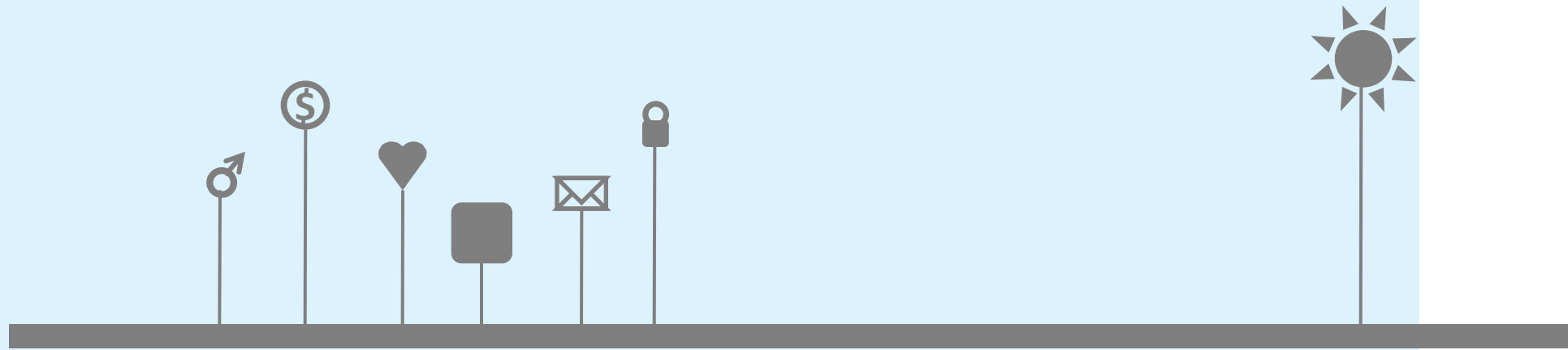


# Lecture 6

## **Morphology**



# Knowledge of language

- 1. knowledge of sounds and sound patterns
- **2. knowledge of word structure and formation**
- 3. knowledge of the structure of phrases and sentences
- 4. knowledge of the relationship between form and meaning, between meanings

- **What do we know when we know a word?**
- **Words are associated with a wide range of information.**

# Contents

- **1. Morphological knowledge**
  - **morpheme**
  - **types of morphemes**
  - **organization of morphemes**
- **2. Word-formation processes**

# words

- - act, color, bike, virus, ...
- - interaction, colorful, motorbike, coronavirus, ...
- An **indivisible unit** is needed to describe words!

# Morpheme

- A **morpheme** is a minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function.
- - boy, desire, ...
- - boyish, desirable, ...
- - boyishness, desirability, ...
-

# Types of Morphemes

- **Free vs Bound Morphemes**
- *Their little dog **bites** the **mailman**.*

# Types of Morphemes

- **1. free morpheme**
  - - lexical morphemes
    - - nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs
  - - open-class morphemes
  - - functional morphemes
    - - conjunctions, prepositions, articles, auxiliary verbs and pronouns
  - - closed-class morphemes



# Types of Morphemes

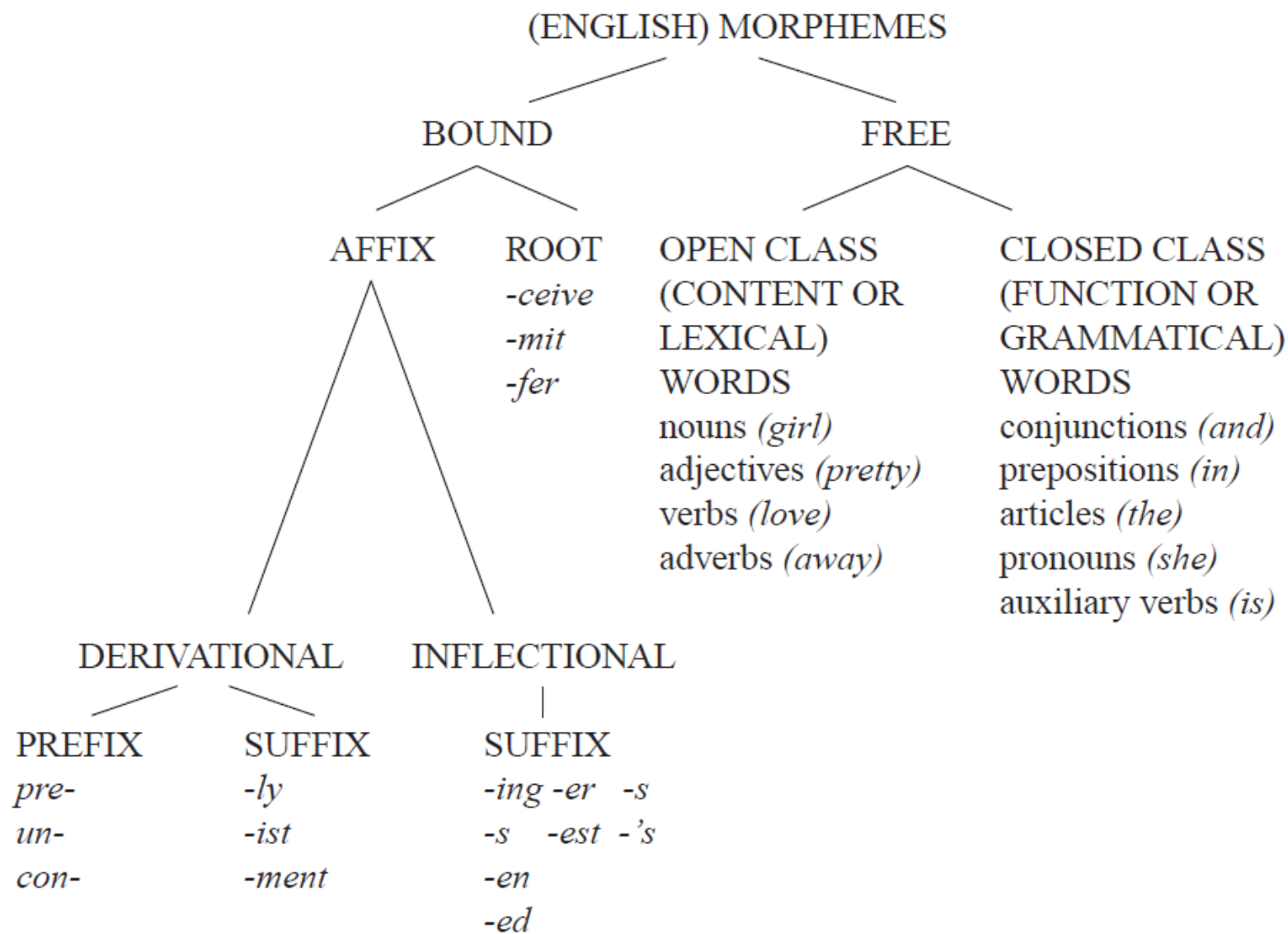
- **2. bound morpheme**
  - - **affixes:**
    - - prefixes: attached to the beginning of another morpheme (*e.g., unlikely, impossible, reduce, rewrite*)
    - - suffixes: attached to the end of another morpheme (*e.g., carelessness, kindness, learnable*)
    - - infixes, circumfixes in some languages
  - - **bound base/stem morphemes** (*e.g., receive, reduce, ...*)
  - - **contracted (shortened) forms** (*e.g. 'll, 've, 'd*)

- **Affixes**
- **derivational morphemes**
- - Morphemes that make new words or transform the root words into different grammatical categories.
- - e.g., *re-*, *pre-*, *ex-*, *mis-*, *co-*, *un-*, ...
- - *-ful*, *-less*, *ish*, *ment*, *ly*, ...

- **inflectional morphemes**
- - Morphemes that mark properties (such as tense, number, person and so forth) of a word
- - Noun + -'s, -s;
- - Verb + -s, -ing, -ed, -en;
- - Adjective + -er, -est
- - Inflectional morphemes are always suffixes in English
- - Inflectional morphemes always follow (if any) derivational morphemes in English.
- - punish + ment + s
- - learn + er + 's

- **Allomorphs**
  - – having different sounds or spellings
  - – carrying the same meaning or having the same grammatical function
- the allomorphs of the morpheme “negation”
  - **im:** - *possible*
  - **in:** – *competent*
  - **il:** – *legal*
  - **ir:** – *relevant*
  - **un:** – *likely*
- the allomorphs of the morpheme “plural”
  - – *criteria, dogs, oxen, deer, judges, stimuli, ...*
- the allomorphs of the morpheme “past tense”
  - – *borrowed, went, did, wrote, drank, was, shot, ...*

# Chart of morpheme types



# Exercise

- Identify all the morphemes in the following sentence, and specify the category of each morpheme.
- *The musicians reconsidered their director's unusual proposal.*

# Organization of morphemes

- **1. Morphemes are ordered in sequence.**

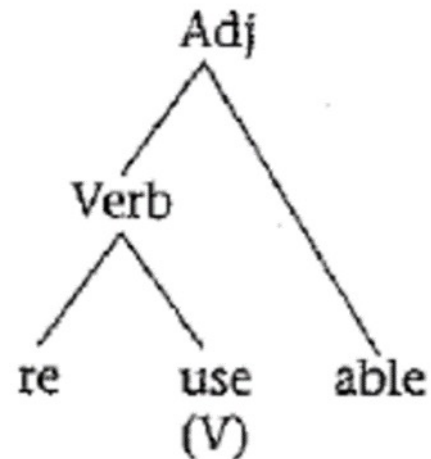
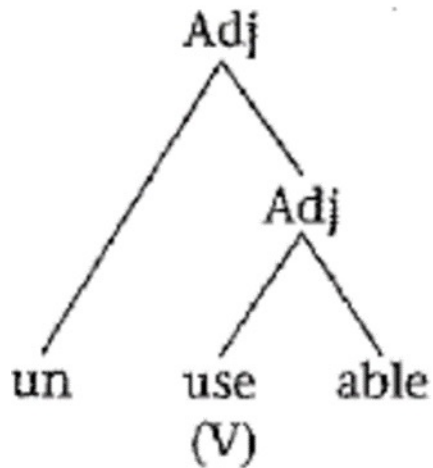
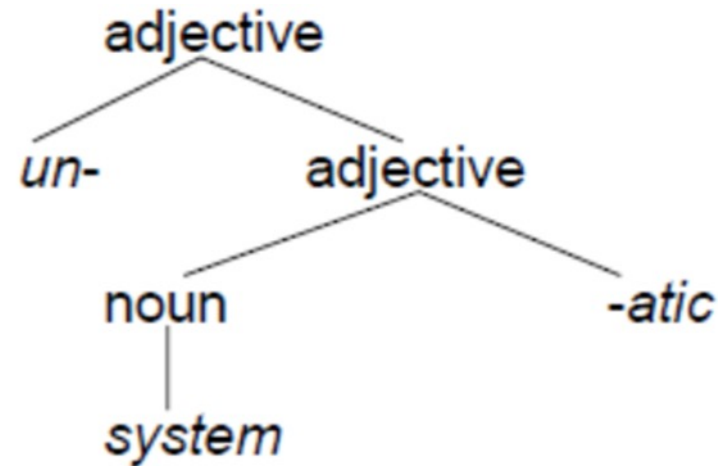
- *unsystematic = un + system + atic*

- “reusable” and “unusable”

# Organization of morphemes

- **2. Morphemes are ordered in hierarchical structure.**

- Two morphological rules:
- – Noun + *-atic* → *Adjective*
- – *un-* + *Adjective* → *Adjective*

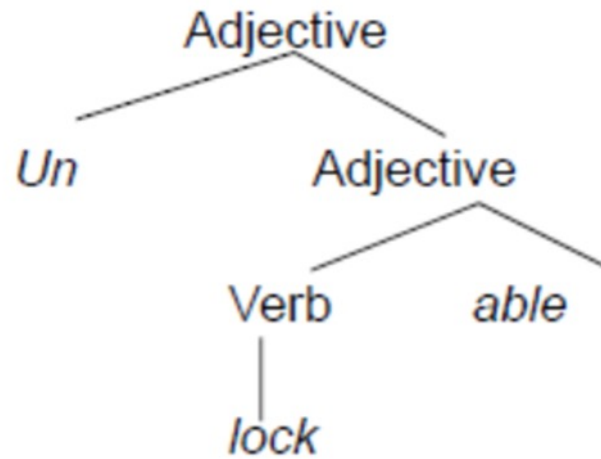




# Organization of morphemes

- 3. explain the ambiguity of words

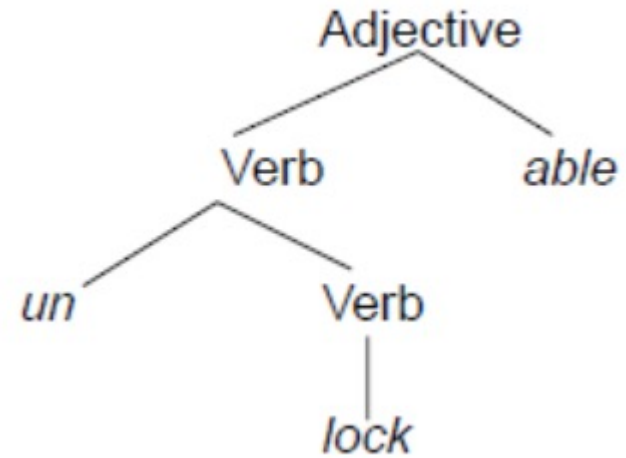
- *unlockable*



- 1) "not able to be locked"

# Organization of morphemes

*unlockable*



2) “*able to be unlocked*”

# Organization of morphemes

- Draw tree diagrams for the following words:
  - – *unwrappable*
  - – *reconstruction*

# Organization of morphemes

- **4. Guessing the meaning of words**

- misclassify, whistle-blower

- Your guesses may be wrong !

- – *deciduous*

- – *bibliography*

- – *gullible*

-

# Word-formation processes

- Vocabulary!
- common ways in which languages build more complex words out of morphemes:

# Word-formation processes

Compounding

Derivation

Conversion

Blending

Backformation

Abbreviation

Borrowing

Coinage

Multiple processes

# Compounding

- **Compounds:** words formed by joining two or more free morphemes or words together
- e.g. *landlord, textbook, Facebook, blackboard, laptop, ...*
- **Two-word compounds** are the most common, but there are compounds containing more than two words.
- *daughter-in-law*
- ...

# Compounding

- **Meaning of compounds**
- English compounds are typically **right-headed**.
- *traffic-cop, teapot, softball, driveway, headstrong, handpick, ...*
- Many compounds are **not right-headed**.
- *overweight,*
- *walkman*
- *must-have*



# Compounding

- The **meaning** of a compound is not always the sum of the meaning of its parts.
- – *Blackboard*
- – walkman
- – *Turncoat*

# Blending

- A **blend** is formed through the combination of two or more other words in some ways.
- **Combining the beginning of a word and the end of another**
  - – *brunch: breakfast + lunch*
  - – *Chinglish: Chinese + English*
  - – *Brixit/Brexit: British exit or Britain exiting from the EU*
- Combing two words around a common sequence of sounds
  - – motel: motor + hotel
  - – *smog: smoke + fog*
  - – *spork: spoon + fork*

# Blending

- **Combining the beginnings of both words**
  - – modem: modulator + demodulator
  - – telex: teleprinter + exchange
- **Combining a word and part of the other word**
  - *foodoholic: food + alcoholic*
  - workaholic:
  - *fanzine: fan + magazine*

# Blending

Base word 1	Base word 2	Blend
boat	hotel	boatel
breakfast	lunch	brunch
channel	tunnel	chunnel
compressor	expander	compander
goat	sheep	geep
guess	estimate	guesstimate
sheep	goat	shoat
smoke	fog	smog
Spanish	English	Spanglish
stagnation	inflation	stagflation

Base word 1	Base word 2	Blend
breath	analyzer	breathalyzer
motor	camp	mocamp
motor	hotel	motel
science	fiction	sci-fi
high	fidelity	hi-fi
modulator	demodulator	modem

# Derivation

- **forming a new word by adding affixes to an existing word**
- Prefix, suffix in English
- act --- reaction
- face --- facial
- belief --- believe
- breath--- breathe

# Conversion (also functional shift or zero derivation)

- *Changing the function of a word and using it as a different part of speech without any corresponding formal change*
- N – V chair---chair the meeting
- V, VP – N must, guess, handout

# Conversion

- The oil price hit a historical new *high/low*.
- try our best to *lower* the living cost.
- to *better* our English
- The cost *totals* 3.5 million USD.
- He bought a new BMW *convertible*.

# Abbreviation

- **Abbreviation** involves the shortening of existing words to create other words, usually informal versions of the originals.
- **1. Clipping /shortening**
  - clipping the first part: phone, copter, chute,
  - clipping the last part: math, ad, dorm,
  - both the first and last part: flu
- **2. Initialism or Acronymy**
  - WHO, UN, USA, USSR, CIS, BBC, VOA, CIA, FBI,
  - NATO, OPEC, APEC, GATT, UNESCO,



# Backformation

- A word of one type (usually a noun) is reduced to form another word of a different type (usually a verb).
  - *Television: televise*
  - *Option: opt*
  - *Babysitter: babysit*
- *editor: edit*

# Borrowing

- **Borrowing** involves adopting a word from another language and incorporating it into another language.
  - Alcohol (Arabic), boss (Dutch), coup (French), blitzkrieg (German, a sudden military attack), robot (Czech), judo (Japanese), yogurt (Turkish), zebra (Bantu), kiwi (Australian aboriginal), tomato (American Indian), shampoo (Indian)...
  - What about Chinese?
- **Loan-translation or calque**
- Borrowing a word from another language by literal, word-for-word or root-for-root translation
  - Flea market: 跳蚤市场
  - Hot dog: 热狗

# Coinage

- **The invention of totally new terms**
- The names of products or trade marks or brand names of a company becomes general terms.
  - Aspirin
  - Nylon
  - Zipper
  - Xerox (make a copy of...)

# hypocorisms

- **a longer** word is reduced to a single syllable, then *-y or -ie* is added to the end.
  - *telly* ('television')
  - *Aussie* ('Australian')
  - *barbie* ('barbecue')
  - *Chrissy pressies*

# Multiple Process

- The creation of a word might involve several of the word-formation processes mentioned above.
- Deli:
  - *borrowing (delicatessen, from German) + clipping*
- Problems with the project **snowballed**.
- Compounding + conversion
- Waspish attitude (WASP: white Anglo-Saxon Protestant)

# A summary

- **1. Morphological knowledge**
  - **morpheme**
  - **types of morphemes**
  - **organization of morphemes**
- **2. Word-formation processes**

# Reading materials for the next week

- Chapter 7 Grammar
- Chapter 8 Syntax

- References:
- Fasold, R. W., & Connor-Linton, J. (Eds.). (2006). *An introduction to language and linguistics*. Cambridge university press.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., & Hyams, N. (2011). *An introduction to language*. Cengage Learning.
- Hazen, K. (2014). *An introduction to language*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Radford, A., Atkinson, M., Britain, D., Clahsen, H., & Spencer, A. (2009). *Linguistics: an introduction*. Cambridge University Press.
- Yule, G. (2014). *The study of language*. Cambridge university press.
- Among many other materials (including online materials)!



**Thank you!**

