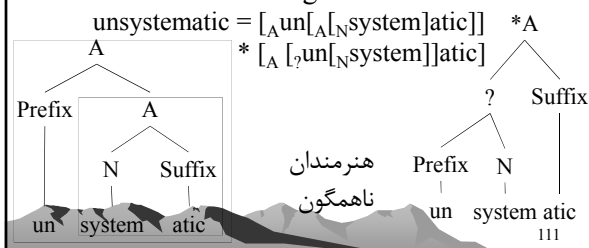


Hierarchical Structure of words

Words have their internal structures.
Lower level elements are combined to form upper level structures.

The combination is rule-governed.



- Derivational morphemes have clear semantic content. In this sense they are like content words, except that they are not words.
- When a new word enters the lexicon by the application of morphological rules, other complex derivations may be **blocked**.

• بی‌مروت * نامرودت * غروت * مردانه نامرد مردانه

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Like discreteness, hierarchical structure is an essential property of human language.

Part of our linguistic competence includes the ability to recognize possible vs. impossible words. Thus we can recognize that *unsystem* is not an English word, in the same way as *مندان* is not a word in Persian.

The hierarchical organization of words can clearly be observed in structurally ambiguous words. Unlockable [un[lockable]] [[unlock]able]

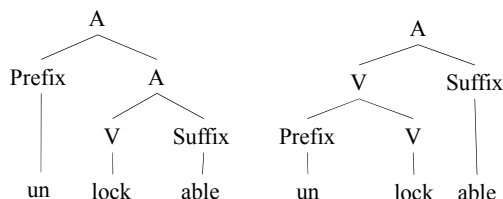
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Lexical Gaps

- Lexical gaps (or accidental gaps) are well-formed words and conform to morphological rules, but do not exist in the language. The actual words in the language constitute only a subset of the possible words.
- Some of the gaps have no meaning attached to them while some others have not been used by native speakers even though they can be meaningful.

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Ambiguity



- If words were without an internal structure, this ambiguity could not be explained.

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