Morphology: Basic Notions

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LING 350: The Structure of Words

1 February 2024

Last time...

- We introduced morphology
- Talked briefly about the issues surrounding how we identify a word
- Introduced the notion of the **lexeme** and the **word form**.
- Introduced **inflection** (the morphological process that involves different word forms of a given lexeme) and **word formation** (the morphological processes that create new lexemes).

These are four different word forms of the single lexeme, WALK

Remember, lexemes are written in SMALL CAPS.

WALK

walk   walking   walked   walks
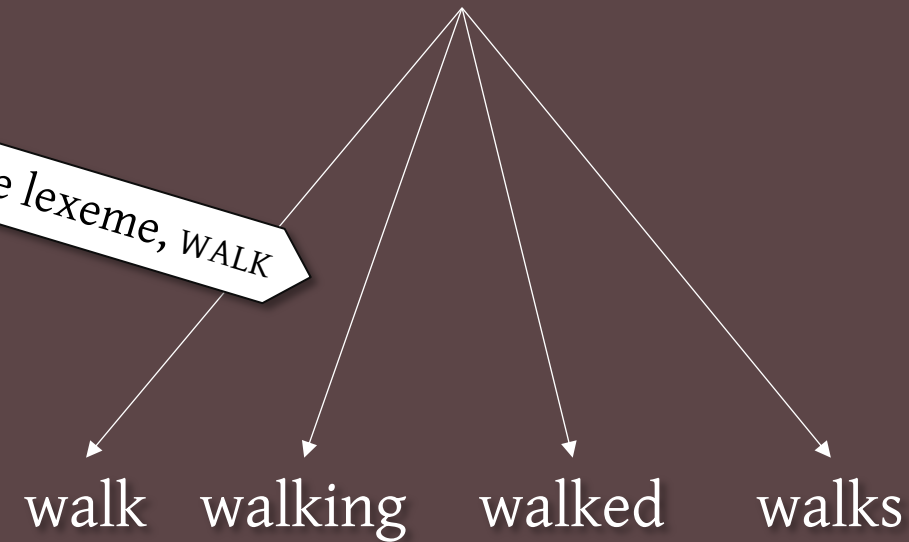
The above four word forms illustrate an inflectional pattern that is common among English verbs.

Constituency

- What is a morphological constituent?

[words] may have an internal constituent structure. For instance, *walking* can be divided into the constituents *walk* and *-ing*. (p.4)

tax-ation, tax-able, tax-abil-ity (p.5)

- A morphological constituent has a **form** and a **meaning**.
- The meaning might be lexical, or it might simply be inflectional.
- A constituent's form might be as short as one phoneme…
- or as long as several syllables.
- Every part of a word is part of a morphological constituent.

-s as in *elephants*

elephant as in *elephants*

Inflection and Word-Formation

- **Inflection** does not create new lexemes. It creates new **word forms** of a given lexeme. Each word form carries grammatical information, but doesn't change the meaning of the lexeme.

- LONG: long<u>er</u>, long<u>est</u>

- WALK: walk<u>s</u>, walk<u>ed</u>, walk<u>ing</u>

- SHAKE: shak<u>en</u>

- DOG: dog<u>s</u>, dog<u>'s</u>

> Inflectional affixes are constituents, along with the stems they combine with.

Inflection and Word-Formation

- **Word-formation**, on the other hand, *does* create new lexemes. There are two basic types of word-formation: derivation, which involves the addition of affixes, and compounding.

- LONG: LONGHOUSE   ELONGATE
- WALK: WALKWAY   WALKABLE
- SHAKE: MILKSHAKE   SHAKER
- DOG: DOGFOOD   DOGGISH

Derivational affixes are constituents, along with the stems they combine with.

compounds

derived words

Both components of compounds are constituents

Why should we consider *walkable* a case of derivation rather than compounding although *able* is a lexeme of English?

Both its pronunciation and its meaning as an affix are different from *able* as a word. Some affixes evolved from originally being lexemes.

Discussion!

Try to determine the morphological constituency of the following English words:

unhappiness   disconnecting   blue-eyed

contrastive   contradiction   connectivity

We'll work on writing out their morphological structure in bracket notation in a little bit.

Discussion! (p.25 q.4)

Try to determine the morphological constituency (if any) of the following English words:

negotiable   electrometer   performance   elongation

colleague   evaporate   eternity   happy   habitual

cordial   correlate   euphemism   music   theology

To what extent do these words raise problems for morphological analysis?

Systematicity

buy	buyer
eat	eater
paint	painter
sell	seller
send	sender

Are *ear* and *hear* systematically related?

Are *man* and *woman* systematically related?

How about *house*, *mouse*, and *louse*?

- Each of these columns shows a paradigm – a "set of linguistic elements with a common property" (p.8).

- How are these two paradigms related to one another?

- There is a "systematic form-meaning correspondence" between the words in these two columns.

- What is a **simplex word**?

- What's a **complex word**?

- Which column shows **simplex words**? Which **shows complex words**?

- -er is a morphological constituent: it has a form, *-er*, and a meaning, 'one who Vs,' where V stands for the verb.

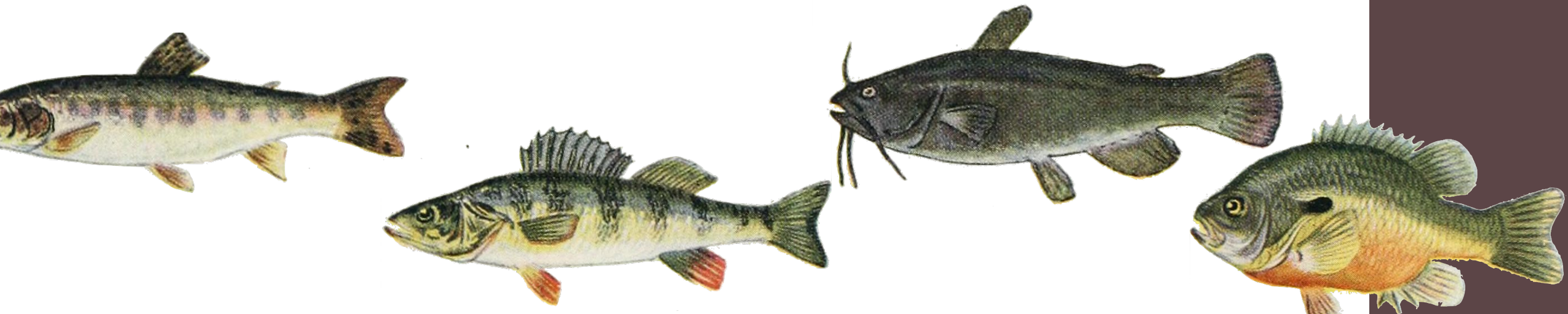# Systematicity

Some Dutch Fish Names

bokking 'bloater'

haring 'herring'

paling 'eel'

wijting 'whiting'

- Would we say that *-ing* is a morphological constituent?

[W]e do not consider this *-ing* a morphological constituent with the meaning "fish" because there are no corresponding Dutch words *bok*, *haar*, *paal*, and *wijt* with a meaning related to the corresponding words... (p.8)

Subcategorization

- Morphemes are morphological constituents.
- Morphemes may be free or bound.
- Morphemes may belong to a number of categories and subcategories.

What's a free morpheme?

What's a bound morpheme?

What's an affix?

elephants

walked

paling ['eel']

giraffe

painter

walk

walking

sender

fish tank

Subcategorization

$$[[eat]_V \ [er]_{N\text{-aff}}]_N$$

- What is this?

  A syntagmatic analysis of the internal structure of *eater*. This uses an approach called "morpheme-based morphology."

- Constituents go in brackets.

- Subcategorization info follows the bracketed constituent.

- $[eat]_V$ is a verb

- $[er]_{N\text{-aff}}$ is an affix that makes a noun

- $[[eat]_V \ [er]_{N\text{-aff}}]_N$ is a noun

Subcategorization practice

• What would the bracket notation look like for…

farm
farmer
quick
quicken
chicken

Concatenation

- **Concatenation** is where morphemes are brought together in a linear way, like beads on a string.

home less ness

friend ly er

im possible ity

un believe able

> Note that spelling can often obscure or misdirect with regards to morphemic structure. As always in linguistics, speech is primary — not writing.

- Be mindful of the order in which morphemes combine. It's not always left-to-right, particularly where prefixes are involved.

Subcategorization

$[[[tranquill]_A[ize]_{Vaff}]_V [er]_{Naff}]_N$

- What's going on here?
- Two ways of showing how "tranquillizer" is formed morphologically.
- Two-step process: first, you derive *tranquillize*, then *tranquillizer*.
- Another form of analysis is **paradigmatic**. It holds that affixes don't exist outside of the word-formation rules, and analyzes *tranquilizer* as [[[tranquill]_A ize]_V er]_N
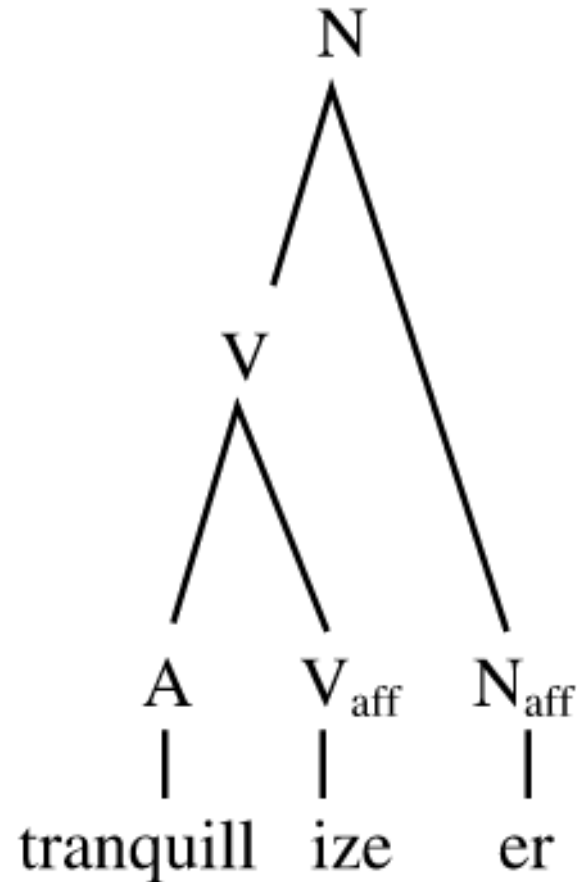
Discussion! (p.25 q.3)

Give the morphological structure (labelled bracketing) of the following English words. You can use either a paradigmatic or syntagmatic labeling system.

- unhappiness

- contrastive

- disconnecting

- contradiction

- blue-eyed

- connectivity

For 8 February…

- Read the rest of chapter 1 (pp.13–24). No need to do the questions at the end of the chapter — some of those will be covered in class.