

# **Morphology: Inflection vs Derivation**

Intro To Lx  
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# Derivation

- ♦ **Derivation** – the process of forming new words from already existing ones. It tends to affect the category of the word.

## Noun > Adjective

*Pain* <sub>[noun]</sub> >>> *painful* <sub>[adjective]</sub>

## Verb > Noun


*Create* <sub>[verb]</sub> >>> *creation* <sub>[noun]</sub>


## Noun > Verb

*Victim* <sub>[noun]</sub> >>> *victimize* <sub>[verb]</sub>

# Inflection

- ◆ Inflection tends to *affect only the grammatical function of a word.*
- ◆ It **never** changes the grammatical class of the word.

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- ◆ In English, inflection is suffixal:
    - the third person singular present **-s**,
    - the past tense (past participle) marker **-ed**
    - the continuous marker **-ing**
    - the past particle **-en**
    - the plural marker **-s**
    - the possessive marker **-‘s**
    - the comparative suffix **-er**
    - the superlative suffix **-est**.

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- ◆ **Criteria for distinguishing inflectional from derivational morphemes:**
    - **Change of category**
    - **Productivity**
    - **Consistency in meaning (semantic consistency)**
    - **Position**

# Change of category

- ◆ Derivational morphemes **can change** the grammatical category of the base:
  - free<sub>adj</sub>                      freedom<sub>N</sub>
  - hospital<sub>N</sub>                      to hospitalize<sub>V</sub>
  - to count<sub>V</sub>                      countable<sub>adj</sub>
  - quick<sub>adj</sub>                      quickly<sub>adv</sub>
- ◆ Examples where derivation **does not change** category are:
  - Produce<sub>V</sub>                      reproduce<sub>V</sub>
  - Friend<sub>N</sub>                      friendship<sub>N</sub>
  - Practical<sub>adj</sub>                      impractical<sub>adj</sub>

# Productivity

- ◆ **Inflectional morphemes tend to be more productive** than derivational morphemes.
- ◆ Productive derivational morphemes: **un-, mis, non-, -er, -less, -ation.**
- ◆ Less productive derivational morphemes are: en-(enslave), -hood, -dom, -fold (two-fold), a- (atypical).

# Semantic consistency

- ◆ Derivational morphemes are semantically less consistent than inflectional morphemes.
  1. *cars* ‘more than one car’
    - ◆ *tables* ‘more than one table’
    - ◆ *shoes* ‘more than one shoe’
  2. *computerize* ‘put into a computer’ ‘**put into X**’
    - ◆ *modernize* ‘make (more) modern’ ‘**make more X**’
    - ◆ *brotherize* ‘provide with a brother’ ‘**provide with X**’



# Position

- ◆ In English,
  - inflectional morphemes are always suffixes, whereas derivational morphemes are both suffixes and prefixes.
- ◆ Derivational suffixes:
  - -tion    action            -ness    laziness
- ◆ Derivational prefixes:
  - dis-        disbelieve                    re-        rearrange