



Morphology

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DEFINITION OF MORPHOLOGY

1

The study of the internal structure of words.
It examines how words can be **broken down** into meaningful units.

unhappy



un + happy



classes



class + es

DEFINITION OF MORPHOLOGY

2

The study of word formation. It examines how new words **are created** in language.

[**un**] + **happy**
= **unhappy**

agree + [**ment**]
= **agreement**

Morpheme

The **smallest**
unit in a
language
that has
meaning.



Morphemes



free
morphemes

bound
morphemes



**They can
stand alone.**

Content words

love big

table cat

house run

Function words

for the

at and

to

they



They cannot
stand alone.

Affixes

prefixes

pre-

re-

dis-

un-

suffixes

-ly

-al

-ize

-ment

Bound roots

- receive
- perceive
- deceive

Words	Morphemes		
dislike	• dis -	• like	
worked		• work	• - <u>ed</u>
loves		• love	• - s
blackboard		• black	• board
disagreement	• dis -	• agree	• - <u>ment</u>



The morpheme cannot be broken down into smaller unit.

Morphemes

Bound

morphemes

affixes

roots

-ceive

derivational

inflectional

prefixes

suffixes

suffixes

(re, un, dis)

**(ful, ly,
ment)**

**(s, ed, er,
ing, est)**

Free

morphemes

content

function

words

words

● **dog**

● **the**

● **cute**

● **on**

● **two**

● **she**

● **walk**

● **but**

Derivational affixes



Prefixes

Adjective base	Derived Adjective
definite	in definite
formal	in formal
edible	in edible
sensitive	in sensitive
adequate	in adequate



Suffixes

Verb base	Derived noun
act	action
elect	election
discuss	discussion
complete	completion
appreciate	appreciation

Inflectional affixes

Suffixes



Function	Affix	Base	Example
• 3rd per.sing.	-s	verb	cooks
• Progressive	-ing	verb	cooking
• Past tense	-ed	verb	cooked
• Past participle	-ed, -en	verb	has cooked
• Plural	-s	noun	pens, bags
• Possessive	-'s	noun	Joe's pen
• Comparative	-er	adjective, adverb	slower, faster
• Superlative	-est	adjective, adverb	slowest, fastest

Allomorph

- ▶ The same morpheme can be realized in different ways.

Words	Morphemes (plural)	Allomorphs
cats	cat + s	/s/
dogs	dog + s	/z/
glasses	glass + <u>es</u>	/ <u>iz</u> /

▶ /s/, /z/, /iz/ are allomorphs of the same morpheme s (plural)

Words	Morphemes (possessive)	Allomorphs
cat's	cat + 's	/s/
dog's	dog + 's	/z/
church's	church + 's	/ <u>iz</u> /

▶ /s/, /z/, /iz/ are allomorphs of the same morpheme 's (possessive)

Words	Morphemes (add -s to verb)	Allomorphs
talks	talk + s	/s/
goes	go + <u>es</u>	/z/
watches	watch + <u>es</u>	/ <u>iz</u> /

► /s/, /z/, /iz/ are allomorphs of the same morpheme add -s to verb

Words	Morphemes (add - <u>ed</u> to verb)	Allomorphs
happened	happen + <u>ed</u>	/d/
worked	work + <u>ed</u>	/t/
needed	need + <u>ed</u>	/id/

► /d/, /t/, /id/ are allomorphs of the same morpheme add -ed to verb

Analyzing the internal structure of words

Reelection

Re + elect + ion



Linear order

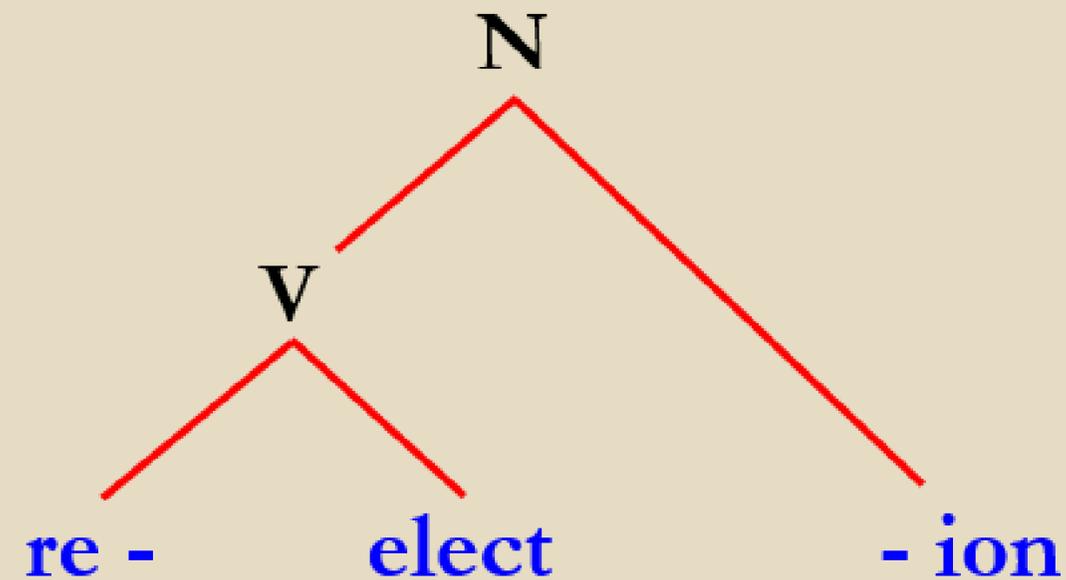
prefix

root

suffix

Analyzing the internal structure of words

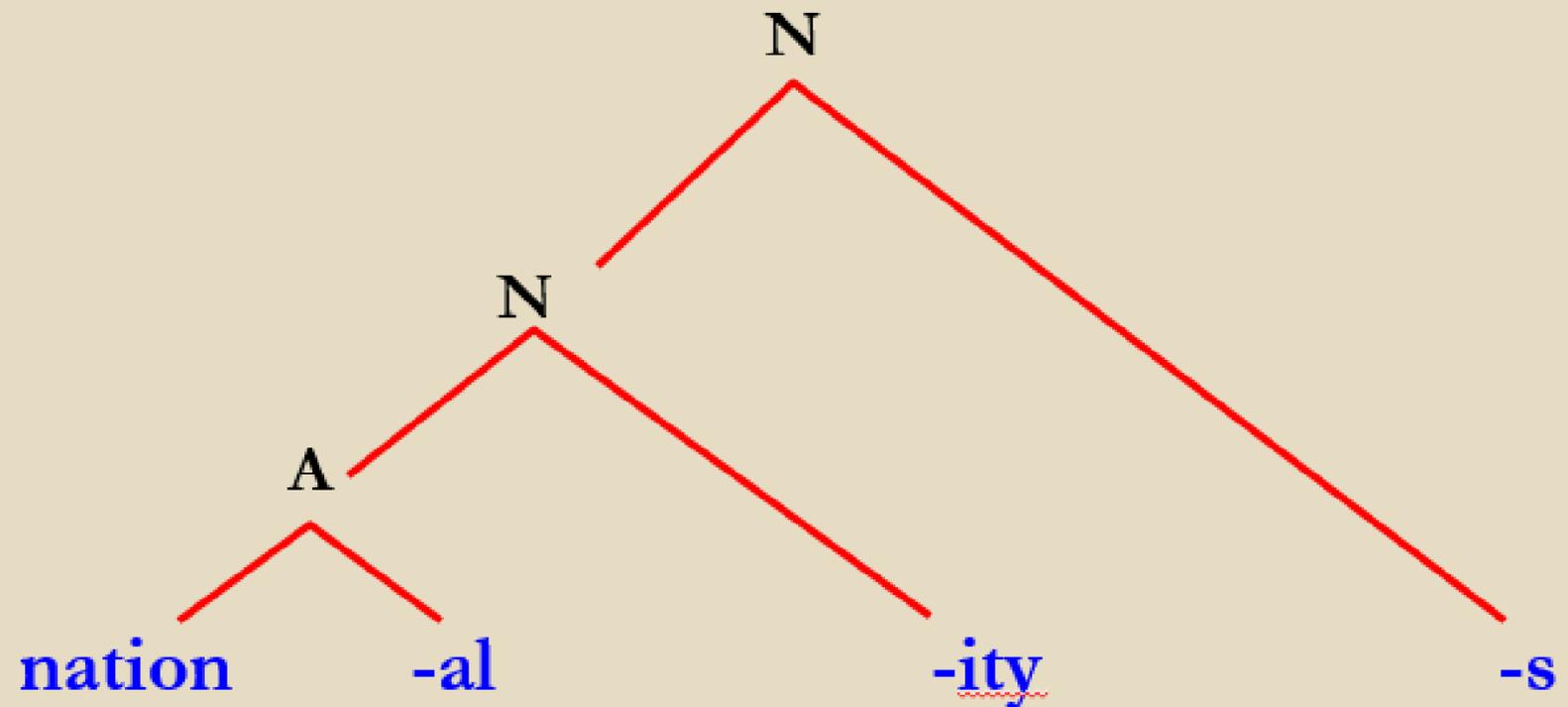
Hierarchical
order



Step 1 : **re -** + elect (v) = **reelect (v)**

Step 2 : reelect (v) + **- ion** = **reelection (n)**

Hierarchical order



Step 1 : nation (n) + - al = **national (a)**

Step 2 : national (a) + - ity = **nationality (n)**

Step 3 : nationality (n) + - s = **nationalities (n)**



Thank you

