

# Morphological processes

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# The lexeme

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## Lexeme

## Word form

car

car  
cars

go

goes  
going  
gone  
went

be

be  
been  
being  
is  
are  
am  
was  
were

# Derivation - Inflection

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Words with derivational morphemes are 'new words' (which you would expect to find in a comprehension dictionary).

Words with inflectional morphemes are 'conjugated' or 'declined' words (which you would not expect to find in a dictionary).

Criteria for distinguishing inflectional from derivational morphemes:

- ❑ change of category
- ❑ productivity
- ❑ consistency in meaning
- ❑ position

# Change of category

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Derivational morphemes can change the grammatical category of the base:

to act

actor  
action

nominalization

free

freedom

hospital

to hospitalize

verbalization

false

to falsify

to count

countable

adjectivization

to hope

hopeful

quick

quickly

adverbialization

# Productivity

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Inflectional morphemes tend to be more productive than derivational morphemes. But the productivity of derivational morphemes is a continuum:

Productive derivational morphemes:

un-  
mis-  
non-

-er  
-less  
-ation

Unproductive derivational morphemes:

en- (e.g. enslave)  
a- (e.g. atypical)

-hood (e.g. motherhood)  
-dom (e.g. freedom)  
-fold (e.g. twofold)

# Productivity

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What determines the productivity of a morpheme?

- ❑ Blocking  
go - went      \*goed  
steal - thief      \*stealer
  
- ❑ Phonological / morphological idiosyncracies
  
- ❑ Semantic:  
waiter      wait-ress      \*road-ess  
actor      act-ress      \*police-ess  
lion      lion-ess

# Semantic consistency

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Derivational morphemes are semantically less consistent than inflectional morphemes.

(1)	<i>cars</i>	'more than one car'	'more than one'
	<i>tables</i>	'more than one table'	'more than one'
	<i>shoes</i>	'more than one shoe'	'more than one'
	<i>cottages</i>	'more than one cottage'	'more than one'
(2)	<i>computerise</i>	'put into a computer'	'put into X'
	<i>modernise</i>	'make (more) modern'	'make more X'
	<i>regularise</i>	'make (more) regular'	'make more X'
	<i>brotherise</i>	'provide with a brother'	'provide with X'
(3)	<i>interest</i>	<i>interchange</i>	
	<i>interdict</i>	<i>interplay</i>	

# Position

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In English, inflectional morphemes are always suffixes, whereas derivational morphemes are both suffixes and prefixes:

Inflectional morphemes:

-s	cats
's	Peter's
-s	walks
-ed	walked
-ing	walking
-er	hotter
-est	warmest

Derivational suffixes:

-tion	action
-ness	laziness
-hood	motherhood
-ize	brutalize
-en	weaken
-ify	falsify
-ive	generative
-ish	foolish

Derivational prefixes:

dis-	disbelieve
re-	rearrange
un-	undo
non-	non-smoker
inter-	interchange
mis-	misinterpret
co-	coactive
de-	derail



# Word formation

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Word formation strategies:

- ❑ affixation
- ❑ compounding
- ❑ conversion
- ❑ shortenings

# Compounding

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Orthography: armchair, pain-free, dinner table

Stress: the white house (over there)      The White House

## Endocentric compounds

armchair	N-N
dinner table	N-N
seasick	N-ADJ
pain-free	N-ADJ
to fine-tune	ADJ-V

## Exocentric compounds

skinhead
pickpocket
handout
afternoon
underground

# Conversion

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N > V        to bridge, to mail, to mushroom, to data-bank

V > N        a command, a dump, a guess, a kiss

ADJ > V     to open, to better, to dirty, to empty

ADJ > N       the poor, a daily (rather rare)

CLOSED CL   no buts, to up, to down, the hereafter

Which one is basic?

- history
- semantic complexity/abstractness
- frequency

# Shortenings

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Bicycle	>	bike	Clippings
Gasoline	>	gas	
Advertisement	>	ad	
Delicatessen	>	deli	
Facsimile	>	fax	

Smoke + fog	>	smoke	Blends
Motor + hotel	>	motel	
Breakfast + lunch	>	brunch	
Channel + tunnel	>	chunnel	

# Shortenings

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Acquired immune deficiency syndrome  
North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
Radio detecting and ranging

>  
>  
>

AIDS  
NATO  
radar

Acronyms

United States of America  
Pretty damm quick  
Jean Pierre

>  
>  
>

USA  
PDQ  
JP

Initialism

# Short review

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# Important terms

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Explain the following terms and provide examples:

- morpheme
- affix
- allomorph
- content morpheme
- base vs. root
- zero morpheme

Comment on the morpheme 'post' in the following words:

post traumatic

postpone

posterior

# Exercise

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Consider the following past tense forms. How many allomorphs does the (regular) past tense morpheme have?

called	patted
walked	claimed
kissed	kicked
dared	loved
argued	dreaded

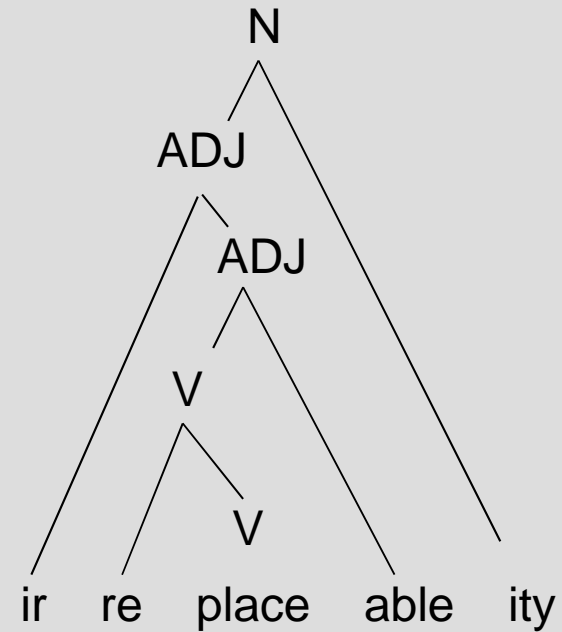
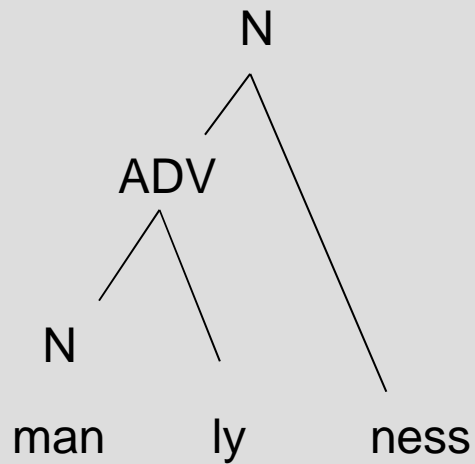
Explain why the past tense alternation is a morphological process. Why is this not a case of allophonic variation?



# Tree diagrams

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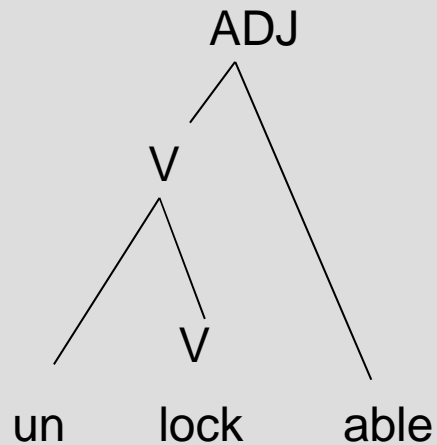
- (1) manliness
- (2) irreplaceability



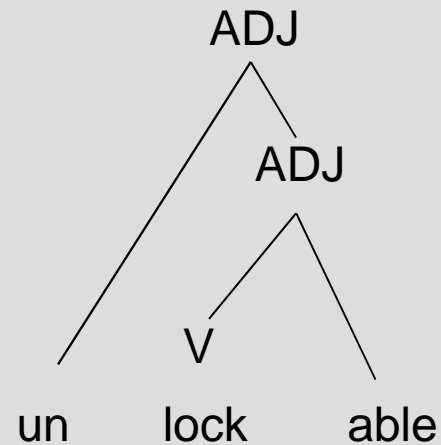
# Tree diagrams

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- (1) unlockable    a. is locked, but cannot be unlocked  
                      b. can in principle be locked, but this one cannot be unlocked



nicht aufschließbar



nicht verschließbar