

**LG105**

Morphology

Class 9: Building Words

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# This week...

- Morphemes
- Derivation
- Inflection
- Compounding
- Allomorphy
- Morphological processes

# Morphemes

- *dogs, builder* are words with internal structure.
- A morpheme is the smallest unit of a language that carries information about meaning and function.
- **dog** and **build** consist of a single morpheme each.
- **dogs** and **builder** consist of two morphemes each.

# Free vs. Bound morphemes

- A morpheme that can be a word by itself is **free**.
- A morpheme that must be attached to another element is **bound**.
- We can build new words from old words by combining morphemes.

# Creating new words from old

print (Verb):

print er                      Noun

re print                      Verb

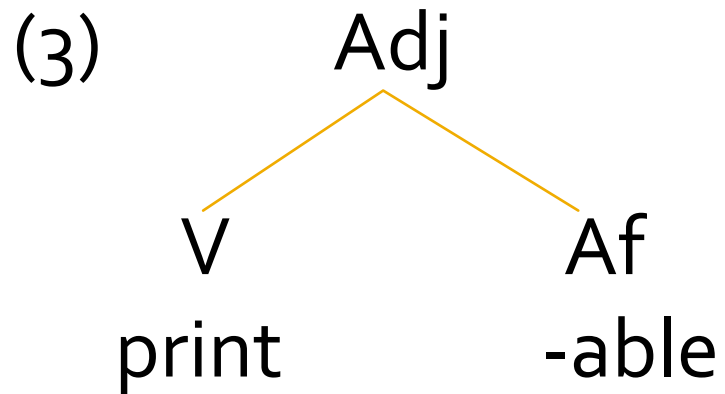
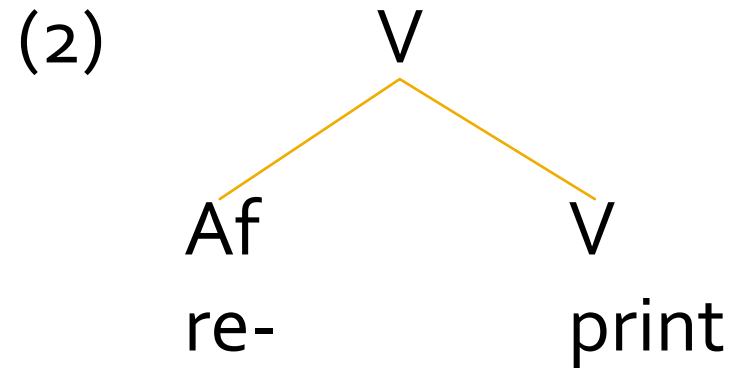
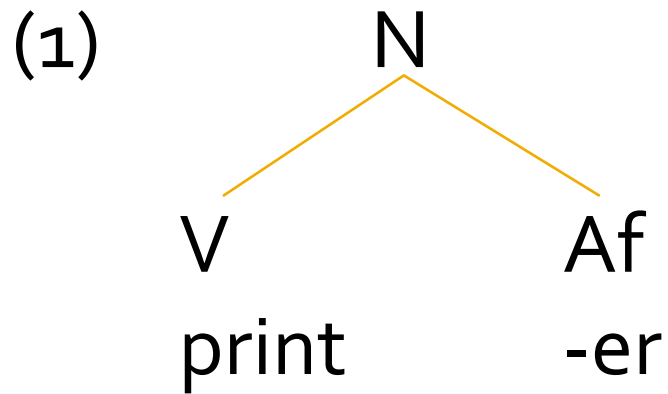
print able                    Adjective

un print able                Adjective

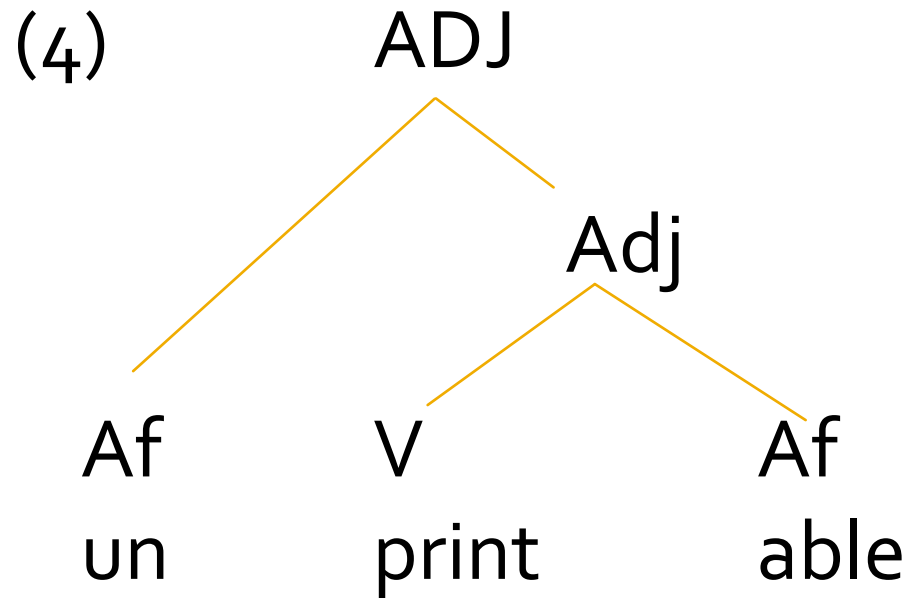
# Derivational morphology

- Creation of new words that produces new word classes is called derivational morphology.
- Complex words such as *un-print-able* usually consist of a root or base and affixes.
- The **root** carries the major component of the words meaning.
- The affix can either occur before (**prefix**) or after (**suffix**) the root.

# Derivation: tree diagrams



# Derivation: tree diagrams



# Derivation in English

	<b>Noun</b>	<b>Verb</b>	<b>Adjective</b>
<b>Noun</b>	<i>boy-hood</i>	<i>motor-ize</i>	<i>child-ish</i>
<b>Verb</b>	<i>print-er</i>	<i>re-write</i>	<i>read-able</i>
<b>Adjective</b>	<i>sad-ness</i>	<i>short-en</i>	<i>un-happy</i>

# Derivation

printer  $\approx$  'thing/person which prints'

PRINT      THING/PERSON WHICH *VERBS*

print

er

# Derivation

boyhood  $\approx$  'state of being a boy'

BOY

STATE OF BEING



boy



hood

# The lexeme concept

- In another kind of word formation process, the new word does not change its word class:

(5) cat            Noun  
      cats        Noun

- These are word forms of one lexeme CAT.

# Inflectional Morphology

- Inflection creates word forms from a lexeme.
- Inflection does not change the grammatical category of the word.
- Inflection is mainly formed by affixation.
- The form to which inflexional morphemes are attached is called a **stem**.

Nouns: singular/plural

Verbs: *tense (e.g. past vs. present participle)*

# Inflectional Morphology

	PRINT	SING	TAKE
base form	print	sing	take
3sg	prints	sings	takes
present participle	printing	singing	taking
past tense	printed	sang	took
past participle	printed	sung	taken

# Examples

They print/sing/take

She prints/sings/takes

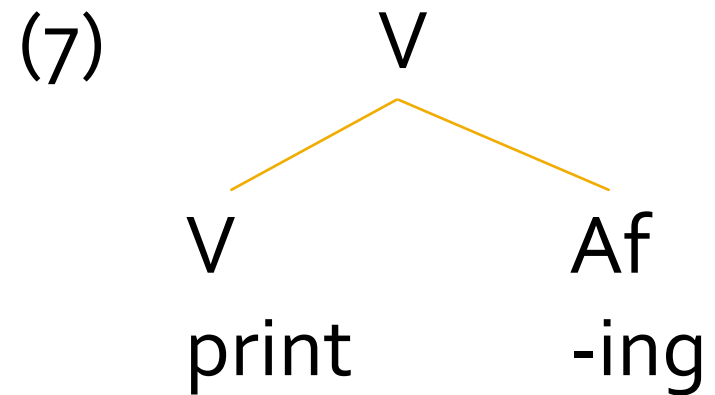
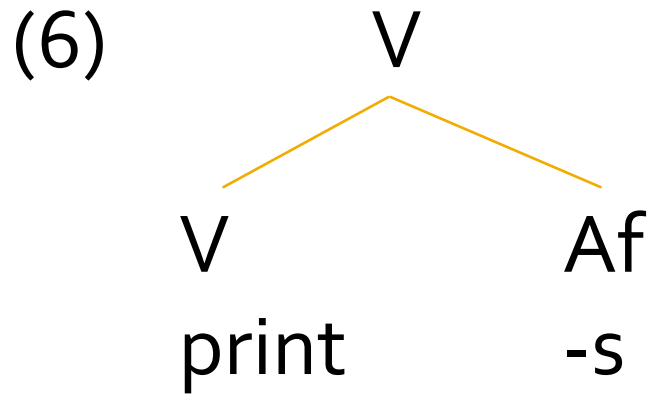
He is printing/singing/taking

We printed/sang/took

Harriet has printed/sung/taken

It was printed/sung/taken (by Harriet)

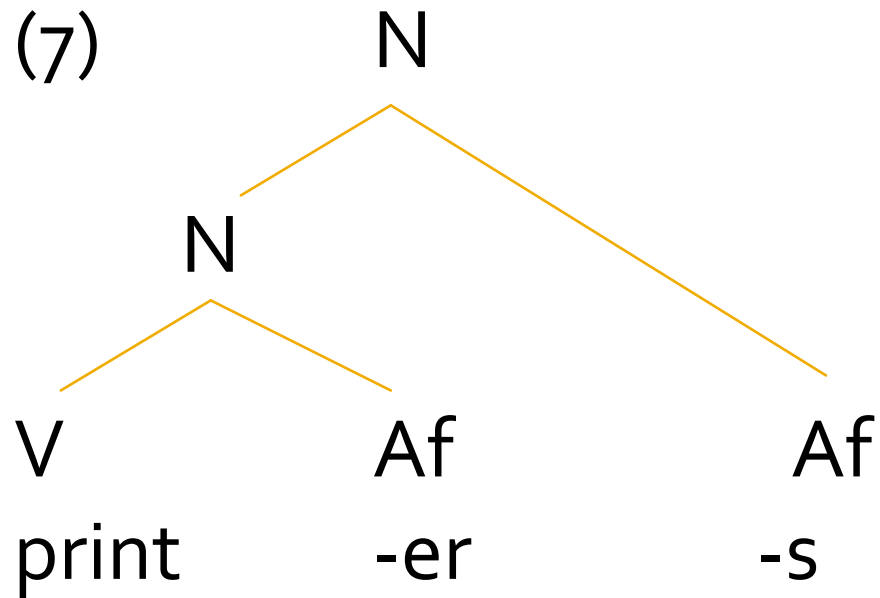
# Inflection: tree diagrams



# Derivation and Inflection

- Inflection occurs after derivation because it does not change the category of the word.
- print-er-s vs. \*print-s-er

# Derivation and Inflection



# Compounding

- Compounding is a way of combining lexical categories to produce new words that are usually nouns, verbs or adjectives.
- E.g. *Greenhouse, spoon-feed, nationwide*.
- The morpheme that determines the category of the compound is the **head**.

# Compounding

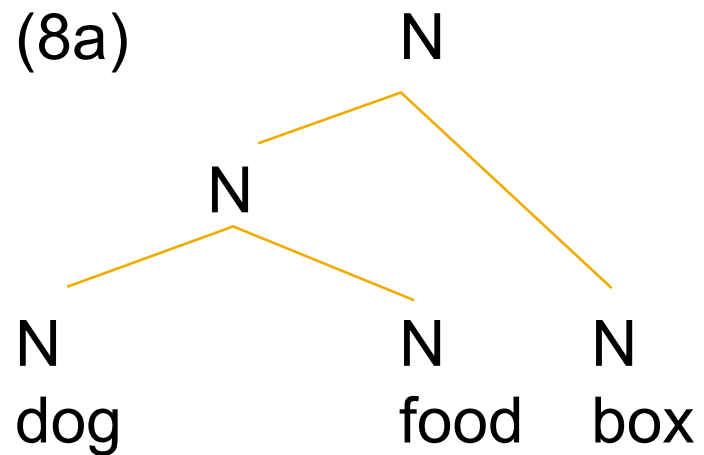
- Most Adj-N compounds have more prominent stress on the first component.
- *greenhouse* ~ *green house*
- *blackboard* ~ *black board*
- *wet suit* ~ *wet suit*

# Compounding

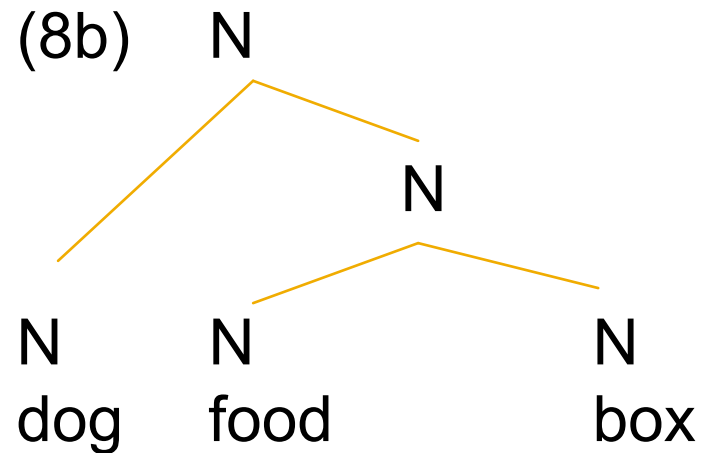
- Compounding illustrates an important aspect of language: **Recursion**.
- film society
- film society committee
- film society committee chairman
- film society committee chairman election
- film society committee chairman election report
- film society committee chairman election report writer

# Compounding: ambiguity

(8) dog food box



$[_N[_N[_N \text{dog}] [_N \text{food}]][_N \text{box}]]$



$[_N[_N \text{dog}][_N[_N \text{food}][_N \text{box}]]]$

# Allomorphy

- Sometimes morphemes undergo regular changes as seen with allophones in phonology.
- Is the plural pronounced the same in these words?

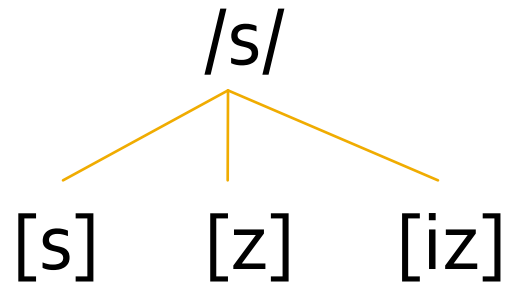
cats                    [s]

dogs                    [z]

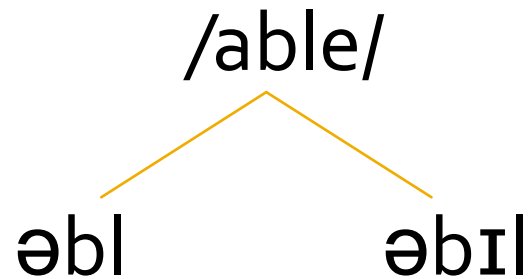
horses                [ɪz]

# Allomorphy

- These are allomorphs of the same morpheme



- Just like in *incapable* vs. *incapability*



# Other morphological processes

- **Ablaut (vowel change):**

man      men  
sing     sang  
break    broke

- **Suppletion:**

go        went

- **Consonant changes**

knife            knives  
bath (baθ)      bathe            (beɪð)

# Other morphological processes

## ■ Stress shift

V		N
permít	⇒	pérmit
contrást	⇒	cóntrast
recórd	⇒	récord
transpórt	⇒	tránsport

# Other morphological processes

## ■ Conversion (no operation)

paper (N)    ⇒    to paper the ceiling    V

dry (Adj)    ⇒    to dry the dishes    V

walk (V)    ⇒    (go for) a walk    N

green (Adj)    ⇒    (support/eat) the greens    N

# Other morphological processes

- **Cliticization**
- Clitics are bound morphemes that need a host in order to be realised.
- In English these involve:
  - Reduced auxiliary verbs: *it's; could've; she'll*
  - possessive marker: *John's father*
  - reduced forms of pronouns, prepositions etc.:  
[gɪvɪm̩hænd] for 'Give him a hand'

# Summary

- We have investigated three main types of word-formation processes; derivation, inflection and compounding.
- The morpheme is the smallest unit in word building.
- Word formation may also involve; allomorphy, ablaut & consonant changes, stress shift, suppletion, conversion and cliticization.

# For next week...

- Practice drawing trees of complex morphological words
- Read chapter 10 of Radford et al (p180-191)