Miranda

Revue pluridisciplinaire du monde anglophone /
Multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal on the English-
speaking world

7 | 2012

Ceramics / Submorphemics

The submorpheme *sm-*, or how Arabic can help explain English

Georges Bohas

Translator: Nigel Briggs

Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/miranda/4294>

DOI: 10.4000/miranda.4294

ISSN: 2108-6559

Publisher

Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès

Electronic reference

Georges Bohas, "The submorpheme *sm-*, or how Arabic can help explain English", *Miranda* [Online], 7 | 2012, Online since 09 December 2012, connection on 16 February 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/miranda/4294> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/miranda.4294>

This text was automatically generated on 16 February 2021.

Miranda is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

The submorpheme *sm-*, or how Arabic can help explain English

Georges Bohas

Translation : Nigel Briggs

EDITOR'S NOTE

Translated by Nigel Briggs, Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon.

1. Introduction: the meanings associated with *sm-* in English

- 1 Line Argoud¹ has recently demonstrated that the notional content associated with the word-initial *sm-* cluster in English includes three main meanings in verbs, meanings which I shall reformulate in my own way as:

1.1. "To strike a violent blow"

- 2 *smash*—to break in pieces violently; to crush, shatter or shiver
3 *smite*—to administer a blow with the hand, a stick, or the like
4 *smatter*—to break into small pieces; to smash

1.2. "Actions realized by the labial region"

- 5 *smack*—to open or separate the lips in such a way as to produce a sharp sound
6 *smile*—to assume an expression of pleasure by turning up the corners of the mouth
7 *smirk*—to smile in an affected, smug or silly way

1.3. “Activities linked to the two principal functions of the nose as an organ”

- 8 Olfactory perception *stricto sensu*:
- 9 *smell*—to have perception by means of the olfactory sense
- 10 Perception of emanations given off by the object of the sensation:
- 11 *smoke*—to produce or give forth smoke
- 12 To trouble or block respiration:
- 13 *smother*—to suffocate
- 14 *smoor*—to smother, suffocate
- 15 I would add to this third group words with initial *sn-* which sometimes manifest a phonosemantic alternation with *sn-* (*sniff/sniff*, etc.) (Philps, 2002), a few examples of which follow:
- 16 *snaffle*—to speak through the nose
- 17 *sneeze*—to expel air suddenly through the nose and mouth with an involuntary movement
- 18 *sniff*—to inhale through the nose with short or sharp audible inhalation; to detect a smell
- 19 *snivel*—to emit mucus from the nose
- 20 *snot*—nasal mucus (now *slang*)
- 21 *niff*—to smell, to stink
- 22 *nuzzle*—to push the nose against something; to thrust the nose/snout into the ground
- 23 In both cases, it is quite clear that we are dealing with a compound, namely: {s + [nasal]}, which means that we are at a level which is more abstract than the phoneme, given the introduction of the [+nasal] feature.
- 24 I could summarize this by saying that the *sm-* submorpheme correlates with three notional invariants: “to strike a blow”, “labiality” and “nasality” (in this category I include the perception by the nose: *smell*, and various natural, extracorporeal phenomena which can be perceived by the olfactory organ (*smoke*, *smoulder*, etc.)). The observation which Argoud firmly establishes can be explained by an investigation into the organization of the submorphemic domain. Our research on Arabic² has demonstrated that this domain is organized into two levels, which I have named the “etymon” level and the “matrix” level. Etymons are binary, non-ordered compounds of phonemes such as {b,t}, and matrices are non-ordered compounds of features such as {[labial], [coronal]}.

2. Three matrices in Arabic

- 25 I shall briefly describe the organization of three matrices in Arabic, starting with the one I have just mentioned: {[labial], [coronal]}.

2.1. The {[labial], [coronal]} matrix (notional invariant: “to strike a blow”)

2.1.1. The phonetic material

This matrix is characterized by the combination of the [labial] and [coronal] features. There are three labials in Arabic – *b*, *f* and *m* – and eleven coronal obstruents – *t*, *d*, *ṭ*, *ḍ*, *s*, *z*, *ṣ*, as well as the emphatics, *ṣ*, *ḍ*, *ẓ*.

2.1.2. Ramifications of the notional invariant

- 26 The semantic load of this matrix, as developed in Bohas & Dat (2007), is quite complex. For the purpose of this article, I shall only reproduce some key elements with illustrative examples. The phonemes within which the features of the matrix are realized appear in boldface.

2.1.2. 0.³ To strike one or several blow(s)

<i>rafaza</i>	to strike, to beat
<i>ḍaraba</i>	to strike, to beat
<i>habata</i>	to strike
<i>ṣamada</i>	to strike

27

2.1.2.1. To strike with a sharp object

<i>ba'aṭa</i>	to slit the throat
<i>ḍabaḥa</i>	to slit the throat, to kill
<i>baḍaḥa</i>	to split, to tear
<i>baḍaḥa</i>	to split the tongue of a young camel one wishes to wean
<i>bazala</i>	to split
<i>ḍabaḥ</i>	to split, to tear
<i>safā</i>	to be fissured and split
<i>ṣabaḥa</i>	to split

28

2.1.2.2. To strike with a pointed object: spear or arrow

<i>ḥafaza</i>	to pierce with a spear
<i>lataba</i>	to strike into something with a spear
<i>naḥaḍa</i>	to penetrate, to go through from one side to the other, and to exit from the other side of a body (arrow)

2.1.2.3. To strike with a whip, a stick, or some other object

<i>bazara</i>	to strike, to bruise with a stick
<i>baḍaḥa</i>	to strike somebody (with a stick)
<i>ḍaba'a</i>	to strike with a stick
<i>zabara</i>	to throw stones at somebody
<i>saba'a</i>	to whip somebody until bleeding occurs
<i>faṣa'a</i>	to beat somebody's back with a stick
<i>labata</i>	to strike somebody with a stick in the chest or stomach
<i>lasaba</i>	to give somebody a lash with a whip
<i>samma</i>	to strike with a stick, with a stone
<i>ṣamaḥa</i>	to strike somebody with a whip
<i>ṣamala</i>	to strike somebody with a stick
<i>sama'a</i>	to strike somebody with a stick

29

2.1.2.4. To strike with one's hand, foot or various other parts of the body

<i>bahaza</i>	to strike and repulse with one's hand, one's foot or both hands
<i>ḥabaṭa</i>	to strike violently; to strike the ground with a forefoot (of horse or camel)
<i>raḥasa</i>	to strike with one hand or both hands
<i>raḥasa</i>	to strike the chest with a foot
<i>zabana</i>	to kick out with the knees
<i>saḥa'a</i>	to strike a blow with a wing
<i>ṣaḥa'a</i>	to punch the nape of the neck
<i>ṣamaḥa</i>	to punch something hollow
<i>ḍafana</i>	to kick in the rear

Consequences: to push, to repulse, to send away:

<i>ṭafana</i>	to push using a blow
<i>ḍafara</i>	to repulse with a blow to the chest
<i>ḍafa'a</i>	to push, to send somebody away by pushing
<i>ṣama'a</i>	to excite, to push somebody against another
<i>ṣamā</i>	to push, to excite somebody

30

2.2. The {[labial], [continuant]} matrix (notional invariant: "labiality")

31 The study of this matrix is still in progress, but enough is known for it to be used here.

2.2.1. The phonetic material

32 On the phonetic level, this matrix combines one of the three [labial] segments of Arabic – *b*, *f* and *m* – with a constrictive.

2.2.2. The notional invariant is centred on the lips

2.2.2.1. The lips and, by contiguity, the mouth:

<i>šafatun</i>	lip and mouth
<i>šafahiyyun</i>	labial
<i>šafaha</i>	to strike somebody on the lips
<i>fāhun</i>	mouth
<i>famun</i>	mouth

2.2.2.2. Specifications of the organ: thick, swollen (of the lips of the mouth or vagina)

<i>fawagun</i>	very thick lips
<i>baṭita</i>	to be swollen (of the lips)
<i>baṭa'a</i>	to be swollen, to swell with blood (of the lips)
<i>balamatun</i>	swelling of the lips
<i>balamun</i>	strong sexual urge in the she-camel and swelling of the sexual organs
<i>rašūfun</i>	who has a beautiful mouth; (woman) who has dry and clean private parts

2.2.2.3.

Production: lip > saliva > to stick, to adhere

<i>šaffa</i>	to be sticky
<i>šabiṭa</i>	to stick to, to become strongly attached
<i>šamaga</i> F II	to dribble and cover oneself with dribble, saliva (of the corner of the mouth)
<i>šingān</i>	the corner of the mouth where the lips meet and saliva, dribble and froth first appear

33

2.2.2.4. Movement of the lips: smile; speech; suction

<i>farra</i> FV	to smile at somebody
<i>basama</i>	to smile by slightly separating the lips
<i>hanafa</i> F.III	to laugh a mocking laugh
<i>rašafa</i>	to suck and kiss while sucking
<i>rašūfun</i>	one who nibbles at his/her food
<i>taramrama</i>	to move the lips as if one wished to speak
<i>hamata</i>	to speak of to laugh very quietly, to smile

34

2.3. The {[nasal], [continuant]} matrix (notional invariant: “nasality”)

2.3.1. The phonetic material

- 35 The phonetic substance of this matrix comprises the two nasals – *m* and *n* – and the various fricatives. As described in Bohas & Dat (2007: 179, 220, 221), the feature [+nasal] constitutes the “pivot” of the matrix, while the [continuant] feature constitutes the “satellite” element. The pivot provides the matrix group with its mimophonic load. We can therefore expect to find the same pivot with different satellites⁴ in other languages.

2.3.2. Notional invariant

- 36 For this presentation, I shall only provide partial details of the organization of this matrix.⁵ The ramifications of the notional invariant are as follows:

2.3.2.1. The nose, the organ itself and what affects it

'anfin	nose
'anafa	to strike somebody on the nose
'anifa	to feel pain in the nose
nuḥaratuṇ	tip of the muzzle, or snout; nostril
manḥar,	
minḥarun,	
munkharun	nostril
'ašammu	who has a nose which is well-proportioned, thin, straight, slightly protruding towards the tip before falling at the very point
wamaza	to move the nose (for example, when speaking of a man agitated by anger or some other affection of the soul); to have a quivering nose

37

2.3.2.2. The nose and air: to inhale, to exhale, to perceive odours, to sniff (at)

ḍaman	unpleasant odour
šamma	to sniff (at)
naša'a F. X	to have smelt an odour by sniffing
nušū'un	pleasant odour
našū'	that which interrupts respiration
našiqa	to breathe something in, to attract into the nostrils
našaḡun	odour

38

2.3.2.3. The influence of nose on the voice: nasal sound; similar animal cries (buzzing-grunting)

ḥanna	to cry or laugh in a nasal voice, as if through the nostrils
ḥanḥana	to speak so unintelligibly, for example, through the nose, as to make the words incomprehensible
ḡunnatuṇ	nasal sound, sound from the nose

39

2.3.2.4. Various secretions (mucus, phlegm) which pass through the nose or liquids which enter the body through the nose

ḥunānun	mucus of camels
ḥaniba	to have mucus
ḍamma	let mucus run, drip from... (said of the nose)

40

3. The explanation

- 41 I shall now return to the *sm-* submorpheme in English and its homonymically correlated notional invariants, 1) “to strike a violent blow”; 2) “actions realized by the labial region” and 3) “activities linked to the principal functions of the nose as an organ”, with the objective of dissecting it into features.
- 42 The *s* is analysed as follows: *s*
 [+continuant]
 [+coronal]
- 43 The *m* is analysed as follows: *m*
 [+labial]
 [+nasal]

3.1. Matrix analysis

- 44 If we take into consideration the [coronal] feature of the *s* and the [labial] feature of the *m*, the compound is a realization of the matrix:
- 45 1. {[labial], [coronal]} (notional invariant: “to strike a blow”)
- 46 This explains:
- 47 *smash*—to break in pieces violently; to crush, shatter or shiver
- 48 *smite*—to administer a blow with the hand, a stick, or the like
- 49 *smatter*—to break into small pieces; to smash
- 50 If we take into consideration the [continuant] feature of the *s* and the [labial] feature of the *m*, the compound is a realization of the matrix:
- 51 2. {[labial], [continuant]} (notional invariant: “labiality”)
- 52 This explains:
- 53 *smack*—to open or separate the lips in such a way as to produce a sharp sound
- 54 *smile*—to assume an expression of pleasure by turning up the corners of the mouth
- 55 *smirk*—to smile in an affected, smug or silly way
- 56 If we take into consideration the [nasal] feature of the *n* and the [continuant] feature of the *s*, the compound is a realization of the matrix:
- 57 3. {[nasal], [continuant]} (notional invariant: “nasality”)
- 58 (Cf. the nuances provided earlier, which are quite analogous in both languages)
- 59 *smell*—to have perception by means of the olfactory sense
- 60 *smoke*—to produce or give forth smoke
- 61 *smod*—to suffocate
- 62 *smother*—to suffocate
- 63 *smoor*—to smother, suffocate
- 64 Not forgetting:
- 65 *snaffle*—to speak through the nose

- 66 *sneeze*—to expel air suddenly through the nose and mouth with an involuntary movement
- 67 *sniff*—to inhale through the nose with short or sharp audible inhalation; to detect a smell
- 68 *snivel*—to emit mucus from the nose
- 69 *snot* —nasal mucus (now slang)
- 70 *niff* —to smell, to stink
- 71 *nuzzle*—to push the nose against something; to thrust the nose/snout into the ground

3.2 The motivation

- 72 Each of these three meanings is motivated in Arabic and in English. The motivation in these three matrices is particularly obvious.

3.2.1.

- 73 In the case of the first matrix, {[labial], [coronal]} (notional invariant: “to strike a blow”), we argued, in Bohas & Dat (2007), the case for acoustic motivation: the muffled loud noise produced by the contact of two objects, as manifested in *pat* and *tap*, is actualized in the concepts: “to strike a blow, to hit”.

3.2.2

- 74 As for the matrix {[nasal], [continuant]} (notional invariant: “nasality”), we would like to quote Allott (1973):

This special relationship between the pattern for a word and its meaning can have different forms depending on the category of word involved:

—the simplest case is for words referring to the human body, to parts of it or to actions referable to the human body. In this case, the pattern underlying the word is typically the product of the state of brain organisation that accompanies movement of the part of the body involved, indication of that part e.g. by pointing or more generally that accompanies awareness of that part of the body or of a specific body feeling;

—in this most straightforward case, the relation between the articulatory pattern for the word and the pattern of brain organisation for movement of the part of the body referred to exists because the brain is a single organ which operates integrally. A movement of a part of the body modifies the set of the rest of the body, including the articulatory organs and muscles;

—there is similarly usually a specific, non-arbitrary relation between words referring to acts of perception (hearing, seeing) and the particular percept which is the meaning of a particular word. So the hearing of a sound produces a pattern of brain organisation which is transposed into an articulatory process producing a word naming the particular sound.

- 75 The combination of the [nasal] sound and the “nasality” notional invariant referring to everything concerning the nose definitely appears to be situated at what Allott has called the “simplest” level.
- 76 To be absolutely clear, the motivations mentioned so far have nothing to do with the onomatopoeic formulations such as *glug-glug*, *tweet-tweet* or *tick-tock* that Saussure

discussed. When we say that *šamma* “to sniff (at)” (2.3.2.2.) is motivated because it is a development of the {[nasal] [continuant]} matrix, this contains no onomatopœia, contrary to *glug-glug*. The motivation is to be found in mimophonics.

- 77 This motivation is derived from the very organization of the human being and, more often than not, it is subconscious, making it easier for people to ‘swallow’ the idea of the arbitrary nature of the sign. However, it is possible to make people aware of this non-arbitrary motivation, a mission we are doing our utmost to accomplish. Is it not strange that there is a nasal in the following words: French, *nez*, Italian, *naso*, English, *nose*, Arabic *ʿanf*, Turkish *burun*? Is it not strange that the same can be said for a large number of languages listed below?⁶

Afrikaans	Neus
Albanian	Hundë.
Bosnian	Nos
Breton	Fri
Catalan	Nas
Czech	Nos
Danish	Næse
Dutch	Neus
English (Old English)	Nosu
Esperanto	Nazo
Faeroese	Nøs
Finnish	Nenä
Frisian	Noas
German	Nase
Greek	Μήτη
Hungarian	Orr
Icelandic	Nef
Italian	Naso
Latin	Naris; Nasus
Malay	Hidung
Norwegian	Nese
Papiamentu	Nanishi
Polish	Nos
Portuguese	Nariz
Romanian	Nas
Russian	НОС ⁷
Scottish Gaelic	Sròn

Spanish	Nariz
Sranan	Noso
Swahili	Pua
Swedish	Näsa
Tagalog	Ilóng
Turkish	Burun
Maya Yucatec	Ni'

- 78 In the above list, the nasal is absent only in Hungarian, Swahili and Breton. The Chinese *pi* or *bi* could represent an objection. Admittedly, there is no [nasal] feature, an absence which can be explained by the fact that the word is related to the conceptual area of the “movement of air⁸”, another aspect of mimophonics.
- 79 Why can we observe such unanimity? Why can this correlation between the nose and the presence of a nasal in the word designating the nose be observed in nearly every language? Besides invoking the historical relationship underlying such words as Italian *naso* and French *nez*, the supporters of the arbitrary nature of this relationship would have to answer this question by invoking chance and coincidence – not a very plausible “explanation”! One can be led to discover the existence of the relationship between the presence of a nasal and the nose and its specific actions (odour, breathing, smelling). Yet whether this awareness occurs or not, it does nothing to change the fact that this motivation exists, a motivation which we can even describe as intrinsic.
- 80 In the case of onomatopœia, on the other hand, it is understood that there is a conscious evocation by the speaker of a salient feature of the entity that is named; in this case we have spoken of “accidental motivation”. One cannot blame Saussure for not having access to this first type of motivation: the science of cerebral organization is a recent development. But one can blame those epigones who have not progressed one iota regarding this point and who still only envisage *glug-glug* and *tweet-tweet* type motivations while totally ignoring intrinsic motivation, which is obviously the only motivation capable of fundamentally calling into question the postulate of the arbitrary nature of the sign.
- 81 The intrinsic motivation of the linguistic sign which we have just evoked affects another debate which regularly appears in works of scientific popularization, namely the issue of the mother language, an instance of which can be found in the August-September 2010 issue of *Les cahiers de Science et vie*⁹. In his 1994 work entitled, *The Origin of Language. Tracing the Evolution to the Mother Tongue*, Ruhlen identifies 27 roots which might belong to the mother language, claimed to be the primordial language which engendered all of the world’s languages. According to the summary provided in the above-mentioned issue of *Les cahiers de Science et vie*, one of Ruhlen’s “global etymologies” is Čun(g)a ‘nose; to smell’. This is claimed to be attested in the following language groups:

Khoisan	čĩũ
Nilo-Saharan	čona
Afro-Asiatic	sunā
Kartvelian	sun
Dravidian	čun̥tu
Eurasiatic	snā
Dene-Caucasian	suŋ
Austriac	ĩŋuŋ
Indopacific	sinna
Australian	mura
Amerind	čuna

- 82 In Ruhlen's book, the inventory of data actually covers two pages. It is worth observing that all these examples include a segment with the [+nasal] feature and a segment with the [+continuant] feature. As in Arabic, we have the combination of the [+nasal] sound and the notional invariant "nasality", which is located at what Allott calls the simplest level.
- 83 What is at work here is the organization of the human being, not an avatar in scientific guise of the old myth from the Book of Genesis: "*Now the whole earth had one language and few words*"¹⁰. In other words, if we find an *n* in all these words, this is not because of the existence of a mother language, but rather because all humans have noses.

3.2.3

- 84 Finally, if we consider the {[labial], [continuant]} matrix)notional invariant: "labiality") and its pivotal feature, [labial], it seems obvious that the relationship between [labial] and everything pertaining to the lips is of exactly the same nature as the relationship we have just identified between [nasal] and everything pertaining to the nose. The motivation is once more rooted in what Allott calls the simplest level.

4. Conclusion

- 85 Given that analysis at the submorphemic level is in its initial phases, I am fully aware that this is trail-blazing work which could be described as a dangerous adventure. First of all, it would be wise to avoid confusing the issues involved. The reader of this presentation should not conclude that the submorphemes of English and the etymons of Arabic, as defined in my research, are one and the same thing. In the Theory of Matrices and Etymons (TME), the etymon is a genuine base for derivation. When the etymon is realized as a radical, it is always enveloped within a vowel structure: for example, the etymon {k,f} may be realized in *kaffa* "to push away, to repulse" whereas the two phonemes of the submorpheme are always contiguous as in *smell* and *sneeze*.
- 86 The components of the etymon, like those of the matrix, are not ordered, which implies that they can be realized in both directions: {b,t} can be realized as "*batta*" ('to cut') and as "*tabba*" ('to cut'), whereas **msell* and **nseeze* are strictly agrammatical. Unlike the submorpheme, the etymon is not necessarily located at the beginning of the word but

may receive various affixes or increments: for example, in *nakafa* “to go away”, the *n* prefix is added to the {k,f} etymon and confers upon it the grammatical meaning “reflexive”, something which appears inconceivable for the submorpheme. Although we are at the infra-morphemic level in both cases, the two conceptions are indisputably different¹¹. However, we should not forget Allott’s remark (1973 and 2001):

Where resemblances are observed between vocabulary in different languages, these are not necessarily an indication that the languages are related by descent or have a similar vocabulary as a result of diffusion. The resemblances may be the result of a natural appearance of similar words for similar perceptions by physically similar people in similar circumstances.

- 87 The fact that submorphemic manifestations can be motivated in the same way in two languages which are as different as Arabic and English leads us to postulate that, for languages which have retained a submorphemic level, the organization of this level could be universal. I have specified “for languages which have retained a submorphemic level”, since one may easily conceive that there are languages in which this level no longer exists, given that languages are not equal with regard to the demotivation of signs; these would be languages in which the relationship between the linguistic sign and the referent is completely demotivated – the dream of Saussure.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version.

Allott, Robin. *The Physical Foundation of Language. The Exploration of a Hypothesis*. 1st edition. Sussex: Seaford, 1973. Knebworth, Hertfordshire: Able Publishing, 2001.

Argoud, Line. “Approche lexico-cognitive des ‘mots en *kn-*’ du vocabulaire anglais.” *Anglophonia/Sigma* 22. Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2007, 129-143.

Bohas, Georges. “De la motivation corporelle de certains signes de la langue arabe et de ses implications”. *Cahiers de linguistique analogique* 3 (2006): 11-41.

---, Dat, Mihai. *Une théorie de l'organisation du lexique des langues sémitiques : matrices et étymons*. Lyon: ENS Édition, 2007.

Migeon, Christophe. “Quand les langues cherchent leur mère”. *Les cahiers de Science & vie* 118 (2010): 28-33.

Philps, Dennis. “Le concept de ‘marqueur sub-lexical’ et la notion d’invariant sémantique”. In *La notion d’invariant sémantique*, Pierre Larrivée (dir.), *Travaux de linguistique* 45 (2002): 103-123.

Ruhlen, Merritt. *The Origin of Language. Tracing the Evolution to the Mother Tongue*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994.

Saussure, Ferdinand (de), 1916, *Cours de linguistique générale*, publié par Charles Bailly et Albert Séchehayé, éd. critique préparée par Tullio de Mauro, post-face de J.-L. Calvet. Paris: Payot, 1995.

<http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/nose>

NOTES

1. Argoud (2007).
 2. See Bohas & Dat (2007).
 3. This level is common to all the etymons arising out of this matrix. The initial point of departure for all the semantic chains is the meaning “to strike a blow, to hit”.
 4. For more details, see Bohas & Dat (2007). In Hebrew, for instance, [+continuant] is replaced by [+consonantal].
 5. For a more detailed development, see Bohas (2006).
 6. Taken from <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/nose>, with no modification of the transcriptions.
 7. Pronounced *nos*.
 8. I would like to thank my colleague Frédéric Wang for providing this information.
 9. Migeon (2010).
 10. *The Holy Bible*, Revised Standard Version, Genesis, 11, 1.
 11. Further research into English and other languages characterized by the existence of submorphemes could lead to a more nuanced expression of this point, since a vowel does in fact occur between *n* and *s* in *nose* and *nasal*, for instance.
-

ABSTRACTS

Line Argoud has demonstrated that the notional load correlated with the English submorpheme *sm-* includes three notional fields: “to strike a blow”, “activities realized by the labial region”, and “activities linked to the nose as an organ”. I demonstrate that this can easily be explained by adopting the organization set out in the Theory of Matrices and Etymons (TME) which I have proposed for Arabic. The analysis which I have provided for Arabic sheds light on the organization of the meanings of this particular submorpheme in English.

Line Argoud a montré que la charge notionnelle corrélée au submorphème anglais *sm-* inclut trois domaines notionnels : “porter un coup”, “activités réalisées par la région labiale”, et “activités liées à l’organe nasal”. Je montre que cette situation s’explique fort bien si l’on adopte l’organisation de la théorie des matrices et des étymons (TME) que j’ai proposée pour l’arabe ; il apparaîtra que l’analyse que j’ai fournie pour l’arabe permet de comprendre l’organisation des sens du submorphème en question en anglais.

INDEX

Mots-clés: théorie des matrices et des étymons, linguistique submorphémique, lexique arabe, domaine notionnel

Keywords: theory of matrices and etymons, submorphemics, Arabic lexicon, notional domain

AUTHORS

GEORGES BOHAS

Professor

École Normale Supérieure de Lyon

Georges.bohas@ens-lyon.fr