Day 8: Morphology
Ling 200: Introduction to Linguistic Thought

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1. *What is Morphology*
   - Definition
   - Morphemes
   - In brains, not dictionaries

2. *Terminology*
   - Affixes
   - Root vs. Stem
   - Free vs. Bound
   - Derivational vs. Inflectional
   - Content vs. Function

3. *Summary*

Outline
What is Morphology
Terminology
Summary

Definition
Morphemes
In brains, not dictionaries

What is Morphology?

- What is Morphology?

Definition (Morphology)

The study of words and the rules for word formation in a language.

- What are words?
- Properties of words:
  - A meaningful unit of language that can stand on its own
  - Stored in **mental lexicon** with information about its 'part of speech' (noun, verb, adj., etc.)
  - Composed of one or more **morphemes**

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What is Morphology?
What are Morphemes?

- What are morphemes?

Definition (Morpheme)

The smallest **meaningful** linguistic unit.

Example (Morphemes)

Examples of morphemes:

- apple, cat, help, salamander, fling, lens
- -er, -ing, -s
- pre-, un-

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What is Morphology?
One word—lots of morphemes

- One word can have lots of morphemes
- E.g., oversimplifications

		simple						
		simple	+	ify				
		simple	+	ify	+	cation		
over	+	simple	+	ify	+	cation		
over	+	simple	+	ify	+	cation	+	s

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What is Morphology?
In brains, not dictionary

In our brains, but not dictionaries:

- knowledge of the structure of words, and word categories
- undo, unfold, untie, … *ungo
- cutest, funniest, lamest, … *goest
- happiness, weirdness, … *goness

Why not?

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What is Morphology?
In brains, not dictionary

Dictionaries do not list all possible words of a language

- new words
    - Google, meth, bedhead
- new usages of words
    - to google something, crystal
- words derived by productive rules:
    - goes, going
    - unfold, foldable, refold, unfoldable

Morphological competence includes information about how
morphemes work, how they can and can't fit together

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Affixes
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Terminology
Affixes

Affix

Definition (affix)

General term for morphemes attached to a **root** or **stem**

Four types of affixes:

- **prefix**: beginning of word (e.g., pre-)
- **suffix**: end of word (-ness, -ly, -tion)
- **infix**: inside a word
  Tagalog [-um-]: [bili] 'buy' → [bumili] 'to buy'
- **circumfix**: 'around' a word (at both ends)
  German [ge- -t]: spiel- 'play' → gespielt 'played'

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Terminology
Root vs. Stem

Definition (root)

forms base for affixes to attach to; cannot be analyzed into smaller parts

Definition (stem)

formed when a root is combined with an affix (that other affixes can continue to be attached to)

Example (root vs. stem)

root:	taste	(verb)
stem:	dis + taste	(prefix + verb)
stem:	dis + taste + ful	(prefix + verb + suffix)
stem:	dis + taste + ful + ly	(prefix + verb + suffix + suffix)

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Terminology
Free vs. Bound

Free morphemes:

Definition (free morphemes)

can occur as an independent word all by themselves

Example

simple words: cat, eat, green, pumpkin, the, is

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Free vs. Bound

Bound morphemes:

Definition (free morphemes)

cannot stand alone, but must be attached to other morphemes

Example

- Affixes: un-, pre-, dis-, -ly, -ness, -tion
- Bound roots:
    - -ceive (conceive, receive, deceive, perceive)
    - -sist (consist, resist, desist, persist)

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Terminology
Free vs. Bound

I know a little man both ept and ert.
An intro-? extro-? No, he's just a vert.
Sheveled and couth and kempt, pecunious, ane,
His image trudes upon the ceptive brain.

When life turns sipid and the mind is traught,
The spirit soars as I would sist it ought.
Chalantly then, like any gainly goof,
My digent self is sertive, choate, loof.

—attributed to David McCord (b. 1897)

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Derivational vs. Inflectional

Derivational affixes:

Definition (derivational affixes)

when added to a word, make or derive a new word with a new meaning

- …sometimes changing the part of speech of the word
    - use (v.) + able → usable (adj.)
    - happy (adj.) + ness → happiness (n.)
- …sometimes not
    - un + happy (adj.) → unhappy (adj.)
    - re + produce (v.) → reproduce (v.)

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Inflectional affixes:

Definition (inflectional affixes)

indicate grammatical roles; do not change basic meaning of the word

3rd per. sg.:	-s	He walks.
past tense:	-ed	He walked.
progressive:	-ing	He is walking.
past participle:	-en	He has eaten.
plural:	-s	I have two cats.
possessive:	-'s	cat's eye
comparative:	-er	She is older.
superlative:	-est	She is oldest.

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Function morphemes:

Definition

Provide information about grammatical function by relating words of a sentence

prepositions:	in, of, on
articles:	a, an, the
pronouns:	I, you, he
auxiliaries:	am, is, are
inflectional affixes:	-s, -ing, -ed

Summary
'sadness'

'sadness'

- How many morphemes?
    - 2 (sad + ness)
- Free or bound?
    - 'sad' is free, '-ness' is bound
- Derivational or inflectional affix?
    - '-ness' is a derivational suffix
- Content or function morphemes?
    - both are content morphemes