

**Morphological structure of  
English words  
(MORPHEMES)  
Lecture # 2**

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# Morphological structure of English words (**MORPHEMES**)

## Language Units

- Morphemes
- Words
- Word groups
- Phraseological units

# MORPHEME

- **morphe** – “form”
- **-eme** “the smallest unit”

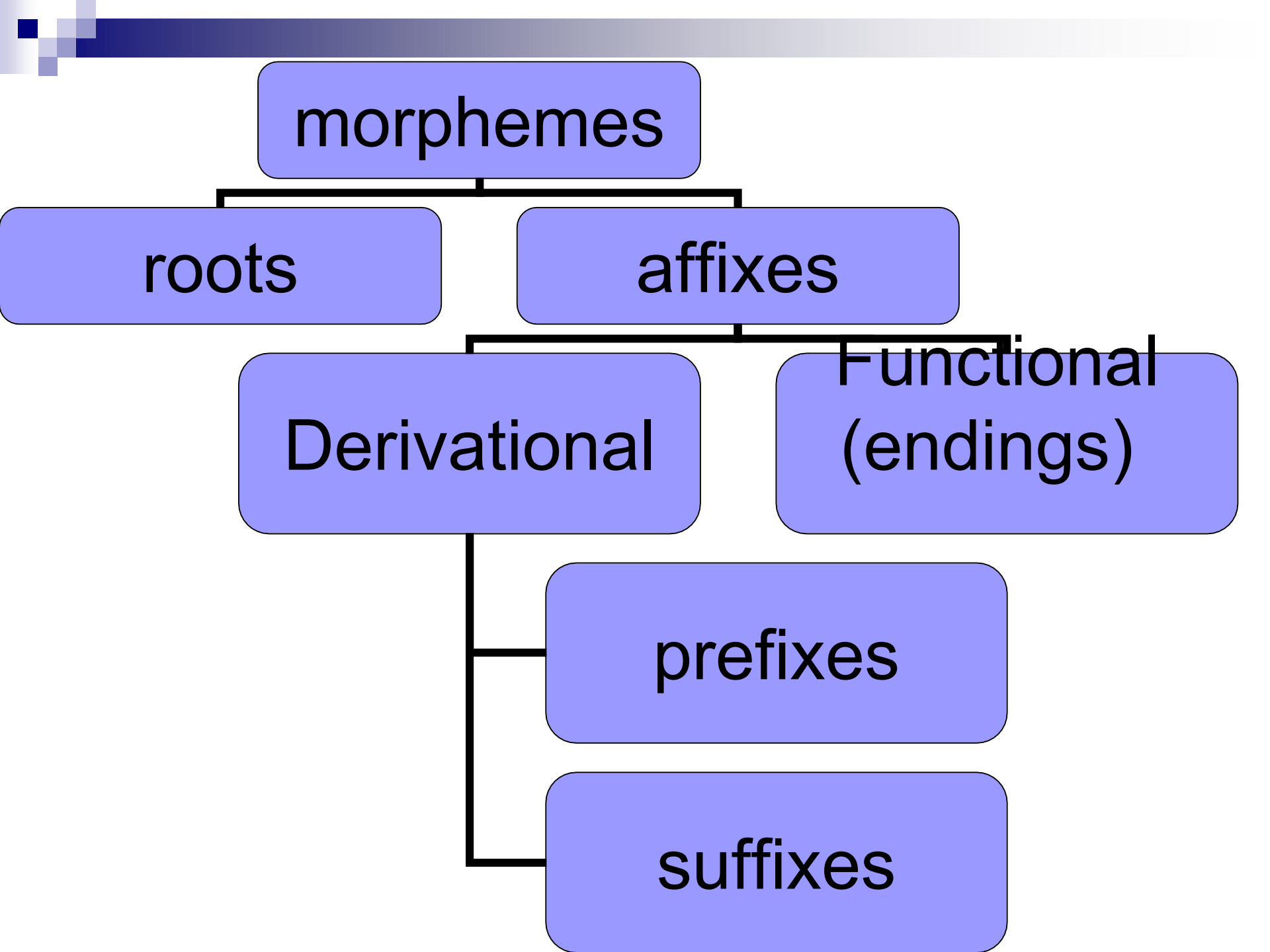
**Morphemes**- are the smallest meaningful unit of form

- *cannot be segmented into smaller units*
- *can occur in speech only as constituent parts of words*
- *are divided into lexical morphemes and grammatical morphemes*

# ALLOMORPHS

- Phonetic variants of one and the same morpheme

Ex:     *plea**se**-pleas**ing** [pl**iz**-]*  
          *plea**s**ant [ple**z**-]*



morphemes

roots

affixes

Derivational

Functional  
(endings)

prefixes

suffixes

# Lexical morphemes

- **Free**

*Roots*

- **Bound**

*Affixes*

## FREE morphemes

- coincide with a word-form
- may stand alone without changing its meaning
- can be only roots

Ex. *sport-* in *sportive*

## BOUND morphemes

- do not coincide with separate word-forms
- occur only as a constituent part of words
- are mostly derivational morphemes

Ex. *-ive* in *sportive*;

# Semantically

- Root morphemes (radicals)
- Non-root morphemes



## A ROOT morpheme (RADICALS)

- is a lexical center of a word
- has an individual lexical meaning common to a set of semantically related words (word-family)

**Ex** *to write, writer, writing*

- does not possess a part-of-speech meaning

**Ex** *cold water, to water flowers*

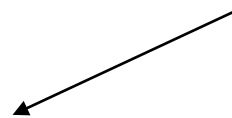
# Non-root morphemes (Derivational)

- Inflectional morphemes (inflections)

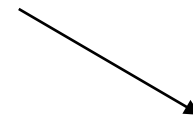


*endings*

- Affixational morpheme (*affixes*)



*prefixes*



*suffixes*



*functional*



*derivational*

# Inflectional morphemes (inflections)

- Inflectional morphemes (inflections)- endings- carry only grammatical meaning

Ex -s (plural of nouns)

- ed (Past Indefinite of regular verbs)

# A PREFIX

- a derivational morpheme
- stands before the root
- modifies the word meaning

Ex *hearten* – *dis**hearten*  
*safe* - *un**safe*

# SUFFIX

- Derivational morpheme
- Follows the root
- Forms a new derivative in a different part of speech or a different word class

Ex *heart-en*

*heart-y*

*heart-less*

# FUNCTIONAL AFFIXES

- build different forms of one and the same word (a word-form)

**Ex.** *boy- boyss, boy's – boys's;*

*take – takess;*

*hearty – heartier – (the) heartiest*

# DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES

- build new words

Ex. to teach - a teacherer

- have a part-of-speech meaning

Ex. *to change* – *changeable*

*to organize* – *organization*

- are dependent on the root they modify (bound)



# Structurally

- **Free morphemes**
- **Bound morphemes**
- **Semi-bound (semi-free) morphemes**



# Free morphemes

- coincide with the stem or a word form

Ex friendship

# Bound morphemes

- Occur only as a constituent of a word  
*(affixes are always bound morphemes)*

*Ex darkness*

*impolite*

*to dramatize*



# Compleatives (a combining form)

- is a bound form
- a distinguishing feature from an affix---borrowed from another language
- occur in compounds (that didn't exist in the original language and were formed in modern times)

Ex aerogram ( Greek ----- *aer* = *air*)  
claustrophobia (Greek ----- *claustrum*=*closed space* *phobia*=*fear*)  
Beatlesmania (*modern - Beatles* Greek ---- *mania* = *madness*)

# Splinters

- clipping the end or the beginning of a word to produce new words

|                 |   |                  |                         |
|-----------------|---|------------------|-------------------------|
| Mini-           | ← | <i>miniature</i> | ( <i>minibus</i> )      |
| Eco-            | ← | <i>ecology</i>   | ( <i>ecomenu</i> )      |
| - <i>burger</i> |   | <i>hamburger</i> | ( <i>cheeseburger</i> ) |
| - <i>wich</i>   |   | <i>sandwich</i>  | ( <i>turkeywich</i> )   |

# Types of meaning

- *Lexical*
- *Differential*
- *Part – of- speech*
- *Distributional*

# Lexical meaning

- Is individual for root-morphemes

Ex *Teach*    *teacher*    *teaching*

- Is generalizing for affixational morphemes

Ex *-en* (*the change of a quality*)

*deepen*    *deafened*

Some affixational morphemes with the same denotational meaning differ in conotation

womanly - womanlike - womanish  
*женственный*      *женский*      *бабий*



# Differential meaning

- To distinguish one word from others containing identical morphemes

Ex A bookshelf      a book+case  
                                 a book+stall

# Part-of-speech meaning

- In most cases affixational morphemes are indicative of the part of speech

Ex -ment (noun)  
- less (adjective)  
- ize (verb)

# Distributional meaning

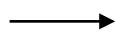
- The meaning of the order and arrangement of morphemes making up a word containing more than one morpheme

sing- (*to make musical sounds*)

Ex sing+er

-er (*the doer of the action*)

er+sing



**IMPOSSIBLE!**