pronoun in (34) has an agreement slot, and so it agrees just like other agreement targets, including verbs and adverbs, in having the morphomic split as in (25), repeated here for convenience:

For comparison with other languages of the family see Kibrik & Kodzasov (1990: 220-223).
The Morphome Debate

(36) Person agreement in Archi agreement targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SG</th>
<th>PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/2 person</td>
<td>gender/number agreement</td>
<td>Ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 person</td>
<td>gender/number agreement</td>
<td>gender/number agreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus we have a morphomic split (as in (36)) nested under a morphomic split within the personal pronoun (35), which is a possibility allowed for in §1.

5.2 Regularity

It is worth comparing and contrasting the Archi situation with the Russian split in the verb paradigm (3). Both show sensitivity to incoming feature specifications. The Russian split is motivated (past versus non-past), while that of Archi (35) is morphomic. It is also worth pointing out an orthogonal distinction here: the Russian split is fully regular, since every verb has such a split, while the Archi split just discussed is irregular, in that the pattern is not shared even across the pronouns, and certainly not beyond. However, the Archi person split is morphomic but regular, in the sense that if a verb or pronoun has an agreement slot and hence marks agreement, it will have that person split. This means that a morphomic split can be fully regular (as was also claimed for Italian verbs by Thornton 2007).

If we now think back over the examples presented, we see that all possibilities involving regularities are found (see (37)):

(37) Irregular and regular splits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>irregular</th>
<th>regular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>morphomic</td>
<td>Russian pec’ ‘bake’ (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivated</td>
<td>Archi person (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivated</td>
<td>SC oko ‘eye’ (26), (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivated</td>
<td>Russian past vs non-past (3), (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have seen how motivated and morphomic splits differ; the examples in (37) show that regularity is not something which differentiates them.\(^{21}\)

Conclusion

At the most basic level, inflectional morphology is entirely about splits in lexemes, since if lexemes have no division into cells there is no inflectional morphology. The divisions can be homogeneous. It is the other types of split which prove interesting, whether motivated or morphomic. First, these two types show different patterns of nesting, relative to each other. Second, they may interact differently with semantic splits. Third, it is conjectured that they behave differently as regards optionality. And fourth, while motivated and morphomic splits may both be differentially sensitive to

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\(^{20}\) Many verbs do not mark agreement and we have just seen the complex situation of the pronouns; those adverbs which mark agreement also have the same person split, but they have an overt marker where verbs have the bare stem.

\(^{21}\) We might also ask whether the inherent / contextual distinction helps differentiate types of split. Again, this does not help, since the distinction refers to particular features, hence it is bound to involve motivated splits.
incoming feature requirements, we would expect that only motivated splits could have external relevance. This is largely true, though there are examples which come close to providing evidence in favour of a morphomic split being externally relevant. Finally, regularity is not a determining factor here: both morphomic and motivated splits can be irregular or regular.

References


Greville G. Corbett
Morphomic splits


