Discussion guide: Baker (1985) and Haspelmath (2002)

Baker (1985) makes the following claims:

- There is no morphological difference between inflectional and derivational morphology
- Only morphological processes that are relevant to the syntax are subject to the Mirror Principle

Haspelmath (2002) discusses these points:

- Many criteria have been proposed by different researchers for distinguishing inflectional from derivational morphology, but these criteria do not necessarily draw the line between inflection and derivation in the same place
- In fact, (many of) these criteria can be seen to define a continuum from more inflection-like to more derivation-like

For this "reading reaction," choose one of the following questions to answer and post, and give the other one some thought, too. These questions will be the basis for class discussion on Wed.

(1)   Considering whether Baker's GF-rules are inflection or derivation...

    (a)   Look at Haspelmath's list of inflection/derivation classification criteria (there is a convenient summary in Table 4.6 on p 71). Setting aside the first item ("relevant to the syntax") (for obvious reasons!), find at least one criterion in this list that would classify one of Baker's GF-rules (such as Passive, Causative, Applicative) as inflection, and explain why it fits.

    (b)   Then, find at least one criterion in this list that would classify the same GF-rule as derivation; again, explain why it fits.

    (c)   It seems that many GF-rules are not clearly classifiable as "inflection" or "derivation" by Haspelmath's criteria. Do you think Baker (1985) would consider this to be a problem as far as the Mirror Principle is concerned? Why or why not?

(2)   In his discussion of the continuum model of the morphological grammar, Haspelmath says the following (pp 80-81): "...the ordering of inflectional affixes with respect to derivational affixes is not the only generalization that can be made. Also within inflectional affixes and within derivational affixes, some orders are strongly preferred, and others are strongly dispreferred. For instance, the diminuitive suffix in Spanish is always outside other derivational suffixes (e.g. the female noun suffix *-es(a)*: *baron-es-ita* 'little baroness', not **baronitesa*). And case suffixes almost always follow number suffixes, rather than vice versa (e.g. Turkish *ev-ler-in* [house-PL-GEN] 'of the houses', not **ev-in-ler*). These additional tendencies cannot be explained by the architecture of the grammar, but whatever explains them can probably also explain the generalization about the larger classes of inflection and derivation."

    The question: Do you think Baker would agree with Haspelmath's claim that "these additional tendencies cannot be explained by the architecture of the grammar"? If you think Baker would agree, explain why. If you think he would disagree, explain which of the two examples Haspelmath gives (the Spanish one or the Turkish one) he would most likely attempt to explain using the architecture of the grammar, and why.

    Optional extra part of this question: If you think Baker would tackle one of Haspelmath's examples as above, what kind of analysis do you think he would give for it?