



جامعة الملك فيصل  
عمادة التعلم الإلكتروني والتعليم عن بعد  
كلية الآداب

اسم المقرر

علم النحو والصرف

**MORPHOLOGY and SYNTAX**

المسوى السادس – اللغة الإنجليزية

أستاذ المقرر

د/ عبدالرحيم جماري

aaljamari@kfu.edu.sa

إعداد: ريم العمادي

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# Introductory Lecture

## CONTENT OF THE LECTURE

- Course description
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- Course objectives
- Course evaluation
- References
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## 1. BRIEF COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the basic principles of English morphology and syntax from the perspective of generative linguistics.

It covers the different processes of word formation including affixation and compounding.

The syntax part introduces basic constituent structure as well as some simple syntactic processes illustrating the working of the transformational component in the grammar.

## 2. COURSE CONTENT

### **MORPHOLOGY**

- Words and word structure
- Derivation
- Compounding
- Inflection
- Other morphological phenomena
- Morphophonemics

### **SYNTAX**

- Categories and structure
- Complement options
- Move
- Universal Grammar and parametric variation

## 3. COURSE OBJECTIVES

**By the end of the course, students should be able to:**

- Identify the internal structure of English words.
- Distinguish different types of morphemes: derivation vs. Inflection.
- Identify the constituent parts of a sentence: words, phrases and clauses.
- Provide a syntactic representation of constituent types on the basis of X'-theory.
- Provide a syntactic derivation for some common sentence types.

## 4. Course Evaluation

Total mark is out of 100

1. 30% of the total mark is assigned to:

- ✓ Your participation in the Blackboard Forum. (10%)
- ✓ Your main three assignments. (10%)
- ✓ Your attendance to live and recorded lectures. (10%)

2. 70% of the total mark is assigned to the FINAL TEST

The final test consists of a set of multiple choice questions with five options to choose from.

The exact date and time of the final test will be announced later.

## 5. References

William O'Grady, John Archibald, and Francis Katamba. *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction*. Pearson Education Limited (2011).

**The content of the course is to be found in Chapters 4 and 5.**

[http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Linguistics-William-OGrady/dp/0312555288/ref=sr\\_1\\_fkmr0\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1423734206&sr=1-1-fkmr0&keywords=contemporary+linguistics+an+introduction+candle+edition](http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Linguistics-William-OGrady/dp/0312555288/ref=sr_1_fkmr0_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1423734206&sr=1-1-fkmr0&keywords=contemporary+linguistics+an+introduction+candle+edition)

## Lecture 1

### INTRODUCTION

Words are important: basic units of language, unlike phonemes and syllables, **words** carry **meaning**. Unlike sentences, which are forgotten soon after we produce them, **words** are **stored** in a speaker's **mental dictionary** or **lexicon**. Words are the fundamental building blocks of language.

Native speakers of English know thousands of words such as *read, language, computer, on*, whose meaning and form cannot be predicted.

However, once they know the meaning of *phish* (obtain sensitive information via email fraudulently), they can recognize and construct words such as: *phished, phisher, phishing*, and *unphishable*.

Thus, **MORPHOLOGY** is that component of the grammar which studies the **structure of words** to account for the knowledge that native speakers have about their own language.

Native speakers know how to segment a string of sounds into words when they write, for instance, so then: What is a word? How can it be defined?

Linguists define the **word** as the **smallest free form** in a language. This means that it can occur alone and in different positions in the sentence as well:

(1) What creatures do children find most fascinating?

**Dinosaurs**

(2) Paleontologists study **dinosaurs**

**Dinosaurs** are studied by paleontologists

\* **Dinosaur (-s)** is extinct. (-s is **NOT** a free form)

### MORPHEMES

Like syllables and sentences, words have an internal structure which consists of one or more **morphemes**.

**A Morpheme is the smallest unit of language that carries meaning**. For example: *Builder* is made up of *build* (construct) and *-er* (one who builds). *Houses* is made up of *house* (dwelling) and *-s* (more than one).

One-morpheme word is said to be **simple** and two or more morpheme words are said to be **complex**.

*Ex: hunt, hunt-er, hunt-er-s.*

### FREE and BOUND MORPHEMES

A morpheme can be either **free**, when it can stand alone, or **bound**, when it must be attached to another one. *Ex: boy vs. -s*

A free morpheme in English can be bound in a different language. *Ex: head* and *\*fi* (in Athapaskan, an Amerindian language). In this language, this morpheme is bound, *sefi*, meaning *my head*.

Conversely, a bound morpheme in English can be free in other languages. *Ex, play-ed vs thaان leew* (eat + past in Thai)

### ALLOMORPHS

**Allomorphs are the variant forms of a morpheme.**

**Example 1:** the indefinite article in English has two variants: *a* when preceding a word that begins with a consonant (*a book*) and *an* when preceding a word that begins with a vowel (*an orange*).

**Example 2:** The plural morpheme *-s* has 3 pronunciations: [s] as in *cats*, [z] as in *dogs*, and [əz] as in *judges*.

Do not confuse spelling changes with allomorphic variation. *Ex* : *e* in *create* and *ride* is dropped in *creat-ive* and *rid-ing*. On the other hand, there is allomorphy in *electric* / *electric-ity* and *impress* / *impression*, where the pronunciation changes but not the spelling. [k] → [s] and [s] → [sh]

## ANALYSING WORD STRUCTURE

To identify the internal structure of words, we need not only to **identify** the component morphemes but also to **classify** them according to their contribution to the **meaning** and **function** of the word.

**Roots and affixes:** Complex words consist of a **root** morpheme and one or more **affixes**.

**The root** is the core of the word that carries the major meaning component. Typically, roots are **lexical** categories such as N, V, A, or P. **N=Noun, V=Verb, A=Adjective, P=Pronoun**

**Affixes** are NOT **lexical** and are ALWAYS **bound** morphemes. For ex, **-er** in **teach-er** (V+er → N) **Af=Affix**

Below are examples of the internal structure of some words:

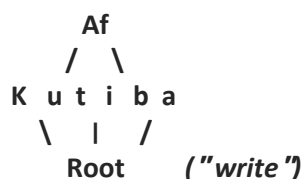


**AFFIX TYPES:** There are 3 types :

1. A **prefix** is attached to the front of the base. Ex. **De-activate, re-play, il-legal**
2. A **suffix** is attached to the end of a base. Ex. **Faith-ful, govern-ment, hunt-er**
3. An **infix**, which less common, occurs **within** another morpheme. For example, in Tagalog, (the language spoken in the Philippines), we find: **bili** → **buy**, the past form of which is **b-in-ili** → **bought**.

**BEWARE!** **-ish** in **boy-ish-ness** is NOT an infix.

Arabic, and other Semitic languages, has interesting illustrations of infixing. Roots in Arabic are **consonantal**. Various combinations of vowels are added, including in between consonants to mark grammatical contrasts such as: **Kataba** → **wrote**, **kutiba** → **has been written**, **aktub** → **I write/am writing**. One way of representing these facts is by assigning vowels to a different **tier**, level :



## PROBLEM CASES

English morphology is said to be **word-based**. Consider the following: **re-do, treat-ment**. Most complex words are like these two.

Not all languages are like English, Spanish and Japanese; verbal roots are **ALWAYS** bound and cannot therefore stand alone. Arabic is also like that.

English also has a number of bound roots such as **unkempt** (*unkempt hair*) which does not break into **un+kempt**.

Other words such as **inept** were **borrowed** into English from Latin **ineptus** (*unsuited*). Today, this word cannot be broken up into \***in-ept**.

Another class of borrowed words from Latin via French is represented by the following: **receive, conceive, perceive, permit, submit** and **commit**. Each potential division of the word does not have a meaning of its own. **Re-** → 'again' but **-ceive** → ? Consequently, these words cannot be segmented.

## Lecture 2 Derivation

### INTRODUCTION

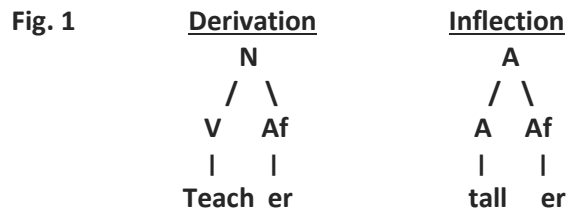
#### Some English derivational affixes

- Complex derivations
- Constraints on derivation

#### Two classes of derivational affixes compounding:

- Properties of compounds
- Endocentric and exocentric compounds

**Derivation** is an affixation process that forms a word with a meaning and/or category distinct from that of its base. Ex. *Sell+er* → *sell-er*, *V+er* → *N*, NOT to be confused with *tall+er* → *tall-er*, *A+er* → *A*. Here *er* is **inflectional**.



Once formed, derived words become independent lexical items and receive their own entry in a speaker's **mental dictionary**. With time, words acquire new meanings. Ex. *Profession* means '*career*' rather than '*the act of professing*'.

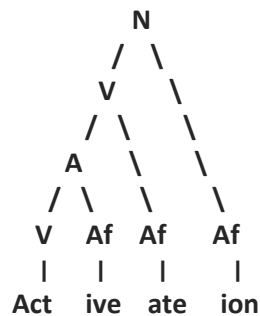
### SOME ENGLISH DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES

**Examples of derivational suffixes:** *fix-able*, *refus-al*, *claim-ant*, *teach-er*, *shoot-ing*, *impress-ive*, *treat-ment*, *king-dom*, *faith-ful*, *presidet-ial*, *arab-ian*, *optimist-ic*, *hospital-ise*, *brain-less*, *poison-ous*, *tall-ish*, *active-ate*, *black-en*, *stupid-ity*, *slow-ly*, *happi-ness*.

### COMPLEX DERIVATIONS

Some words require multiple levels of word structure as in Fig. 2 below:

**Fig.2: A multilayered internal structure**

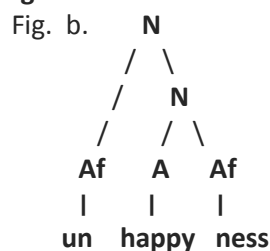
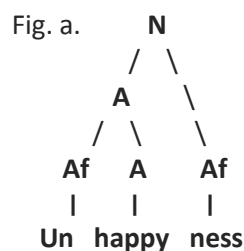


This word illustrates a **multilayered internal structure** with the attachment of an **affix** to an appropriate base.

### COMPETING ANALYSIS

In some cases, the internal structure of a word is **ambiguous** between two competing analyses.

Ex. *Unhappiness*



## CONSTRAINTS ON DERIVATION

Derivation is often subject to **special constraints** and **restrictions**.

For example, the suffix **-ant** can attach to bases of Latin origin such as *combat-ant*, *assist-ant*, but not those of English origin such as *\*help-ant*, *\*fight-ant*.

A derivational affix may attach only to a base with **particular phonological properties**.

For example, the **-en** combines with adjectives to create verbs.

Ex. *Whiten*, *soften*, *madden*, *quicken*, *liven*, but not *\*abstracten*, *\*bluen*, *\*greenen*, *\*angryen*, *\*slowen*.

This suffix can only combine with a monosyllabic base ending in an **obstruent** (stop, fricative or affricate).

## TWO CLASSES OF DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES

### Class 1:

They trigger changes in the consonant or vowel segment of the base and may affect stress placement.

Ex. **-ity** san-**ity** [ei] changes to [i], from sane to sanity.  
**-y** democrac-**y** [t] changes to [s] and stress shifts from 'democrat to de'mocracy  
**-ive** product-**ive** stress shifts from pr'oduct to pro'ductive.  
**-ise** public-**ise** shift from [k] to [s] from public to publicise .

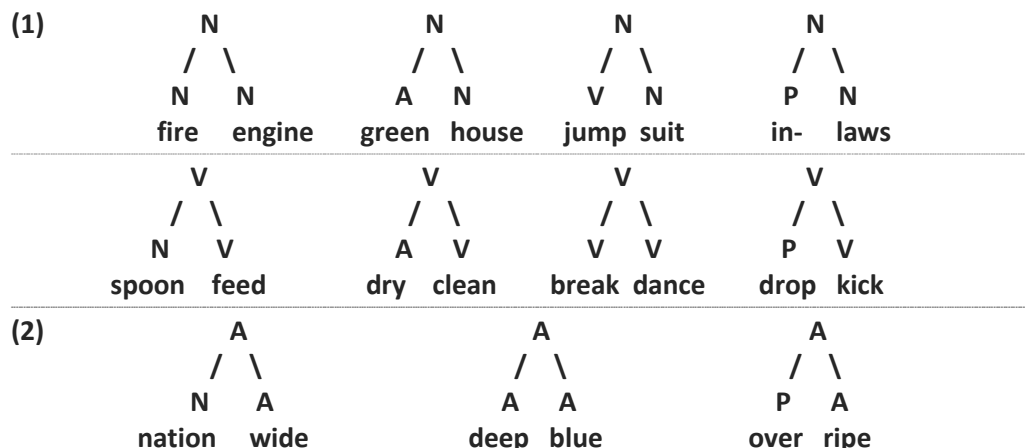
### Class 2:

- These tend to be phonologically **neutral**, not affecting the segmental makeup of the base.  
 Ex. *Prompt-ness*, *hair-less*, *hope-ful*, *quiet-ly*, *self-ish*, *defend-er*.
- These usually cannot intervene between the root and a class 1 affix.  
 Ex. *Divis-ive-ness*, *fear-less-ness*, but not *\*fear-less-ity*.

## COMPOUNDING

**Compounding** is a process of word formation in English which consists in **combining existing words to create complex words**.

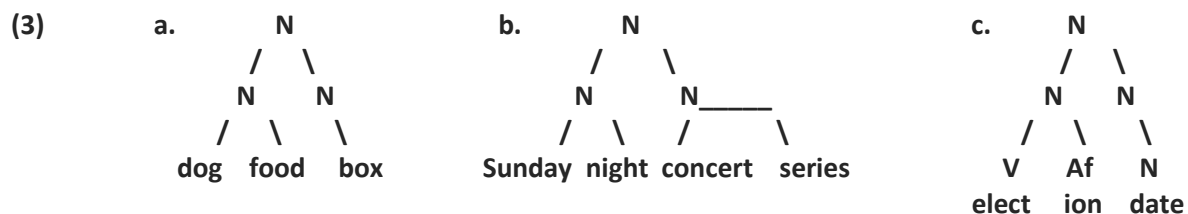
The resulting compound may be a Noun or a Verb or an Adjective. Ex. :



Note that **the rightmost word determines the category of the compound**. Thus, *Greenhouse* is a **noun** because it ends with the noun *house*. *Spoon-feed* is a **verb** because it ends with the verb *feed*.

The morpheme that determines the category of the entire word is called **HEAD**.

Compounds can combine with other words to create even larger compounds. Ex.



Notice how compounding interacts with derivation in (3c)

### PROPERTIES OF COMPOUNDS

English orthography is not consistent in representing compounds. They can be written as **single words**, or **separated by a hyphen**, or simply **separate words**.

As for pronunciation, some facts MUST be noted: **Adj-Noun compounds** are characterized by **more prominence/stress** of the first compound: *`greenhouse* → "a glass enclosed garden" vs. *green house* "a house painted green"; *`blackboard* → "a chalkboard" vs. *black board* (a board painted in black).

**Tense** and **plural** markers cannot affect the first element in the compound. Ex. \* the player *dropped kick* the ball vs the player *drop kicked* the ball.

### ENDOCENTRIC AND EXOCENTRIC COMPOUNDS

In most cases, a compound denotes a sub-type of the meaning/concept **denoted** by the **head/rightmost element in the compound**.

Ex.:

*steamboat* → a boat powered by steam.

*airfield* → a field where airplanes land.

*fire drill* → practice in case of fire.

Such compounds are said to be **endocentric**.

In a smaller number of cases, the meaning of the compound **does not follow from the meaning of its compounds**.

Ex.

*redhead* → a person with red hair.

*redneck* → a person, not a neck.

Such compounds are said to be **exocentric**.

**Exocentric** compounds allow the suffixation of **-s** to irregular plurals, the **endocentric** ones do NOT.

Ex.

#### Endocentric:

*wisdom teeth, policemen, oak leaves.*

#### Exocentric:

*bigfoots* (mythical creatures), *watchmans* (a type of portable TV).

## Lecture3 INFLECTION

### What is INFLECTION?

It is a change or modification in the form of a word **to mark grammatical**. For examples, languages contrast plural and singular nouns by the addition of a plural affix such as **-s** in English as in **book ~ book-s**. (The base form to which an inflectional affix is added is also called a **stem**.)

### INFLECTION IN ENGLISH

With only 8 inflectional affixes, English is not a highly inflected language.

#### English inflectional affixes:

- **Nouns: Plural -s** as in *books* ; **Possessive (genitive) -s** as in *John's book*.
- **Adjectives: Comparative -er** → the *smaller* one, **Superlative -est** → the *smallest* one.
- **Verbs: 3Person simg. Non-past -s** → He *reads* well. Prog. **-ing** → He is *working*.  
**past tense -ed** → He worked; **past participle -en/ed** → He has *eaten/worked*.

### INFLECTION VERSUS DERIVATION

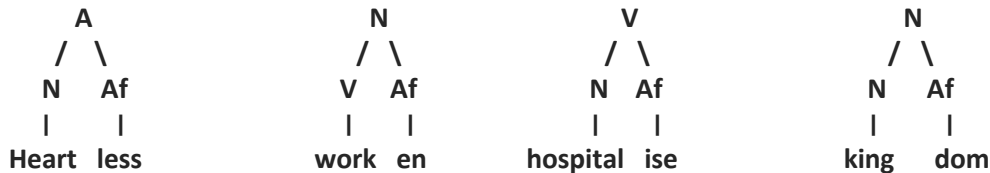
4 criteria are often used to distinguish between inflection and derivation affixes.

#### (1) Category change:

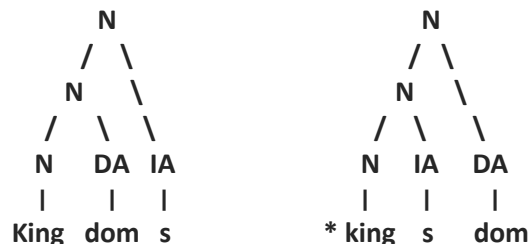
Inflection **does not change the grammatical category of the meaning** of its host.



Derivational affixes **do change the category and meaning** of their host.



- (1) **Order:** A derivational affix (DA) **must combine** with the base before an inflectional affix (IA); i.e., **Inflection applies to the output of derivation.**



#### (2) Productivity:

IAs have few exceptions, comparatively. DAs typically apply to restricted classes of bases. Ex. *modernize* vs *\*new-ise* ; *legal-ise* vs *\*lawful-ise* ; Confine **-ment**; align**-ment**; treat**-ment**; *\* arrest-ment*; *\* straighten-ment*, etc.



### (3) Semantic transparency :

IAs contribute transparent and consistent meaning to their host.

Ex. *books, trees, cats or walked, played, talked, etc.*

DAs do not contribute consistent meaning.

Often it is not possible to predict the word's meaning from its parts.

Ex. *Actor* is someone who *acts* but a *professor* is not so who *professes*. *Government* can mean *institution* as in *government's program* but it can also mean *act of governing* as in *government by the people*.

### OTHER INFLECTIONAL PHENOMENA

**CASE:** It is a change a word's form to mark change in its grammatical function ( subject, direct object, indirect object, and so on ). English does not mark case on noun, but it does on pronouns; ex, *he* vs *him*, *he met him* vs \* *him met he*.

Standard Arabic marks Case on nouns: (nominative, accusative, and genitive )

*Akala Omar-u t-tuffaahat-a fi l-maktab-i*

Ate Omar-nom apple-acc in the-office-gen

'Omar ate the apple in the office. '

**AGREEMENT:** Occurs when a word is inflected to match certain grammatical properties of another word (*t-taTabuq*). In English, it is limited to the third person singular of the simple present; ex, He work-s very hard.

### PROCESSES RELATED TO INFLECTION

#### Internal Change:

A process that substitutes a non-morphemic segment to mark a grammatical contrast.

Ex. *sink* ~ *sank* (ablaut); *goose* ~ *geese* (umlaut). The change explained historically is as follows:

a. Old English form : /go:s/

d. Loss of the plural suffix /gœ:s/

b. Old plural form: /go:s-i/

e. Other change /ge:s/ then /gi:s/

c. umlaut /gœ:s-i/

Note that internal change is NOT infixing. There is no base form {sg}, {sk}. Infixing and internal change show that morphology is not always concatenative, meaning that affixation does not always apply sequentially.

**Suppletion:** it occurs when a morpheme is replaced by another which is extremely different to mark a grammatical contrast. Ex. *Go* ~ *went* and *was* ~ *were*.

Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between suppletion and Internal Change. Ex. *Think* ~ *thought*, *seek* ~ *sought*. Often, it is treated as an extreme form of internal change or as partial suppletion.

**Reduplication:** it involves the repetition of the base form or some part of it.

Ex. In Turkish, *iji* → *well*, while *iji iji* → *very well* (full doubling of the base form).

In Tagalog, *takbo* → *run*, while *tatakbo* → *will run* (partial doubling of the base).

**Tone placement :** Tone is used in some languages to mark grammatical contrast. Ex, In Mini-Bili, a language spoken in the Congo, we find the following contrasts: *zí* → *ate*, while *zì* → *will eat*.

**Conversion:** Often considered to be a type of derivation, it involves a change in meaning and category. It is also called zero derivation. Ex., *the poor, the rich, the sublime*, ( Noun ~ Adjective), *up the price* ( preposition ~ verb ), *dirty* ( verb to Adj), *run* (verb ~ noun), *butter* ( noun ~ to verb).

Conversion in two syllable words is often marked by a shift in stress. Ex., *im`plant (N) ~ im`plant, im`port ~ im`port, pre`sent ~ pre`sent*.

**Clipping:** A process whereby a polysyllabic word is shortened by deleting one or more syllables. Ex., Names, Ron ~ Ronald, Liz ~ Elisabeth. In casual speech, *prof* ~ *professor*, *phys-ed* ~ *physical education*. Other forms are much more widely spread: *ad*, *lab*, *demo*, etc. Recently, we find internet-inspired creations such as *blog* (website log of events).

**Blends:** They are words that are formed by blending non-morphemic parts of two already existing words. Ex., *brunch* = *breakfast* + *lunch*, *smoke* = *smoke* + *smog*, *infomercial* = *information* + *commercial*, *ginormous* = *gigantic* + *enormous*, *bit* = *binary digit*, *modem* = *modulator* + *demodulator*, etc.

**Backformation:** Creates a new word by removing part of an existing word. Ex., *Resurrection* → *resurrect*, *donation* → *donate*, *enthusiasm* → *enthuse*, etc. Ex of new recent such creations are: *liaison* → *liaise*, *allegation* → *allegate*, *administration* → *administrare*, *aggression* → *aggress*.

**Acronyms:** They are formed by keeping the initial letters of some or all the words in a phrase and pronouncing them as ONE word. Ex., *UNICEF* → *United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund*, *NATO* → *North Atlantic Treaty Organisation*, etc.

**Word coinage:** Common for names of products. Ex., *Kodak*, *Teflon*.

## MORPHOPHONEMICS

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### Morphemes and their allomorphs

Is every morpheme pronounced the same in all contexts? The answer is **NO**. Many morphemes have two or more pronunciations, called **allomorphs**. The choice between them is determined by the **phonological context**.

#### **Examples 1 : The plural in English**

How is the plural morpheme in English formed?

**Answer**, by adding **-s** to the singular form. Consider: *cats*, *dogs*, *horses*. As is well known, English spelling does not reflect pronunciation.

**This suffix has three allomorphs:** [s] as in *cats*, *lamps*, [z] as in *dogs*, *days*, and [iz] or [əz] as in *horses* or *judges*. **The pronunciation is predictable on the basis of the phonological context :**

- **Sibilants** ( hissing sounds) such as *horse*, *rose*, *bush*, *church*, *judge*, call for [iz]
- Otherwise, when preceded by a **voiceless consonant**, [s] is used as in *cat*, *rock*, *cup*.
- Otherwise, when preceded by a **voiced consonant**, [z] is used as in *dogs*, *days*, *birds*.

**Example 2:** How is the past morpheme **-ed** realized phonologically? [t], [əd], and [id] or [əd]

Is Allomorphy a matter of phonological conditioning only?

Yes, as in the cases above, but **NO** for others.

Consider the word *lie*. It ends in a vowel, a voiced sound and therefore forms its plural *lies* with [z]. However, if we replace [z] with [s], we get an actual word *lice*, the plural of *louse*.

Grammar also accounts for allomorphy in English.

Consider *cliff* and *laugh*. Both form their plural with [s], *cliffs* and *laughs*, but *wife* and *loaf* do not, *\*wives*, *\*loafs* are ill-formed. Their plural is *wives* and *loaves*.

Similar words that change their voiceless consonants *f*, *s*, *th* to voiced counterparts *v*, *z*, *dh* are : *knife* ~ *knives*, *life* ~ *lives*, *path* ~ *paths*.

Notice that the change is restricted to the plural morpheme: "my *wife's car*" **does NOT** undergo any change.

## Lecture 4 MORPHOLOGY PRACTICE

***EXERCISE 1: Circle the correct answer in the following multiple choice questions:***

1. Morphology is the level of grammar concerned with the .....
  - a. Structure of words
  - b. Stricture of words
  - c. Status of words
  - d. Structure of worlds
2. The association between most words and their meanings is purely .....
  - a. Controversial
  - b. Conditional
  - c. Central
  - d. Conventional
3. When we derive one word from another, we .....
  - a. Change its class, for example, from Verb to Noun
  - b. Change its tense, for example, from Past to Present
  - c. Both of the above
  - d. None of the above
4. Roots are .....
  - a. NOT always free
  - b. Always free
  - c. Both of the above
  - d. None of the above
5. A compound is a word that contains .....
  - a. One prefix and one word
  - b. One suffix and one word
  - c. Two root morphemes and one word
  - d. Two free standing forms
6. .... is a morpheme that makes the most significant contribution to a word's meaning.
  - a. The phoneme
  - b. The derivational morpheme
  - c. The inflectional morpheme
  - d. The root
7. .... is some kind of resemblance between the sound of a word and what it denotes/means.
  - a. Idiom
  - b. Proverbs
  - c. Onomatopoeia
  - d. None of the above
8. Suppletion occurs when a word is represented by two or more ..... roots.
  - a. Different
  - b. Similar
  - c. Both a and b
  - d. None of the above
9. Choose the group of words that result from derivation
  - a. Cry, cries, cried, crying
  - b. Kind, unkind, kindness, kindly
  - c. Tooth, teeth
  - d. None of the above

**EXERCISE 2: Divide the following words into morphemes and morphs.**

Examples: (i) truth                      morphemes: {true} {th}  
(ii) barefoot                      morphemes: {bare} {foot}

(1)

- a. research      {re} {search}
- b. butterfly      {butter} {fly}
- c. holiday      {holi} {day}
- d. morpheme      {morph} {eme}
- e. phonology      {phono} {logy}

**EXERCISE 3: Some words in (2) contain suffixes. Identify the suffixes by circling them.**

(2)

- a. happiness
- b. freedom
- c. flowers
- e. brother
- e. blackboard

**EXERCISE 3: Some words in (3) contain prefixes. Identify the prefixes by circling them.**

(3)

- a. unable
- b. discourage
- c. establish
- d. receive
- e. strawberry

**EXERCISE 4: For each word below, indicate whether the word is morphologically simple (S) or complex (C), or includes an inflectional affix (IA), or includes a derivational affix (DA) by circling the relevant answer. S => simple, C => Complex, IA => infl. Affix, DA=> Deriv. Aff.**

(4)

- a. rider                      S      C      IA      DA
- b. colder                      S      C      IA      DA
- c. silver                      S      C      IA      DA
- d. lens                      S      C      IA      DA
- e. legs                      S      C      IA      DA

**EXERCISE 5: (i) Identify the root in the words below by underlining it; (ii) State the syntactic category it belongs to. Example: friendly: friend (Noun)**

(5)

- a. lamps      lamp (Noun)
- b. kindness      kind (Adjective)
- c. hinted      hint (Noun)
- d. players      pray (Verb)
- e. grandfathers      grandfather (Noun)