

12. Words & Meaning II

Introduction to Language (Ling 201)

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Spring 2026

Course Evaluations



You have 10 minutes to do this.

- 1 extra credit point for doing your evaluation and showing me proof you did it!
- Don't show me how you evaluated me – just show me that you submitted your evaluation.

Go to <https://csi.mce.cc>

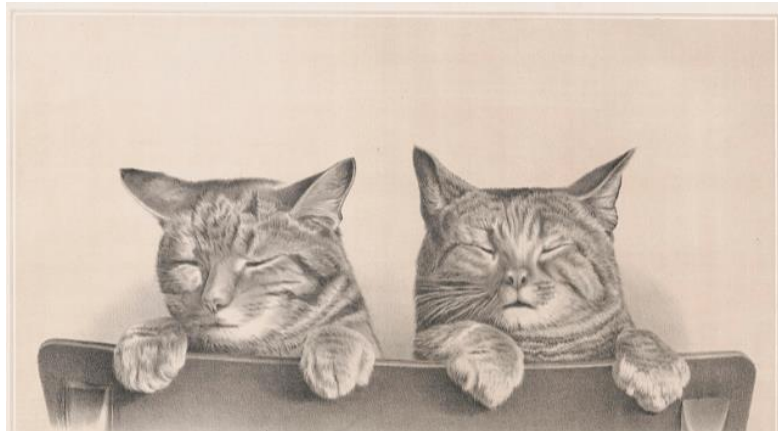
Log in with your CUNYfirst login credentials

(Enter your CUNY_Login_MFA authentication code once requested.)

- If you don't have wifi or data here, you can email me a screenshot later: joseph.pentangelo@csi.cuny.edu

What is morphology?

- The study of words and word-parts.
- These word-parts are called morphemes.
- A morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in a language.
- Each word contains at least one morpheme.



cat has one morpheme

cats has two morphemes:
cat and the plural *-s*

What is morphology?

- How many morphemes are in *category*?
- How about *catastrophe*?
- Not all “cat”s are *cats*.

- What’s another word with one morpheme?
- What’s another word with two morphemes?
- How many morphemes are there in:

dog dogs doghouse sit sitter dog sitter giraffe



Not Me:

category

catastrophe

cattle

catalogue

cater

scatter

What's in a word?

- Depending on a word's **lexical** category (“part of speech”: noun, verb, etc.), certain morphemes can be added to it.
- For example, many verbs can take *-er* “one who does something.”
sing-er, wash-er, drink-er, work-er, bake-(e)r
- Other lexical categories cannot take this suffix.
- Making a new word by adding morphemes to an existing word is called **derivation**.
- We should be able to identify the morphemes each word is made up of.



How many morphemes in *farmer*?

What are they?



How many morphemes in *bicycle*?

What are they?

What's in a word?

- **Affixes** are morphemes that get added to a root or word. (You probably know prefix and suffix – two types of affixes.)
- Most affixes are **derivational**. They alter the meaning and lexical category of a word, thus creating a new word.
farm is a verb meaning ‘to sow & harvest crops’ + -er = *farmer*, a noun meaning ‘one who sows & harvests crops’
- Some are **inflectional**. They don't create a new word, but change grammatical information about a word.
cat is a noun meaning ‘small housepet’ + -s = *cats*, the same noun but plural instead of singular

What's in a word?

- Morphemes can be **free** or **bound**.
- Free morphemes may appear on their own, as their own words.
- Bound morphemes must appear in connection with another morpheme.



farm

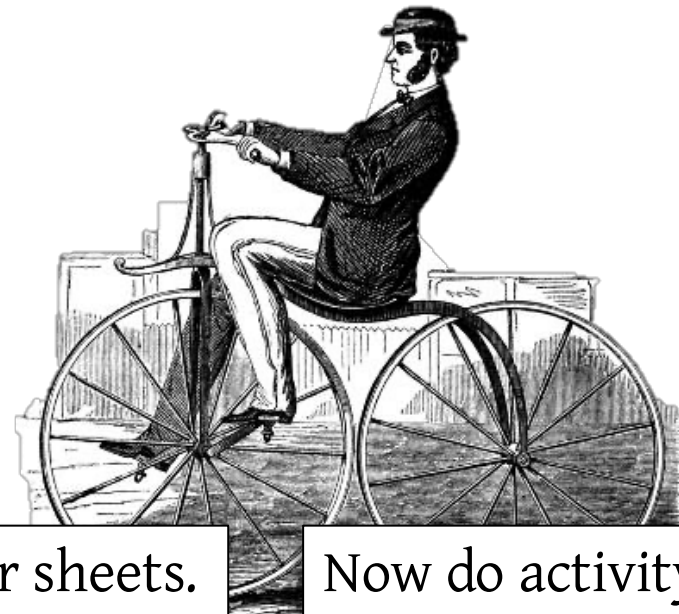
free or bound?

free!

-er

free or bound?

bound!



bi-

free or bound?

bound!

-cycle

free or bound?

bound!

In groups, do activity 1 on your sheets.

Now do activity 2.

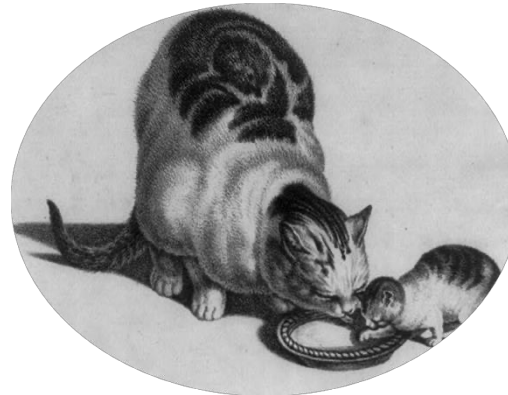
What is morphology?



Sing has one morpheme



moth has one morpheme



singer has two morphemes:
sing and the “one who does something” *-er*

How many morphemes does *mother* have?

One, even though it ends in *er* – it’s not “one who moths”

How many morphemes does *smaller* have?

Two

Is the *-er* in *smaller* the same as the *-er* in *singer*?

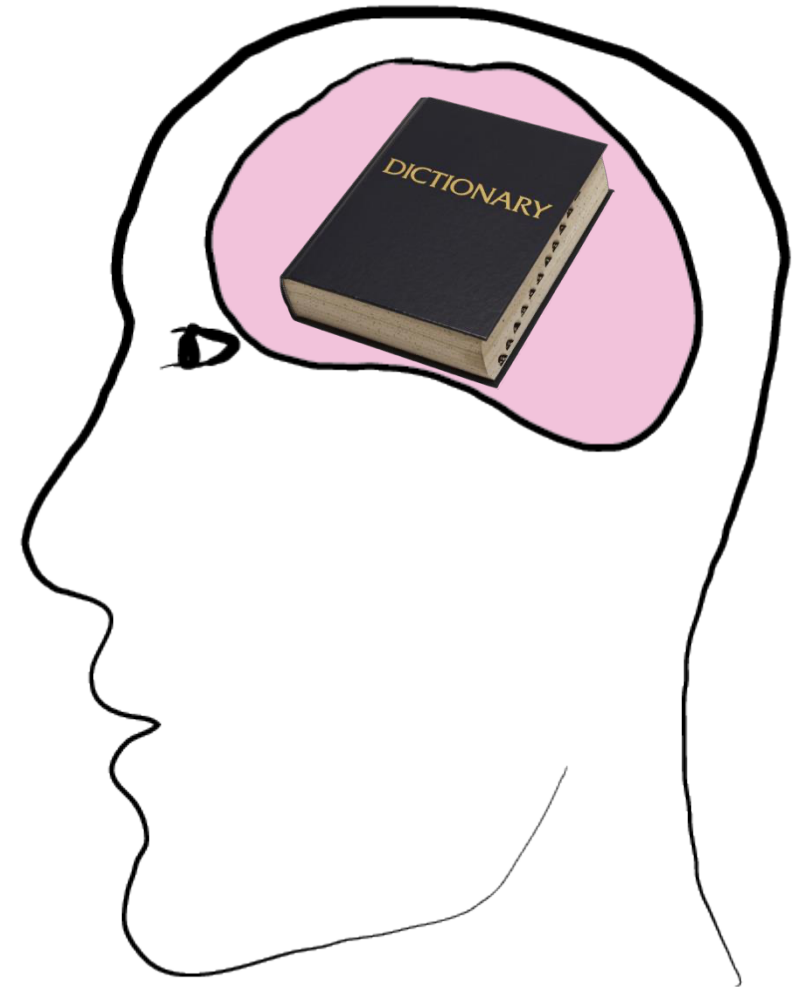
Do activity 3 on your sheets.

The Lexicon

- What is the *lexicon*?

[...] a sort of mental dictionary that language users—both speakers and hearers—have internalized as part and parcel of acquiring their particular language.
(p.155)

- What is stored in the lexicon?
- Words!
- Or, more specifically, *lexical entries*.



What's in a word?

- Words have **form**, **meaning**, and a **lexical category**.
- **Form**: pronunciation, spelling, sign.
- **Meaning**: definition.
- **Lexical category**: part of speech (noun, verb, etc.)



Form:

moth /mɑθ/ or /mɒθ/

Meaning:

nocturnal flying insect with powdery wings.

Lexical category:

Noun



Lexical Entry

- Form:

/kæt/

- Meaning:

Small quadrupedal mammal with whiskers and pointy ears that meows and purrs.

- Lexical category:

Noun



Lexical Entry

- Form:
/dag/ or /dɒg/
- Meaning:
Small to medium mammal
that barks and growls.
- Lexical category:
Noun

What kinds of words are there?

Every word belongs to a **lexical category**.

- Nouns ‘apple’ ‘aardvark’ ‘liberty’
- Verbs ‘run’ ‘play’ ‘consider’
- Adjectives ‘blue’ ‘octagonal’ ‘unbelievable’
- Adverbs ‘quickly’ ‘fast’ ‘yesterday’
- Prepositions ‘for’ ‘under’ ‘from’
- Determiners ‘the’ ‘a’ ‘his’
- Pronouns ‘she’ ‘him’ ‘it’
- Conjunctions ‘and’ ‘but’ ‘because’

What kinds of words are there?

Every word belongs to a **lexical category**.

- **Nouns**
 - **Verbs**
 - **Adjectives**
 - Adverbs
 - Prepositions
 - Determiners
 - Pronouns
 - Conjunctions
- We'll be dealing with these three.
- 'apple' 'cardinal' 'liberty'
'blue' 'octagonal' 'unbelievable'
'quickly' 'fast' 'yesterday'
'for' 'under' 'from'
'the' 'a' 'his'
'she' 'him' 'it'
'and' 'but' 'because'

What kinds of words are there?

- Some words are monomorphemic. They contain a single morpheme.
- Some words are polymorphemic. They have two or more morphemes. Of these words, some have **free** roots.

un- + **speak** + -able

‘unable to be spoken’

farm + -er

‘one who farms’

- Some have **bound** roots. A bound root cannot appear as its own word.

psych- + -ology

‘study of the mind’

mono- + -**graph**

‘book on a single subject’

- We should be able to do this kind of morphological breakdown alongside our lexical entries.



Form: anteater /æntitəɪ/

Meaning: animal that eats ants

Lexical category: noun

Morphemes:

three: *ant* + *eat* + *-er* 'one who does the verb'



Form: raccoon /ɹækʊn/

Meaning: nocturnal mammal with a mask

Lexical category: noun

Morphemes: one: *raccoon*



Form: musicians /mjuzɪʃɪnz/

Meaning: people who play music

Lexical category: noun

Morphemes:

three: *music* + *-ian* 'one who does something'
+ *-s* 'plural'



Form: drummer /dʌmɹə/

Meaning: one who plays a drum or drums

Lexical category: noun

Morphemes: two: *drum* + *-er* 'one who does the verb'



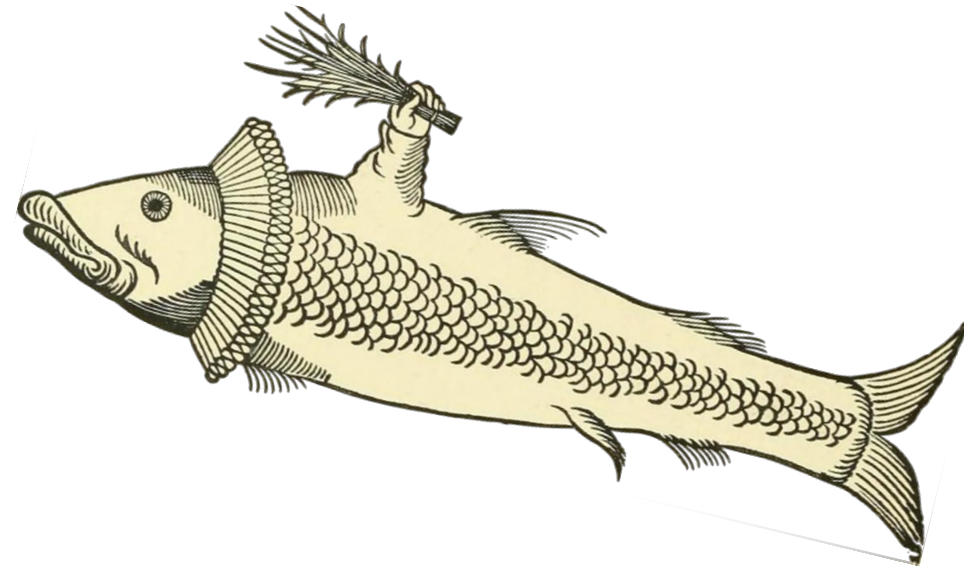
Form: athletic /æθlətɪk/

Meaning: skilled, like an athlete

Lexical category: adjective

Morphemes:

two: *athlete* + *-ic* 'like the noun'



Form: unbelievable /ʌnbəlivəbəl/

Meaning: impossible to take seriously

Lexical category: adjective

Morphemes:

three: *un-* 'not' + *believe* + *-able* 'able to be verbed'

Morphological Processes

- So far, we've talked a lot about affixation.
- Three other morphological processes to know are **compounding**, **alternation**, and **suppletion**.
- **Compounding** is when two free morphemes combine to form a new word with its own lexical entry.
- Compounds are not the same as phrases – they need to be learned as new words.







a sour milkman

Compounds and Phrases

- A compound's internal elements can't be modified with outside words.

*a very blackboard

a very black board

a very black blackboard

- In the phrase “a sour milkman,” what's sour? The milkman – not the milk.
- How about “a big jailbreak” – what's big? The jailbreak – not the jail.
- What's hot in “a hot bathroom”?
The bathroom – not the bath.



Alternation

- This is a process whereby inflection is marked through modification of a word's internal sounds rather than the addition of an affix.

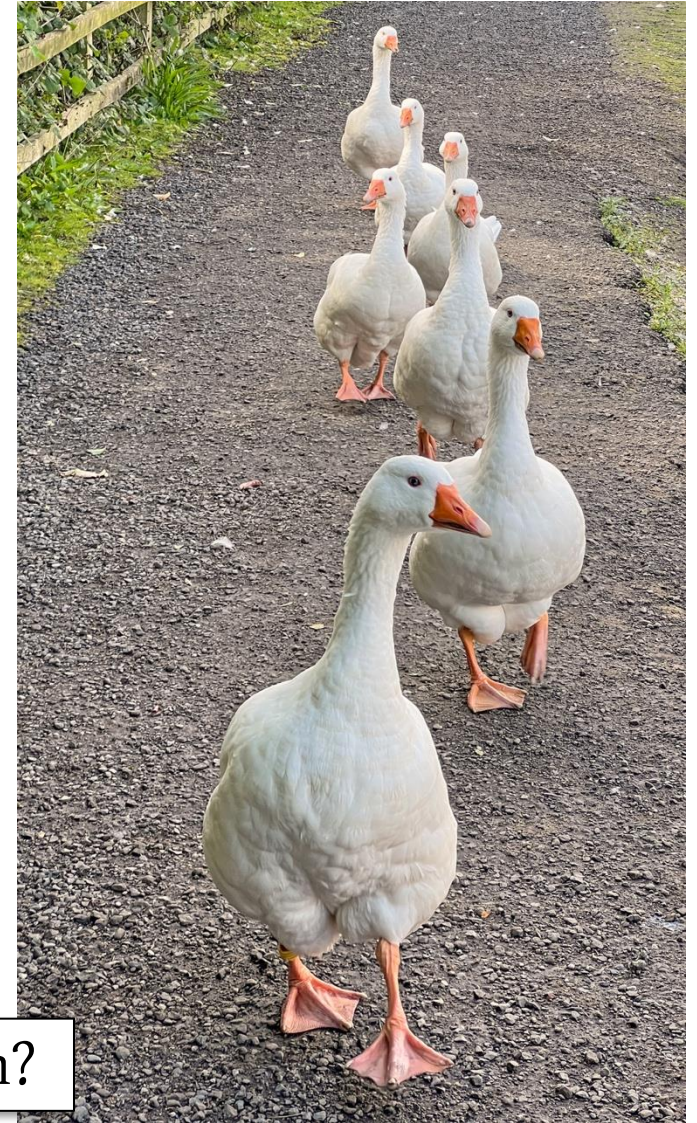
goose → geese

NOT goose → *gooses

What's another word that pluralized through alternation?

What's the past tense of *swim*?

What's another verb that is marked for past tense through alternation?



Suppletion

- Sometimes, within a given lexeme, a different root is used for one grammatical word than for the others. This is called **suppletion**.
- What's the past tense of GO?
- What's the difference between *went* and *gone*?

GO

go, goes, going, went, gone

Do activity 4 on your sheets.

For next time:

- Read pp.257–265 in *Language Files*. There will be a quiz on this reading at the start of class.
- The final review will take place next week. Choose your teams wisely!