

## PHONOLOGY

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### STRUCTURE

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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- ❖ To know about phonemes.
- ❖ To know about Sounds of English
- ❖ To know about Place and Manner of Articulation
- ❖ To know about description of Vowels and Consonants
- ❖ To know about phonemes and allophones
- ❖ To know about phonemes of British R.P. and Phonemes of GIE
- ❖ To know about word stress
- ❖ To know about weak forms of word or sentence
- ❖ To know about division and groups of sentence stress
- ❖ To know about intonation

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### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

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Whereas phonetics is the study of sounds and is concerned with the production, audition and perception of speech sounds (called phones), phonology describes the way sounds function within a given language and operates at the level of sound systems and abstract sound units. Knowing the sounds of a language is only a small part of phonology. This importance is shown by the fact that you can change one word into another by simply changing one sound. Consider the differences between the words *time* and *dime*. The words are identical except for the first sound. [t] and [d] can therefore distinguish words, and are called contrasting sounds. They are distinctive sounds in English, and all distinctive sounds are classified as phonemes. Phonology deals with sound structure in individual languages: the way distinctions in sound are used to differentiate linguistic items, and the ways in which the sound structure of the 'same' element varies as a function of the other sounds in its context. Phonology and phonetics both

involve sound in natural language, but differ in that phonetics deals with sounds from a language-independent point of view, while phonology studies the ways in which they are distributed and deployed within particular languages. Phonology originated with the insight that much observable phonetic detail is irrelevant or predictable within the system of a given language. This led to the positing of phonemes as minimal contrastive sound units in language, each composed (according to many writers) of a collection of distinctive features of contrast. Later work showed that a focus on surface contrast ultimately was misguided, and generative phonology replaced this with a conception of phonology as an aspect of speakers' knowledge of linguistic structure. Important research problems have involved the relation between phonological and phonetic form; the mutual interaction of phonological regularities; the relation of phonological structure to other components of grammar; and the appropriateness of rules vs. constraints as formulations of phonological regularities.

Phonology is typically defined as “the study of speech sounds of a language or languages, and the laws governing them,”<sup>1</sup> particularly the laws governing the composition and combination of speech sounds in language. This definition reflects a segmental bias in the historical development of the field and we can offer a more general definition: the study of the knowledge and representations of the sound system of human languages. From a neurobiological or cognitive neuroscience perspective, one can consider phonology as the study of the mental model for human speech. In this brief review, we restrict ourselves to spoken language, although analogous concerns hold for signed language (Brentari, 2011). Moreover, we limit the discussion to what we consider the most important aspects of phonology. These include: (i) the mappings between three systems of representation: action, perception, and long-term memory; (ii) the fundamental components of speech sounds (i.e., distinctive features); (iii) the laws of combinations of speech sounds, both adjacent and long-distance; and (iv) the chunking of speech sounds into larger units, especially syllables.

To begin, consider the word-form “glark.” Given this string of letters, native speakers of English will have an idea of how to pronounce it and what it would sound like if another person said it. They would have little idea, if any, of what it means.<sup>2</sup> The meaning of a word is arbitrary given its form, and it could mean something else entirely. Consequently, we can have very specific knowledge about a word’s form from a single presentation and can recognize and repeat such word-forms without much effort, all without knowing its meaning. Phonology studies the regularities of form (i.e., “rules without meaning”) (Staal, 1990) and the laws of combination for speech sounds and their sub-parts.

Any account needs to address the fact that speech is produced by one anatomical system (the mouth) and perceived with another (the auditory system). Our ability to repeat new word-forms, such as “glark,” is evidence that people effortlessly map between these two systems. Moreover, new word-forms can be stored in both short-term and long-term memory. As a result, phonology must confront the conversion of representations (i.e., data structures) between three broad neural systems: memory, action, and perception (the MAP loop; Poeppel & Idsardi, 2011). Each system has further

sub-systems that we ignore here. The basic proposal is that this is done through the use of phonological primitives (features), which are temporally organized (chunked, grouped, coordinated) on at least two fundamental time scales: the feature or segment and the syllable (Poeppel, 2003).

Try saying the word 'helps' out loud, paying close attention to the final sound of the word. After that, say the word 'crabs' out loud, again paying attention to the final sound. After getting over the embarrassment of talking to yourself (especially if you're in a crowded place!), what did you notice about the final sounds of these words?

If you said that they are different, you're absolutely correct! In 'helps', the final sound is pronounced like you would expect the letter 's' to sound. However, in 'crabs', the ending should have sounded more like a 'z'. The reasoning for this change can be found through the use of phonology, which is the study of speech sounds and how they change depending on certain situations or placements in syllables, words, and sentences.

You may have also heard of something called phonetics, which is the study of speech sounds as they stand in isolation. The key difference between phonetics and phonology is that phonology is more focused on how speech sounds change and behave when in a syllable, word, or sentence, as opposed to when spoken in isolation.

Phonology is the study of the patterns of sounds in a language and across languages. Put more formally, phonology is the study of the categorical organisation of speech sounds in languages; how speech sounds are organised in the mind and used to convey meaning. In this section of the website, we will describe the most common phonological processes and introduce the concepts of underlying representations for sounds versus what is actually produced, the surface form.

Phonology can be related to many linguistic disciplines, including psycholinguistics, cognitive science, sociolinguistics and language acquisition. Principles of phonology can also be applied to treatments of speech pathologies and innovations in technology. In terms of speech recognition, systems can be designed to translate spoken data into text. In this way, computers process the language like our brains do. The same processes that occur in the mind of a human when producing and receiving language occur in machines.

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## 1.2. PHONEMES/SOUNDS OF ENGLISH

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Phonemes mean sounds. Each IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) represents a phoneme. /k/ and /g/ are two phonemes that change the meaning of words like [curl] and [girl], right? Now, English phonemes fall into two broad categories: Consonants and vowels.

The bad news is that each consonant and vowel has its own IPA symbol. For example, there is phoneme [kʰ] in kill and [k] in skill. The latter is unaspirated, while the former is (aspirated). You go ahead and pronounce the phoneme /k/ in [skill] in the same way you would pronounce it in [Kill]. It sounds a bit strange doesn't it?

The other bad news is that we do not always pronounce those phonemes exactly in the same way. It depends on the surrounding phonemes, meaning, rhythm and speed etc. You must know how the phonemes blend and assimilate to speak English fluently and naturally. You need to understand what happens to phonemes during natural speech. If you do that, you will no longer need subtitles when you watch American or British movies (assuming you have a reasonably good vocabulary).

There is no way for anyone to cover every nuance in speech. I am very confident though the list and categories I have included are quite comprehensive. Based on my experience, there are 5 important categories or keys, as I call them, that you need to be aware of when learning English. The 5 categories are as follows:

- 1-Consonants
- 2-Vowels
- 3-The schwa sound
- 4-The [t] pronunciation
- 5-Connected speech

So basically, you're not just about to learn what phonemes are, you're about to learn how they deal and co-exist with each other.

Despite there being just 26 letters in the English language there are approximately 44 unique sounds, also known as phonemes. The 44 sounds help distinguish one word or meaning from another. Various letters and letter combinations known as graphemes are used to represent the sounds.

The 44 English sounds fall into two categories: consonants and vowels. Below is a list of the 44 phonemes along with their International Phonetic Alphabet symbols and some examples of their use. Note that there is no such thing as a definitive list of phonemes because of accents, dialects and the evolution of language itself. Therefore you may discover lists with more or less than these 44 sounds.

The English alphabet has 26 letters, made up of consonants and vowels. There are five vowels (a,e,i,,o,u) and the rest are all consonants. In English, pronunciation of words centres upon syllables: a syllable is a unit of pronunciation which has one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants, forming the whole or a part of a word. For example, there are two syllables in wa/ter and three in in/fer/no.

The sounds of spoken language are known as phonemes. Thus, /water/ has two syllables but four phonemes: w/a/t/er; /inferno/ has three syllables but seven phonemes: i/n/f/e/r/n/o. Do not be fooled into thinking that the each letter has a corresponding phoneme, as in these two examples. A word like /tough/ has two syllables: t/ough and two phonemes: t/ough.

In English, the written equivalent of sounds or phonemes are known as graphemes, and the English alphabet made up of the 26 letters is called the orthographic alphabet. In a language such as English, not all words have a phoneme/grapheme match. For example, the words bough, through and trough all end -ough but each is pronounced differently. English is thus classified as a semi-phonetic language: that is, sometimes graphemes correspond to phonemes, and sometimes they do not. The reason for this is

historical, going back to the 17th century and the ways in which written English was standardised. In order to study the sounds of English, linguists devised an alphabet which contains symbols to capture all possible sounds in English, called the International Phonetic Alphabet.

### The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is an alphabet of phonetic notation designed to capture all the different ways words in English can be pronounced, based on the Latin alphabet. It was designed by the International Phonetic Association (1999) as a standardised system for

Phoneme	IPA Symbol	Graphemes	Examples	Voiced?
1	b	b, bb	bug, bubble	Yes
2	d	d, dd, ed	dad, add, milled	Yes
3	f	f, ff, ph, gh, lf, ft	fat, cliff, phone, enough, half, often	No
4	g	g, gg, gh, gu, gue	gun, egg, ghost, guest, prologue	Yes
5	h	h, wh	hop, who	No
6	dʒ	j, ge, g, dge, di, gg	jam, wage, giraffe, edge, soldier, exaggerate	Yes
7	k	k, c, ch, cc, lk, qu, q(u), ck, x	kit, cat, chris, accent, folk, bouquet, queen, rack, box	No
8	l	l, ll	live, well	Yes
9	m	m, mm, mb, rm, lm	man, summer, comb, column, palm	Yes
10	n	n, nn, kn, gn, pn	net, funny, know, gnat, pneumatic	Yes
11	p	p, pp	pin, dippy	No
12	r	r, rr, wr, rh	run, carrot, wrench, rhyme	Yes
13	s	s, ss, c, sc, ps, st, ce, se	sit, less, ride, scene, psycho, listen, pace, course	No
14	t	t, tt, th, ed	tip, matter, thomas, ripped	No
15	v	v, f, ph, ve	vine, of, stephen, five	Yes
16	w	w, wh, u, o	wit, why, quick, choir	Yes
17	z	z, zz, s, ss, x, ze, se	zed, buzz, his, scissors, xylophone, craze	Yes
18	ʒ	s, si, z	treasure, division, azure	Yes
19	tʃ	ch, tch, tu, ti, te	chip, watch, future, action, righteous	No
20	ʃ	sh, ce, s, ci, si, ch, sci, fi	sham, ocean, sure, special, pension, machine, conscience, station	No
21	θ	th	thongs	No
22	ð	th	leather	Yes
23	ŋ	ng, n, ngue	ring, pink, tongue	Yes
24	j	y, i, j	you, onion, hallelujah	Yes

representing sounds of oral language. The IPA font most widely used is Doulos Sil, downloadable at: [http://scripts.sil.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site\\_id=nrsi&id=doulossil\\_download](http://scripts.sil.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site_id=nrsi&id=doulossil_download)

The IPA is particularly useful when it comes to describing individual sounds of spoken English. This is because in English there can be more way of pronouncing the same graphemes. For example, in English, there are two main ways of producing the <a> sound: bath or grass with a long or short . People from the south of England tend to pronounce the long and people from the North the short . In the West Midlands region of the UK, people tend to say Birmingham instead of Birmingham, missing out the and over articulating or over pronouncing the .

Phoneme	IPA Symbol	Graphemes	Examples
25	æ	a, ai, au	cat, plaid, laugh
26	e?	a, ai, igh, aigh, ay, er, et, ei, au, a_e, ea, ey	bay, maid, weigh, straight, pay, foyer, filet, eight, gauge, mate, break, they
27	e	e, ea, u, ie, ai, a, eo, ei, ae	end, bread, bury, friend, said, many, leopard, heifer, aesthetic
28	i:	e, ee, ea, y, ey, oe, ie, i, ei, eo, ay	be, bee, meat, lady, key, phoenix, grief, ski, deceive, people, quay
29	?	i, e, o, u, ui, y, ie	it, england, women, busy, guild, gym, sieve
30	a?	i, y, igh, ie, uy, ye, ai, is, eigh, i_e	spider, sky, night, pie, guy, sty, aisle, island, height, kite
31	?	a, ho, au, aw, ough	swan, honest, maul, slaw, fought
32	o?	o, oa, o_e, oe, ow, ough, eau, oo, ew	open, moat, bone, toe, sow, dough, beau, brooch, sew
33	?	o, oo, u,ou	wolf, look, bush, would
34	?	u, o, oo, ou	lug, monkey, blood, double
35	u:	o, oo, ew, ue, u_e, oe, ough, ui, oew, ou	who, loon, dew, blue, flute, shoe, through, fruit, manoeuvre, group
36	??	oi, oy, uoy	join, boy, buoy
37	a?	ow, ou, ough	now, shout, bough
38	?	a, er, i, ar, our, ur	about, ladder, pencil, dollar, honour, augur
39	e??	air, are, ear, ere, eir, ayer	chair, dare, pear, where, their, prayer
40	?:	a	arm
41	?:?	ir, er, ur, ear, or, our, yr	bird, term, burn, pearl, word, journey, myrtle
42	?:	aw, a, or, oor, ore, oar, our, augh, ar, ough, au	paw, ball, fork, poor, fore, board, four, taught, war, bought, sauce
43	???	ear, eer, ere, ier	ear, steer, here, tier
44	???	ure, our	cure, tourist

The standard form of spoken English or the reference accent for English is known as Received Pronunciation (RP), and it is this accent of English upon which IPA is based. RP is also called variously: BBC English, the Queen's English or 'Correct English' and is the spoken form to which many learners of English as an additional language aspire. However, the idea of RP is wide ranging and encompassing, and the IPA tries to capture how people actually speak. The English language, as a living language, is also



subject to change, including the ways in which words are pronounced. The BBC English we have today is very different from that of fifty years ago when presenters were required to take elocution lessons in RP. Today, the BBC has presenters from a wide range of backgrounds and no longer requires them to take elocution lessons. Similarly, the speech of the British Royal Family is different with each generation, so that the accent of the younger generation of the Royal Family is very different from that of older ones. Even so, IPA acts as a useful reference against which variation, including variation in RP, can be identified.

The tables below illustrates the equivalence of each grapheme (or letter) in the orthographic alphabet to a phoneme in IPA. Table 1 gives consonant grapheme-phoneme correspondence, and Table 2, vowel grapheme-phoneme correspondence.

### Standard Lexical Sets

It is useful to consider the pronunciation of vowel sounds in English through the idea of Standard Lexical Sets, introduced by the linguist John C. Wells in 1982. Wells defined one lexical set on the basis of the pronunciation of words in the reference accent Received Pronunciation (RP) for the English spoken in England. English has five vowels in its alphabet: a, e, i, o, u. However, there are many more ways of pronouncing the vowels than the five sounds given by a, e, i, o, u. /a/ can be pronounced as a 'short' sound as in the word <bad>, or pronunciations common in the North of England, such as <grass> and <bath>. It can also represent a 'long' sound, as in the word <laugh>, or <bath>, and <grass>. The sound represented by /o/ can also be spelt in different ways, such as in the word <off> or in <cough>.

### Minimal Pairs

Minimal pairs are words with different meanings that have the same sounds except for one. These contrasting sounds can either be consonants or vowels. The words pin and bin are minimal pairs because they are exactly the same except for the first sound. The words read and rude are also exactly the same except for the vowel sound. The examples from above, time and dime, are also minimal pairs. In effect, words with one contrastive sound are minimal pairs. Another feature of minimal pairs is overlapping distribution. Sounds that occur in phonetic environments that are identical are said to be in overlapping distribution. The sounds of [p] from pin and bin are in overlapping distribution because they occur in both words. The same is true for three and through. The sounds of [r] is in overlapping distribution because they occur in both words as well.

### Free Variation

Some words in English are pronounced differently by different speakers. This is most noticeable among American English speakers and British English speakers, as well as dialectal differences. This is evidenced in the ways neither, for example, can be pronounced. American English pronunciation tends to be [niðər], while British English pronunciation is [najðər].

### Phones and Allophones

Phonemes are not physical sounds. They are abstract mental representations of the phonological units of a language. Phones are considered

to be any single speech sound of which phonemes are made. Phonemes are a family of phones regarded as a single sound and represented by the same symbol. The different phones that are the realization of a phoneme are called allophones of that phoneme. The use of allophones is not random, but rule-governed. No one is taught these rules as they are learned subconsciously when the native language is acquired. To distinguish between a phoneme and its allophones, I will use slashes // to enclose phonemes and brackets [] to enclose allophones or phones. For example, [i] and [i̥] are allophones of the phoneme /i/; [ʔ] and [ʔ~] are allophones of the phoneme /ʔ/.

### **Complementary Distribution**

If two sounds are allophones of the same phoneme, they are said to be in complementary distribution. These sounds cannot occur in minimal pairs and they cannot change the meaning of otherwise identical words. If you interchange the sounds, you will only change the pronunciation of the words, not the meaning. Native speakers of the language regard the two allophones as variations of the same sound. To hear this, start to say the word cool (your lips should be pursed in anticipation of /u/ sound), but then say kill instead (with your lips still pursed.) Your pronunciation of kill should sound strange because cool and kill are pronounced with different allophones of the phoneme /k/.

Nasalized vowels are allophones of the same phoneme in English. Take, for example, the sounds in bad and ban. The phoneme is /æ/, however the allophones are [æ] and [æ̃]. Yet in French, nasalized vowels are not allophones of the same phonemes. They are separate phonemes. The words beau [bo] and bon [bõ] are not in complementary distribution because they are minimal pairs and have contrasting sounds. Changing the sounds changes the meaning of the words. This is just one example of differences between languages.

### **Phonological Rules**

Assimilation: sounds become more like neighboring sounds, allowing for ease of articulation or pronunciation; such as vowels are nasalized before nasal consonants

- Harmony: non-adjacent vowels become more similar by sharing a feature or set of features (common in Finnish)
- Gemination: sound becomes identical to an adjacent sound
- Regressive Assimilation: sound on left is the target, and sound on right is the trigger

Dissimilation: sounds become less like neighboring sounds; these rules are quite rare, but one example in English is [fʔfʔ] becoming [fʔft] (/f/ and /ʔ/ are both fricatives, but /t/ is a stop)

Epenthesis: insertion of a sound, e.g. Latin "homre" became Spanish "hombre"

- Prothesis: insertion of vowel sound at beginning of word
- Anaptyxis: vowel sound with predictable quality is inserted word-internally
- Paragoge: insertion of vowel sound at end of word
- Excrescence: consonant sound inserted between other consonants (also called stop-intrusion)



Deletion: deletion of a sound; e.g. French word-final consonants are deleted when the next word begins with a consonant (but are retained when the following word begins with a vowel)

- Aphaeresis: vowel sound deleted at beginning of word
- Syncope: vowel sound is deleted word-internally
- Apocope: vowel sound deleted at end of word

Metathesis: reordering of phonemes; in some dialects of English, the word asked is pronounced [æks]; children's speech shows many cases of metathesis such as aminal for animal

Lenition: consonant changes to a weaker manner of articulation; voiced stop becomes a fricative, fricative becomes a glide, etc.

Palatalization: sound becomes palatal when adjacent to a front vowel  
Compensatory Lengthening: sound becomes long as a result of sound loss, e.g. Latin "octo" became Italian "otto"

### Assimilation in English

An interesting observation of assimilation rules is evidenced in the formation of plurals and the past tense in English. When pluralizing nouns, the last letter is pronounced as either [s], [z], or [ʔz]. When forming past tenses of verbs, the -ed ending is pronounced as either [t], [d], [ʔd]. If you were to sort words into three columns, you would be able to tell why certain words are followed by certain sounds:

#### Plural nouns

/s/	/z/	/ʔz/
cats	dads	churches
tips	bibs	kisses
laughs	dogs	judges

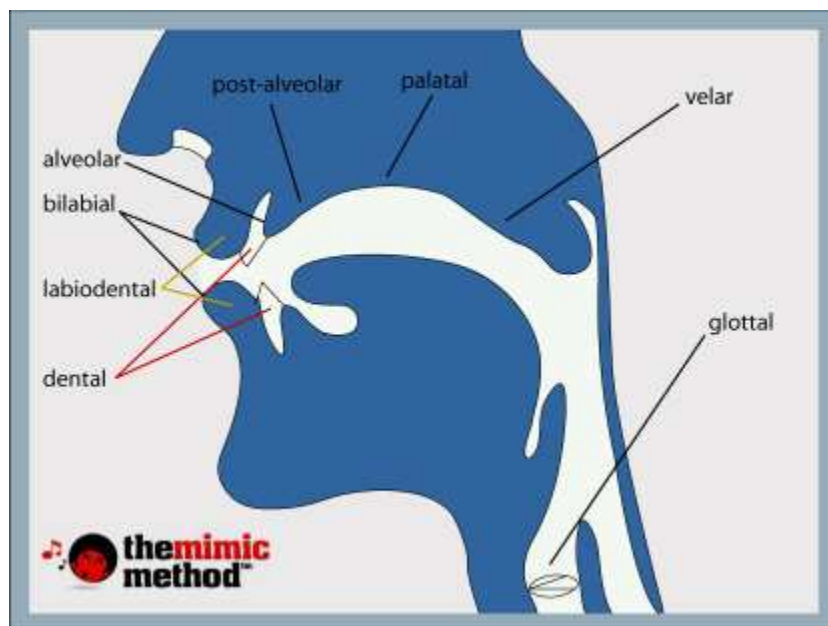
#### Past Tense

/t/	/d/	/ʔd/
kissed	loved	patted
washed	jogged	waded
coughed	teased	seeded

Hopefully, you can determine which consonants produce which sounds. In the nouns, /s/ is added after voiceless consonants, and /z/ is added after voiced consonants. /ʔz/ is added after sibilants. For the verbs, /t/ is added after voiceless consonants, and /d/ is added after voiced consonants. /ʔd/ is added after alveolar stops. The great thing about this is that no one ever taught you this in school. But thanks to linguistics, you now know why there are different sounds (because of assimilation rules, the consonants become more like their neighboring consonants.)

### Writing Rules

A general phonological rule is A ? B / D \_\_ E (said: A becomes B when it occurs between D and E) Other symbols in rule writing include: C = any obstruent, V = any vowel, Ø = nothing, # = word boundary, ( ) = optional, and { } = either/or. A deletion rule is A ? Ø / E \_\_ (A is deleted when it



### ***Bilabial***

Bilabial consonants occur when you block/constrict airflow out of the mouth by bringing your lips together.

English contains the following three bilabial consonants:

/p/ as in “purse” and “rap”

/b/ as in “back” and “cab”

/m/ as in “mad” and “clam”

### ***Labio-Dental***

Labio-dental consonants occur when you block/constrict airflow by curling your lower lip back and raising it to touch your upper row of teeth.

English contains the following two labio-dental sounds:

/f/ as in “fro” and “calf”

/v/ as in “vine” and “have”

### ***Dental***

Dental consonants occur when you block/constrict airflow by placing your slimy tongue against your upper teeth.

English contains the following two labio-dental sounds:

/θ/ as in “thick” and “bath”

/ð/ as in “the” and “rather”

### ***Alveolar***

The alveolar ridge is where your teeth meet your gums.

You create Alveolar consonants when you raise your tongue to the alveolar ridge to block or constrict airflow.

The English alveolar consonants are as follows:

/n/ as in "no" and "man"

/t/ as in "tab" and "rat"

/d/ as in "dip" and "bad"

/s/ as in "suit" and "bus"

/z/ as in "zit" and "jazz"

/l/ as in "luck" and "fully"

### ***Post-Alveolar***

When you retract your tongue back just a bit from the alveolar ridge, the sounds change enough to be recognized as distinct consonants.

So post-alveolar consonants are those that occur when the tongue blocks or constricts airflow at the point just beyond the alveolar ridge.

The post-alveolar english consonants are as follows:

/ʃ/ as in "shot" or "brash"

/ʒ/ as in "vision" or "measure"

/tʃ/ as in "chick" or "match"

/dʒ/ as in "jam" or "badge"

### ***Palatal***

The roof of your mouth is the hard palate. You may know it as "the place that burns like hell when I eat pizza that is too hot."

You create Palatal consonants when you raise the tongue to this point and constrict airflow.

English has only one palatal consonant:

/j/ as in "yes" and "bayou"

### ***Velar***

Behind your hard palate you have the velum or soft palate. Unlike the bony hard palate in front of it, the this consists of soft, mucousy tissue.

You make Velar Consonants when you raise the back of your tongue to the velum to block or restrict airflow.

### ***English has the following velar consonants:***

/ŋ/ as in "going" and "uncle" (note that the 'n sound' in these words is NOT made at the alveolar ridge, which is why it is distinct from /n/).

/k/ as in "kite" and "back"

/g/ as in "good" and "bug"

/w/ as in "wet" and "howard"

### ***Glottal***

The glottis is actually two vocal folds (i.e. vocal cords). It acts as a sort of bottle cap to your windpipe.

Inhale and then hold your breath for a few seconds while keeping your mouth open. What you are actually doing to keep the air from expelling out of your lungs by closing your glottis.

Glottal consonants aren't actually consonants; they just play consonant roles in the language. In English, the following things happen at the glottis:

/h/ as in "hi" and "Bahamas." Say these words and notice how you're not actually constricting or blocking airflow for this /h/ sound. You're just exhaling a little bit harder than you would for a normal vowel sound in transition to the following vowel sound.

/ʔ/ – This is actually the culprit behind many of the "silent syllables" we discussed in the first lesson. For example, in the phrase "wha(t) time is it?" the /t/ in "what" is dropped and the vowel sound before it is closed at the glottis.

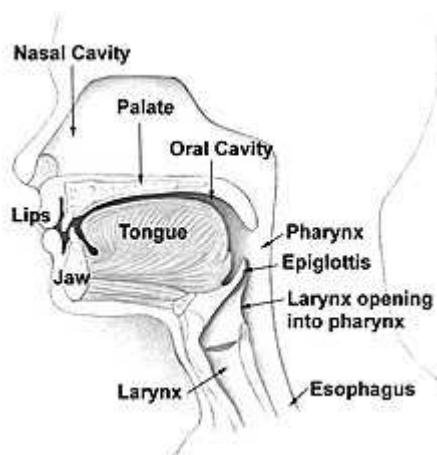
### **Manner of Articulation**

In articulatory phonetics, the manner of articulation is the configuration and interaction of the articulators (speech organs such as the tongue, lips, and palate) when making a speech sound. One parameter of manner is stricture, that is, how closely the speech organs approach one another. Others include those involved in the r-like sounds (taps and trills), and the sibilancy of fricatives.

The concept of manner is mainly used in the discussion of consonants, although the movement of the articulators will also greatly alter the resonant properties of the vocal tract, thereby changing the formant structure of speech sounds that is crucial for the identification of vowels. For consonants, the place of articulation and the degree of phonation or voicing are considered separately from manner, as being independent parameters. Homorganic consonants, which have the same place of articulation, may have different manners of articulation. Often nasality and laterality are included in manner, but some phoneticians, such as Peter Ladefoged, consider them to be independent.

### **Broad Classifications**

Euler diagram showing a typical classification of sounds (in IPA) and their manners of articulation and phonological features



Manners of articulation with substantial obstruction of the airflow (stops, fricatives, affricates) are called obstruents. These are proto typically

## ***Individual Manners***

Stop, an oral occlusive, where there is occlusion (blocking) of the oral vocal tract, and no nasal air flow, so the air flow stops completely. Examples include English /p t k/ (voiceless) and /b d g/ (voiced). If the consonant is voiced, the voicing is the only sound made during occlusion; if it is voiceless, a stop is completely silent. What we hear as a /p/ or /k/ is the effect that the onset of the occlusion has on the preceding vowel, as well as the release burst and its effect on the following vowel. The shape and position of the tongue (the place of articulation) determine the resonant cavity that gives different stops their characteristic sounds. All languages have stops.

Nasal, a nasal occlusive, where there is occlusion of the oral tract, but air passes through the nose. The shape and position of the tongue determine the resonant cavity that gives different nasals their characteristic sounds. Examples include English /m, n/. Nearly all languages have nasals, the only exceptions being in the area of Puget Sound and a single language on Bougainville Island.

Fricative, sometimes called spirant, where there is continuous frication (turbulent and noisy airflow) at the place of articulation. Examples include English /f, s/ (voiceless), /v, z/ (voiced), etc. Most languages have fricatives, though many have only an /s/. However, the Indigenous Australian languages are almost completely devoid of fricatives of any kind.

Sibilants are a type of fricative where the airflow is guided by a groove in the tongue toward the teeth, creating a high-pitched and very distinctive sound. These are by far the most common fricatives. Fricatives at coronal (front of tongue) places of articulation are usually, though not always, sibilants. English sibilants include /s/ and /z/.

Lateral fricatives are a rare type of fricative, where the frication occurs on one or both sides of the edge of the tongue. The "ll" of Welsh and the "hl" of Zulu are lateral fricatives.

Affricate, which begins like a stop, but this releases into a fricative rather than having a separate release of its own. The English letters "ch" [tʃ] and "j" [dʒ] represent affricates. Affricates are quite common around the world, though less common than fricatives.

Flap, often called a tap, is a momentary closure of the oral cavity. The "tt" of "utter" and the "dd" of "udder" are pronounced as a flap [ɾ] in North American and Australian English. Many linguists distinguish taps from flaps, but there is no consensus on what the difference might be. No language relies on such a difference. There are also lateral flaps.

Trill, in which the articulator (usually the tip of the tongue) is held in place, and the airstream causes it to vibrate. The double "r" of Spanish "perro" is a trill. Trills and flaps, where there are one or more brief occlusions, constitute a class of consonant called rhotics.

Approximant, where there is very little obstruction. Examples include English /w/ and /r/. In some languages, such as Spanish, there are sounds that seem to fall between fricative and approximant.

One use of the word semivowel, sometimes called a glide, is a type of approximant, pronounced like a vowel but with the tongue closer to the

roof of the mouth, so that there is slight turbulence. In English, /w/ is the semivowel equivalent of the vowel /u/, and /j/ (spelled "y") is the semivowel equivalent of the vowel /i/ in this usage. Other descriptions use semivowel for vowel-like sounds that are not syllabic, but do not have the increased stricture of approximants. These are found as elements in diphthongs. The word may also be used to cover both concepts. The term glide is newer than semivowel, being used to indicate an essential quality of sounds such as /w/ and /j/, which is the movement (or glide) from their initial position (/u/ and /i/, respectively) to a following vowel.

Lateral approximants, usually shortened to lateral, are a type of approximant pronounced with the side of the tongue. English /l/ is a lateral. Together with the rhotics, which have similar behavior in many languages, these form a class of consonant called liquids.

### ***Other Airstream Initiations***

All of these manners of articulation are pronounced with an airstream mechanism called pulmonic egressive, meaning that the air flows outward, and is powered by the lungs (actually the ribs and diaphragm). Other airstream mechanisms are possible. Sounds that rely on some of these include:

Ejectives, which are glottalic egressive. That is, the airstream is powered by an upward movement of the glottis rather than by the lungs or diaphragm. Stops, affricates, and occasionally fricatives may occur as ejectives. All ejectives are voiceless, or at least transition from voiced to voiceless.

Implosives, which are glottalic ingressive. Here the glottis moves downward, but the lungs may be used simultaneously (to provide voicing), and in some languages no air may actually flow into the mouth. Implosive stops are not uncommon, but implosive affricates and fricatives are rare. Voiceless implosives are also rare.

Clicks, which are lingual ingressive. Here the back of the tongue is used to create a vacuum in the mouth, causing air to rush in when the forward occlusion (tongue or lips) is released. Clicks may be oral or nasal, stop or affricate, central or lateral, voiced or voiceless. They are extremely rare in normal words outside Southern Africa. However, English has a click in its "tsk tsk" (or "tut tut") sound, and another is often used to say "giddy up" to a horse.

Combinations of these, in some analyses, in a single consonant: linguo-pulmonic and linguo-glottalic (ejective) consonants, which are clicks released into either a pulmonic or ejective stop/fricative.

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## **1.4. DESCRIPTION OF VOWELS AND CONSONANTS**

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Vowel definition: A vowel is a sound produced with a comparatively open configuration of the vocal tract. In everyday language, a vowel is a letter (sound) of the English alphabet that is not a consonant.

A vowel is most often identified as a letter that is not a consonant. More specifically, a vowel is a sound that when paired with a consonant makes a syllable.



A vowel is any sound that a letter makes that is not a consonant sound.

What are the vowels? There are five English vowels,

A, E, I, O, U.

Sometimes, Y can also function as a vowel, but it is not considered a vowel in and of itself.

what is vowel Examples in Words:

cat

“a” is a vowel in this word

street

“e” and “e” are vowels in this word

late

“a” and “e” are vowels in this word

### ***Vowels and Consonants***

vowel letters Vowels and consonants are two different sounds. A consonant is most often identified as a letter that is not a vowel.

English consonants are: B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y (sometimes), Z.

Consonants and vowels do not make syllables on their own. A vowel paired with a consonant makes a syllable.

Example of consonants in words:

bin

“b” and “n” are the consonants in this word

stool

“s,” “t,” and “l” are the consonants in this word

chair

“c,” “h,” and “r” are the consonants in this word

### ***Forming Syllables***

whats a vowel A syllable is a unit of sound that creates meaning in language. Vowels alone do not make syllables. Instead, they pair with consonants to create what we know as syllables.

Syllables can have more than one letter. However, a syllable cannot have more than one sound.

Furthermore, syllables can have more than one vowel and more than one consonant. Still, a syllable cannot have more than one consonant or vowel sound.

Examples of syllables in words will help clarify this concept.

Examples:

tree

one syllable

two consonants “t” and “r” “w” and two vowels “e” and “e”

holy

two syllables

“ho”: one consonant “h” plus one vowel “o”

“ly”: one consonant “l” plus one vowel “y”

example

three syllables

“ex”: one vowel “e” plus one consonant “x”

“am”: one vowel “a” plus one consonant “m”

“ple” : two consonants “p” and “l” plus one vowel “e”

lake

one syllable

two consonants “l” “k” plus one two vowels “a” and “e”

Literary Devices That Use Vowels

vowel wordsThe sound that vowels make is used to create a literary device called assonance. Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds within nearby words.

Assonance is often used in poetry when writers use sound to create meaning.

It is important to note that assonance is not rhyme.

Example of Assonance:

the green tree bleeds its honeyed sap

the repetition of the long “e” sound in the words “green,” “tree,” and “bleeds” creates assonance

The following is an example of assonance from Edgar Allan Poe’s poem “The Bells”

Hear the sledges with the bells—

Silver bells!

What a world of merriment their melody foretells!

In these lines, Poe use the short “e” sound to create assonance. Here is another look at the lines with the terms that create assonance underlined.

Hear the sledges with the bells—

Silver bells!

What a world of merriment their melody foretells!

Poe uses the words of this poem to reinforce the sound of the bells. He selects words specifically to sound as though the poem itself is making bell-like noises.

The assonance reinforces the melody of the bells themselves.

Consequently, writers should only use assonance when they understand its purpose. Like any literary device, assonance should connect to meaning and be used with intention.

## CONSONANTS

Consonants are unique part of linguistics that are straightforward to remember, but much more complex to understand. Simply put, consonants

are letters that are not vowels. So any letter that is not A, E, I, O, U, and sometimes Y is a consonant. Remembering that rule is the easiest way to determine whether a letter is a consonant or not. However, the full reasoning why a letter is designated as a consonant is much more complex and interesting, and related to a field called articulatory phonetics, which studies ways we produce speech.

The first set of symbols presented here represents consonant sounds. Most are fundamental to English pronunciation regardless of accent. Since you might be unfamiliar with some of the terms used to describe the sounds, here are some definitions you might find useful:

**Voiced:** a voiced sound is a sound where the vocal cords vibrate, thus producing some sort of pitch. This is the kind of sound most people associate with regular talking or singing.

**Voiceless / unvoiced:** a voiceless or unvoiced sound is one where the vocal cords do not vibrate, thus making the sound very whispery and without a pitch. It can tend to make a letter sound harsher when pronounced.

**Stop:** a consonant sound where the airflow is stopped completely by the mouth and then sharply released. Think of sounds like “p,” “k,” and “t.” All languages contain stops.

**Fricative:** a consonant sound where the airflow becomes noisy and turbulent because it only has a very small space to travel through in the mouth. Think of sounds like “f,” “s,” and “sh.” Most languages have fricatives, but not all.

**Nasal:** a consonant sound where the airflow passes exclusively through the nose instead of the mouth. Think of sounds like “m,” “n,” or “ng.” Almost all languages have nasals.

**Affricate:** a consonant sound that begins like a stop but then releases like a fricative, thus making it a sort of combination sound. Think of sounds like “ch” and “j.” Affricates are common, especially in English.

**Alveolar ridge:** a ridge found on the roof of the mouth between the upper teeth and the hard palate, which is used in conjunction with the tip of the tongue to make many sounds

**Soft palate:** the soft tissue in the back of the roof of your mouth, which is used in conjunction with the back of the tongue to make many sounds

**Glottis:** the part of the larynx (air passage) that contains the vocal cords and the opening between them

/P/

Voiceless stop made with both lips

Found in words like: pen, spin, tip, happy

Letters that usually represent it: “p”

/B/

Voiced stop made with both lips

Found in words like: but, web, baby

Letters that usually represent it: “b”

As you may have noticed, the only difference between producing /p/ and /b/ is the voicing, while all other factors remain the same.

It's common, including in English, to have pairs of words that are essentially the same, except one is voiced and the other is unvoiced. If you're having trouble pronouncing certain sounds, try to identify a corresponding sound with a different voicing as a reference.

/t/

Voiceless stop made with the tip of the tongue on the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: two, sting

Letters that usually represent it: "t"

/d/

Voiced stop made with the tip of the tongue on the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: do, daddy, odd

Letters that usually represent it: "d"

/k/

Voiceless stop made with the back of the tongue on the soft palate

Found in words like: cat, kill, skin, queen, unique, thick, chaos

Letters that usually represent it: "k," "c," "q," "que," "ck," sometimes "ch"

/g/

Voiced stop made with the back of the tongue on the soft palate

Found in words like: go, get, beg, bigger

Letters that usually represent it: "g"

/f/

Voiceless fricative made by putting your upper front teeth on your lower lip

Found in words like: fool, enough, leaf, off, photo, glyph

Letters that usually represent it: "f," "ph," sometimes "gh"

/v/

Voiced fricative made by putting your upper front teeth on your lower lip

Found in words like: voice, have, of, over

Letters that usually represent it: "v," sometimes "f"

/θ/

Voiceless fricative made by putting your tongue between your teeth

Found in words like: thing, teeth, Athens

Letters that usually represent it: "th"

If you're curious about this symbol, it comes from the Greek letter "theta," which makes the same sound in Greek.

/ð/

Voiced fricative made by putting your tongue between your teeth

Found in words like: this, breathe, father

Letters that usually represent it: "th"

You might have noticed that both /t/ and /ð/ are represented by "th" in English. Although sometimes there are rules as to when a letter or letter cluster makes different sounds, there really is no rule for "th."

Sometimes it's voiced, and sometimes it's unvoiced, and you'll just have to memorize the difference as you come across each word with a "th" in it. This letter seems to be based off of the Greek letter "delta," which makes the same sound in Greek.

/s/

Voiceless fricative made by putting the tip the tongue nearly on the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: see, city, pass, lesson

Letters that usually represent it: "s," sometimes "c"

/z/

Voiced fricative made by putting the tip the tongue nearly on the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: zoo, rose, clothes, asthma

Letters that usually represent it: "z," sometimes "s," rarely "th"

/ʃ/

Voiceless fricative made by putting the tip the tongue a little bit past the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: she, sure, session, emotion, leash

Letters that usually represent it: "sh," "si," "ti," sometimes "s,"

/ʒ/

Voiced fricative made by putting the tip the tongue a little bit past the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: genre, pleasure, beige, equation, seizure, vision

Letters that usually represent it: "g," "si," "ti," "z," sometimes "s"

/tʃ/

Voiceless affricate made with the tip of the tongue on the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: chair, nature, teach

Letters that usually represent it: "ch," sometimes "t"

This is one of the two affricates in English, the other being /dʒ/. As stated in the definitions above, an affricate is a combination of a stop and a fricative, so the "ch" sound is actually represented by two IPA symbols. The same goes for the "j" sound.

/dʒ/

Voiced affricate made with the tip of the tongue on the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: gin, joy, edge, did you, judgment

Letters that usually represent it: "j," sometimes "g," "dg," sometimes "d"

/ð/

A momentary stop-like sound called a flap or tap, caused by the tip of the tongue lightly throwing itself against the alveolar ridge

Found in words like: better, hidden, hater, odor

Letters that usually represent it: "t," "d"

This is another sound that might confuse you. This is because it's primarily found in American accents and is essentially another way that Americans become lazy with the letter "t." You saw previously that the glottal stop is a way to replace the /t/ sound in the middle and ends of words.

However, Americans sometimes use the flap instead in the middle of words, though note that the /ð/ and /t/ sounds are mutually exclusive. For example, an American would pronounce the word "button" with a /ð/ in the middle, but not a /t/. Meanwhile, "better" is pronounced with a /t/ but not a /ð/, at least in an American accent.

/ð/ is actually the letter "r" in many other languages like Spanish, Korean, and Arabic (the symbol even looks like some degenerate letter "r"). In terms of sound, consider it to be a softer version of /d/, which is why the letter "d" is often replaced by it, too.

/x/

Voiceless fricative made by putting the back of your tongue nearly on your soft palate

Found in words like: loch (Scottish), ugh

Letters that usually represent it: "gh"

This is an interesting sound because it is not actually a standard sound in English. However, it is easy for most English speakers to make, and occasionally shows up in oddball words like "ugh," where the /x/ sound is almost an extra marker of exasperation.

## How consonants are produced

Saying consonant sounds involves constricting airflow in different locations in your mouth by:

briefly stopping then releasing the air ("p", "b", "t", "d", "k", "g"),

diverting the airflow and associated resonance to your nose ("m", "n", "ng"),

squeezing the air through a narrow space ("th" as in "thin", "th" as in "then", "f", "v", "s", "z", "sh", "zh" as in "vision", "h", and in posh dialects, "wh"),

combining stopping then squeezing ("ch", "j"), or

narrowing the vocal tract ("w", "y", "r", "l").

Consonants that are like vowels – approximants

The last four consonant sounds on the above list – "y", "w", "r", "l" – are produced with less mouth constriction than other consonants, and in linguistics are called "approximants".



Approximants occupy a kind of linguistic grey area between vowels and consonants, in fact “w” and “y” are also known as semivowels.

There’s very little difference between the consonant sound “y” and the vowel sound “ee” as in “see/sea/me”, and between the consonant sound “w” and the vowel sound “ooh” as in “moon/rule/grew”.

These sounds are classified as consonants because they generally behave like consonants, that is, they’re (in) syllable onsets not syllable nuclei.

### **Syllabic Consonants**

In many English dialects, the sound “l” can be a syllable all by itself in words like “bottle” and “middle”. This is also true of the sound “n” in words like “button” and “hidden”.

In these words, the tongue has just said “t” or “d”, so it’s already in the right place to go straight into the sound “l” or “n”, without saying a vowel first. However, we still write a “vowel letter” in this syllable (le, on, en) and we say a vowel sound in other words with similar final spellings, like “giggle” and “dabble”, “ribbon” and “beckon”, “happen” and “embiggen”.

The sound “m” can also act as a syllable in words like “rhythm” and “algorithm”, again because the sounds “th” and “m” are physically very close together. In this case we don’t write a “vowel letter” in the last syllable, but we do say a vowel sound in the last syllable of most words spelt like this, like “autism” and “criticism” (click here for more, see right column).

Tell language mavens who insist a consonant is never a syllable to stick that up their jumpers.

### **Voiced and voiceless consonants**

Some consonants are produced using your voice (“b”, “d”, “g”, “m”, “n”, “ng”, “th” as in “then”, “v”, “z”, “zh” as in “vision”, “j”, “y”, “w”, “r”, “l”) and the rest are voiceless (“p”, “t”, “k”, “th” as in “thin”, “f”, “s”, “sh”, “ch”, “h”).

Most consonants come in neat voiced-voiceless pairs – “p/b”, “t/d”, “k/g”, “th as in thin/th as in then”, “f/v”, “s/z”, “sh/zh as in vision”, and “ch/j” (yes, I read a recent Grammarly blog post, and have decided to start using the Oxford Comma).

Try saying each of these sound pairs in turn, and you’ll notice that the main difference between each pair is that you use your voice for the first sound, but not the second one.

If you are using your voice when you say the sounds “p”, “t”, “k”, “th” as in “thin”, “f”, “s”, “sh” or “ch”, you’re saying them wrong. This can confuse children about the difference between sounds, and/or cause blending problems (click here or here for previous blog posts on this).

The sound “h”, is also voiceless, but lost its voiced pair somewhere down the crack between Old and Middle English, though its ghost still makes guest appearances as the spelling gh in words like “thought”, “night” and “daughter”.

The nasal sounds “m”, “n” and “ng” don’t have voiceless pairs, but are made in the same spots in your mouth as, respectively, “p/b”, “t/d” and “k/g”.

Here are the handy vowel charts from the Cued Articulation iPad app, but please remember it's an app, so the red buttons marked "diphthongs" and "pure vowels" take you to these charts, they aren't the labels for the charts they're on. The chart headings are up at the top, and the sounds are organised from high front vowels at top left to low back ones at bottom right.

### The difference between vowels and consonants

A vowel is a speech sound made with your mouth fairly open, the nucleus of a spoken syllable.

A consonant is a sound made with your mouth fairly closed.

When we talk, consonants break up the stream of vowels (functioning as syllable onsets and codas), so that we don't sound like we've just been to the dentist for four fillings and the anaesthetic hasn't worn off yet.

Consonants require more precise articulation than vowels, which is why children find them harder to learn, and often end up in speech therapy after having become so cross at not being understood that they've started hitting people.

Only a few children with severe speech sound difficulties (often called dyspraxia or apraxia) sometimes need therapy to help them produce vowel sounds correctly.

Most syllables contain a vowel, though vowel-like consonants can occasionally be syllables. And to complicate matters, many English vowels are technically two or three vowels shmooshed together.

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## 1.5. PHONEMES AND ALLOPHONES

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Trubetzkoy (1939) wrote

"It is the task of phonology to study which differences in sound are related to differences in meaning in a given language, in which way the discriminative elements ... are related to each other, and the rules according to which they may be combined into words and sentences."

Linguistic units which cannot be substituted for each other without a change in meaning can be referred to as linguistically contrastive or significant units. Such units may be phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic etc.

Logically, this takes the form:-

IF	unit X in context A	GIVES meaning 1
AND IF	unit Y in context A	GIVES meaning 2
THEN	unit X AND unit Y	belong to separate linguistic units
eg. IF	sound [k] in context [_æt]	GIVES meaning "cat"
AND IF	sound [m] in context [_æt]	GIVES meaning "mat"
THEN	sound [k] and sound [m]	belong to separate linguistic units

## Phonemes

A phoneme is a unit of sound that distinguishes one word from another in a particular language.

For example, in most dialects of English, with the notable exception of the west midlands and the north-west of England, the sound patterns /s?n/ (sin) and /s??/ (sing) are two separate words that are distinguished by the substitution of one phoneme, /n/, for another phoneme, /?/. Two words like this that differ in meaning through the contrast of a single phoneme form a minimal pair. If, in another language, any two sequences differing only by pronunciation of the final sounds [n] or [?] are perceived as being the same in meaning, then these two sounds are interpreted as variants of a single phoneme in that language.

Phonemes that are established by the use of minimal pairs, such as tap vs tab or pat vs bat, are written between slashes: /p/, /b/. To show pronunciation, linguists use square brackets: [p?] (indicating an aspirated p in pat).

Within linguistics, there are differing views as to exactly what phonemes are and how a given language should be analyzed in phonemic (or phonematic) terms. However, a phoneme is generally regarded as an abstraction of a set (or equivalence class) of speech sounds (phones) that are perceived as equivalent to each other in a given language. For example, the English k sounds in the words kill and skill are not identical (as described below), but they are distributional variants of a single phoneme /k/. Speech sounds that differ but do not create a meaningful change in the word are known as allophones of the same phoneme. Allophonic variation may be conditioned, in which case a certain phoneme is realized as a certain allophone in particular phonological environments, or it may otherwise be free, and may vary by speaker or by dialect. Therefore, phonemes are often considered to constitute an abstract underlying representation for segments of words, while speech sounds make up the corresponding phonetic realization, or the surface form.

Phonemes are the linguistically contrastive or significant sounds (or sets of sounds) of a language. Such a contrast is usually demonstrated by the existence of minimal pairs or contrast in identical environment (C.I.E.). Minimal pairs are pairs of words which vary only by the identity of the segment (another word for a single speech sound) at a single location in the word (eg. [mæt] and [kæt]). If two segments contrast in identical environment then they must belong to different phonemes. A paradigm of minimal phonological contrasts is a set of words differing only by one speech sound. In most languages it is rare to find a paradigm that contrasts a complete class of phonemes (eg. all vowels, all consonants, all stops etc.).

eg. the English stop consonants could be defined by the following set of minimally contrasting words:-

i) /p?n/ vs /b?n/ vs /t?n/ vs /d?n/ vs /k?n/

Only /g/ does not occur in this paradigm and at least one minimal pair must be found with each of the other 5 stops to prove conclusively that it is not a variant form of one of them.

ii) /g?n/ vs /p?n/ vs /b?n/ vs /t?n/ vs /d?n/

Again, only five stops belong to this paradigm. A single minimal pair contrasting /g/ and /k/ is required now to fully demonstrate the set of English stop consonants.

iii) /gæʔn/ vs /kæʔn/

Sometimes it is not possible to find a minimal pair which would support the contrastiveness of two phonemes and it is necessary to resort to examples of contrast in analogous environment (C.A.E.). C.A.E. is almost a minimal pair, however the pair of words differs by more than just the pair of sounds in question. Preferably, the other points of variation in the pair of words are as remote as possible (and certainly never adjacent and preferably not in the same syllable) from the environment of the pairs of sounds being tested. eg. /ʔ/ vs /ʔ/ in English are usually supported by examples of pairs such as "pressure" [preʔʔ] vs "treasure" [treʔʔ], where only the initial consonants differ and are sufficiently remote from the opposition being examined to be considered unlikely to have any conditioning effect on the selection of phones. The only true minimal pairs for these two sounds in English involve at least one word (often a proper noun) that has been borrowed from another language (eg. "Confucian" [kʔnfjʔʔʔʔn] vs "confusion" [kʔnfjʔʔʔʔn], and "Aleutian" [ʔlʔʔʔʔn] vs "allusion" [ʔlʔʔʔʔn]).

A syntagmatic analysis of a speech sound, on the other hand, identifies a unit's identity within a language. In other words, it indicates all of the locations or contexts within the words of a particular language where the sound can be found.

For example, a syntagm of the phone [n] in English could be in the form:-

( #CnV..., #nV..., ...Vn#, ...VnC#, ...VnV..., etc.)

whilst [ʔ] in English would be:-

(...Vʔ#, ...VʔC#, ...VʔV..., etc)

but would not include the word initial forms of the kind described for [n].

Note that in the above examples, "#" is used to represent a word or syllable boundary, "V" represents any vowel, and "C" represents another consonant.

For example, examples of the type "#CnV..." would include "snow" [snʔʔ], "snort" [snoʔt] and "snooker" [snʔʔkʔ]. In this case, the only consonant (for English) that can occupy the initial "C" slot is the phoneme /s/, and so the generalised pattern could be rewritten as "#snV...".

## Allophones

In phonology, an allophone is one of a set of multiple possible spoken sounds, or phones, or signs used to pronounce a single phoneme in a particular language. For example, in English, [t] (as in stop [stʔp]) and the aspirated form [tʔ] (as in top [tʔʔp]) are allophones for the phoneme /t/, while these two are considered to be different phonemes in some languages such as Thai and Hindi. On the other hand, in Spanish, [d] (as in dolor [do'loʔ]) and [ð] (as in nada ['naða]) are allophones for the phoneme /d/, while these two are considered to be different phonemes in English.

The specific allophone selected in a given situation is often predictable from the phonetic context, with such allophones being called positional variants, but some allophones occur in free variation. Replacing a sound by another allophone of the same phoneme usually does not change the meaning of a word, but the result may sound non-native or even unintelligible.

Native speakers of a given language perceive one phoneme in the language as a single distinctive sound and are "both unaware of and even shocked by" the allophone variations that are used to pronounce single phonemes.

Allophones are the linguistically non-significant variants of each phoneme. In other words a phoneme may be realised by more than one speech sound and the selection of each variant is usually conditioned by the phonetic environment of the phoneme. Occasionally allophone selection is not conditioned but may vary from person to person and occasion to occasion (ie. free variation).

A phoneme is a set of allophones or individual non-contrastive speech segments. Allophones are sounds, whilst a phoneme is a set of such sounds.

Allophones are usually relatively similar sounds which are in mutually exclusive or complementary distribution (C.D.). The C.D. of two phones means that the two phones can never be found in the same environment (ie. the same environment in the senses of position in the word and the identity of adjacent phonemes). If two sounds are phonetically similar and they are in C.D. then they can be assumed to be allophones of the same phoneme.

eg. in many languages voiced and voiceless stops with the same place of articulation do not contrast linguistically but are rather two phonetic realisations of a single phoneme (ie. /p/=[p,b], /t/=[t,d], and /k/=[k,g]). In other words, voicing is not contrastive (at least for stops) and the selection of the appropriate allophone is in some contexts fully conditioned by phonetic context (eg. word medially and depending upon the voicing of adjacent consonants), and is in some contexts either partially conditioned or even completely unconditioned (eg. word initially, where in some dialects of a language the voiceless allophone is preferred, in others the voiced allophone is preferred, and in others the choice of allophone is a matter of individual choice).

eg. Some French speakers choose to use the alveolar trill [r] when in the village and the more prestigious uvular trill [ʀ] when in Paris. Such a choice is made for sociological reasons.

### **The premises of practical phonemics**

(This section is after Pike (1947) (chapter 4, pp 57-66), all text below in quotes has been taken from this source)

This section examines some of the basic assumptions behind phonemic analysis. The first four premises are particularly important to remember during the process of phonemic analysis.

"Phonemic analysis cannot be made with phonetic data alone; it must be made with phonetic data plus a series of phonemic premises and procedures".(p65)

"Phonemic procedures... must be founded upon premises concerning the underlying universal characteristics of languages of the world... ." (p57)

1. "Sounds tend to be modified by their environments" (coarticulation, producing allophones)

The actual details of these processes vary from language to language.

2. "Sound systems have a tendency towards phonetic symmetry"

eg. IF unequivocal evidence that [p] vs [b] and [k] vs [g] are separate phonemes then it is likely that [t] vs [d] are separate phonemes

3. "Sounds tend to fluctuate"

Free variation of allophones, eg. sometimes /tas/ = [tas] and sometimes /tas/ = [das]

4. "Characteristic sequences of sounds exert structural pressure on the phonemic interpretation of suspicious segments or suspicious sequences of segments"

For example, in the interpretation of syllable structure:-

eg1. [ma] "cat"

[bo] "to run"

[su] "sky"

[sa] "leaf"

[ia] "moon"

[tsa] "ten"

If in all non-suspicious words the syllable structure was found to be CV then

[ia] ? /ja/

[tsa] ? / t?sa/

which would agree with the CV structure.

eg2. [maba]"dog"

[nasag] "elephant"

[saplam] "egg"

[pasak] "to eat"

All clear syllable initials are found at the start of the words and are always \$CV... . All clear syllable finals are found at the end of words and are either ..VC\$ or ..V\$. There are no unambiguous examples of CC clusters at the start or end of a syllable therefore the most likely analysis would be to place the syllable boundary in [saplam] thus /sap\$lam/. In the cases of [maba],[nasag] and [pasak] the most satisfactory syllabification would be to place the medial consonant in the second syllable (placing at the end of the first syllable would require an additional syllable initial \$V... which is not unambiguously attested (ie. no words begin with a vowel)).

Some extra premises (Pike lists more but these are the most important)

1. "Every language has consonants and vowels"

2. "Certain kinds of segments may be vowels in one language but consonants in another."



- eg. [ia] ?/ia/ in language 1 (L1) but [ia] = /ja/ in language 2 (L2)
3. "The dichotomy between vowel and consonant is not strictly an articulatory one but is in part based on distributional characteristics."
4. "A long vowel or consonant may in some languages constitute two phonemes."
- eg. [a?] ?/a/ in L1 and /aa/ in L2
5. "A sequence of two segments may in some languages constitute a single phonetically complex phoneme."
- eg. [atsa] ?/at\$sa/ in L1 and /atsa/ in L2 (nb. \$ = syllable boundary)
- It may be that L2 only allows open syllables (V and CV) and so the L1 form would be illegal.
6. "Some segments may be non-significant transition sounds"
- eg. in English /eg/ may be [ʔeg], where the glottal stop is phonemically non-significant.
7. "If two segments are sub-members of a single phoneme, the NORM of the phoneme is that sub-member [allophone] which is least limited in its distribution and least modified by its environments."
- eg. /n/ ? [ʔ] /\_\_ {k/g} and [n] elsewhere (here, [ʔ] is clearly an environmental modification)
8. "In order to be considered sub-members of a single phoneme, two segments must be (a) phonetically similar and (b) mutually exclusive as to the environments in which they occur."
9. "When two phonemic conclusions each appear to be justifiable by the other premises, and each seems to account for all the available facts of all types, that conclusion is assumed to be correct (a) which is the least complex, and (b) which gives to suspicious data an analysis parallel with analogous non-suspicious data, and (c) which appears most plausible in terms of alleged [coarticulations in] specific environments."

## **1.6. PHONEMES OF BRITISH R.P. AND PHONEMES OF GIE**

Received Pronunciation (RP), commonly called BBC English and Standard British pronunciation or Southern British pronunciation, is an accent of Standard English in the United Kingdom and is defined in the Concise Oxford English Dictionary as "the standard accent of English as spoken in the south of England", although it can be heard from native speakers throughout England and Wales. Peter Trudgill estimated in 1974 that 3 per cent of people in Britain were RP speakers, but this rough estimate has been questioned by the phonetician J. Windsor Lewis. Clive Upton notes higher estimates of 5% (Romaine, 2000) and 10% (Wells, 1982) but refers to all these as "guesstimates" that are not based on robust research.

Formerly colloquially called "the King's English", RP enjoys high social prestige in Britain, being thought of as the accent of those with power, money, and influence, though it may be perceived negatively by some as being associated with undeserved privilege. Since the 1960s, a greater permissiveness toward regional English varieties has taken hold in education.

The study of RP is concerned exclusively with pronunciation, whereas Standard English, the Queen's English, Oxford English, and BBC English are also concerned with matters such as grammar, vocabulary, and style.

### Usage

Teachers often promote the modern RP accent to non-native speakers learning British English. Non-RP Britons abroad may modify their pronunciation to something closer to Received Pronunciation to allow better understanding by people unfamiliar with the diversity of British accents. They may also modify their vocabulary and grammar to approach those of Standard English for the same reason. RP serves as the standard for English in most books on general phonology and phonetics, and most dictionaries published in the United Kingdom use RP in their pronunciation schemes.[citation needed] Most British voices in apps like Siri and Google Assistant speak RP, and most TV and radio stations across the UK use this accent.

### In dictionaries

Most English dictionaries published in Britain (including the Oxford English Dictionary) now give phonetically transcribed RP pronunciations for all words. Pronunciation dictionaries represent a special class of dictionary giving a wide range of possible pronunciations; British pronunciation dictionaries are all based on RP, though not necessarily using that name. Daniel Jones transcribed RP pronunciations of a large number of words and names in the English Pronouncing Dictionary. Cambridge University Press continues to publish this title, as of 2011 edited by Peter Roach, the accent having been renamed "BBC Pronunciation". Two other pronunciation dictionaries are in common use: the Longman Pronunciation Dictionary, compiled by John C. Wells (using the name "Received Pronunciation"), and the Oxford Dictionary of Pronunciation for Current English, compiled by Clive Upton. This represents an accent named BR ("British English") – based on RP, but claimed to be representative of a wider group of speakers. An earlier pronunciation dictionary by J. Windsor Lewis gives both British and American pronunciations, using the terms General British (GB) for the former and General American (GA) for the latter.

### Status

Traditionally, Received Pronunciation was the "everyday speech in the families of Southern English persons whose men-folk [had] been educated at the great public boarding-schools" and which conveyed no information about that speaker's region of origin before attending the school.

It is the business of educated people to speak so that no-one may be able to tell in what county their childhood was passed.

—A. Burrell, *Recitation. A Handbook for Teachers in Public Elementary School*, 1891

In the 19th century, some British prime ministers still spoke with some regional features, such as William Ewart Gladstone. From the 1970s onwards, attitudes towards Received Pronunciation have been changing slowly. The BBC's use of Yorkshire-born Wilfred Pickles during the Second World War (to distinguish BBC broadcasts from German propaganda) is an earlier

example of the use of non-RP accents, but even then Pickles modified his speech towards RP when reading the news.

Although admired in some circles, RP is disliked in others. It is common in parts of Britain to regard it as a south-eastern English accent rather than a non-regional one and as a symbol of the south-east's political power in Britain. Based on a 1997 survey, Jane Stuart-Smith wrote, "RP has little status in Glasgow, and is regarded with hostility in some quarters". A 2007 survey found that residents of Scotland and Northern Ireland tend to dislike RP. It is shunned by some with left-wing political views, who may be proud of having an accent more typical of the working classes.

## Phonology

Consonant phonemes<sup>[51]</sup>

	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Nasal	<u>m</u>		<u>n</u>				<u>ŋ</u>
Stop	<u>p</u> <u>b</u>		<u>t</u> <u>d</u>			<u>k</u> <u>g</u>	
Affricate				<u>tʃ</u> <u>dʒ</u>			
Fricative	<u>f</u> <u>v</u>	<u>θ</u> <u>ð</u>	<u>s</u> <u>z</u>	<u>ʃ</u> <u>ʒ</u>			<u>h</u>
Approximant			<u>l</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>j</u>		<u>ɹ</u>

Nasals and liquids (/m/, /n/, /ʃ/, /r/, /l/) may be syllabic in unstressed syllables. The consonant in 'row', 'arrow' in RP is generally a postalveolar approximant, which would normally be expressed with the sign [ʃ] in the International Phonetic Alphabet, but the sign /r/ is nonetheless traditionally used for RP in most of the literature on the topic.

Voiceless plosives (/p/, /t/, /k/, /tʃ/) are aspirated at the beginning of a syllable, unless a completely unstressed vowel follows. (For example, the /p/ is aspirated in "impasse", with primary stress on "-passe", but not "compass", where "-pass" has no stress.) Aspiration does not occur when /s/ precedes in the same syllable, as in "spot" or "stop". When a sonorant /l/, /r/, /w/, or /j/ follows, this aspiration is indicated by partial devoicing of the sonorant. /r/ is a fricative when devoiced.

Syllable final /p/, /t/, /tʃ/, and /k/ may be either preceded by a glottal stop (glottal reinforcement) or, in the case of /t/, fully replaced by a glottal stop, especially before a syllabic nasal (bitten ['bʃ?nʃ]). The glottal stop may be realised as creaky voice; thus, an alternative phonetic transcription of attempt [ʃ'tʃemʃt] could be [ʃ'tʃemmʃt].

As in other varieties of English, voiced plosives (/b/, /d/, /g/, /dʒ/) are partly or even fully devoiced at utterance boundaries or adjacent to voiceless consonants. The voicing distinction between voiced and voiceless sounds is reinforced by a number of other differences, with the result that

the two of consonants can clearly be distinguished even in the presence of devoicing of voiced sounds:

Aspiration of voiceless consonants syllable-initially.

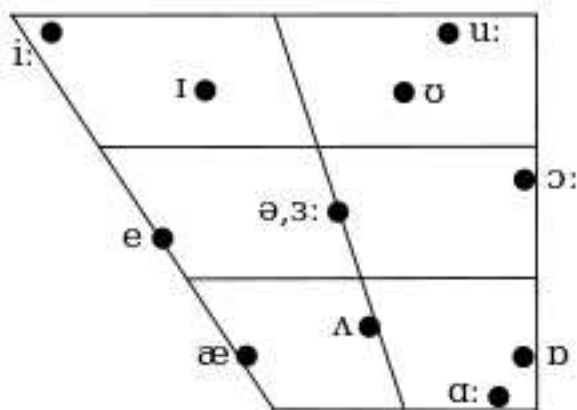
Glottal reinforcement of voiceless consonants syllable-finally.

Lengthening of vowels before voiced consonants.

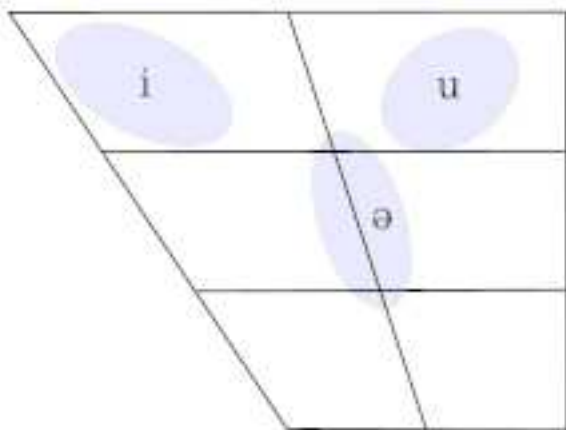
As a result, some authors prefer to use the terms "fortis" and "lenis" in place of "voiceless" and "voiced". However, the latter are traditional and in more frequent usage.

The voiced dental fricative (/ð/) is more often a weak dental plosive; the sequence /nð/ is often realised as [nʔnʔ] (a long dental nasal). /l/ has velarised allophone ([ɫ]) in the syllable rhyme. /h/ becomes voiced ([ʔ]) between voiced sounds.

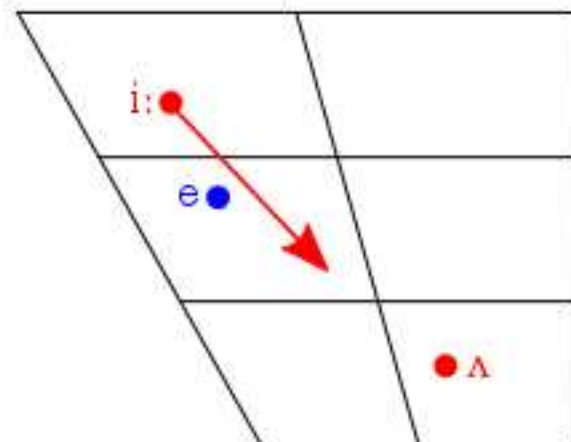
## Vowels



Monophthongs of a fairly conservative variety of RP. From Roach (2004, p. 242)



Ranges of the weak vowels in RP and GA. From Wells (2008, p. XXV)



Allophones of some RP monophthongs, from Collins & Mees (2003:92, 95, 101). The red ones occur before dark /l/, and the blue one occurs before velars.

### Monophthongs (Short)

Front	Central	Back
Close	?	?
Mid	e	?
Open	æ	?

Examples of short vowels: /ɪ/ in kit, mirror and rabbit, /ʊ/ in foot and cook, /e/ in dress and merry, /ʌ/ in strut and curry, /æ/ in trap and marry, /ɒ/ in lot and orange, /ɔ/ in ago and sofa.

### Monophthongs (Long)

Front	Central	Back
Close	i?	u? ?? (About this soundlisten)
Mid	e?	??
Open		??

Examples of long vowels: /i:/ in fleece, /u:/ in goose, /e:/ in bear, /ɜ:/ in nurse and furry, /ɔ:/ in north, force and thought, /ɑ:/ in father and start.

The long mid front vowel [ɜ:] is transcribed with the traditional symbol ?e?? in this article. The predominant realisation in contemporary RP is monophthongal.

### Long and short vowels

RP's long high vowels /i:/ and /u:/ are slightly diphthongised, and are often narrowly transcribed in phonetic literature as diphthongs [i:] and [u:].

The terms "long" and "short" are relative to each other when applied to the vowel phonemes of RP. Vowels may be phonologically long or short (i.e. belong to the long or the short group of vowel phonemes) but their

length is influenced by their context: in particular, they are shortened if a voiceless (fortis) consonant follows in the syllable, so that, for example, the vowel in 'bat' [bæ?t] is shorter than the vowel in 'bad' [bæd]. The process is known as pre-fortis clipping. Thus phonologically short vowels in one context can be phonetically longer than phonologically long vowels in another context. For example, the phonologically long vowel /i:/ in 'reach' /ri:t/ (which ends with a voiceless consonant) may be shorter than the phonologically short vowel /ɪ/ in the word 'ridge' /rɪd/ (which ends with a voiced consonant). Wiik, cited in Cruttenden (2014), published durations of English vowels with a mean value of 17.2 csec. for short vowels before voiced consonants but a mean value of 16.5 csec for long vowels preceding voiceless consonants.

In natural speech, the plosives /t/ and /d/ often have no audible release utterance-finally, and voiced consonants are partly or completely devoiced (as in [bʔædʔ]); thus the perceptual distinction between pairs of words such as 'bad' and 'bat', or 'seed' and 'seat' rests mostly on vowel length (though the presence or absence of glottal reinforcement provides an additional cue).

In addition to such length distinctions, unstressed vowels are both shorter and more centralised than stressed ones. In unstressed syllables occurring before vowels and in final position, contrasts between long and short high vowels are neutralised and short [i] and [u] occur (e.g. happy ['hæpi], throughout [ʔʔu'aʔt]). The neutralisation is common throughout many English dialects, though the phonetic realisation of e.g. [i] rather than [ʔ] (a phenomenon called happy-tensing) is not as universal.

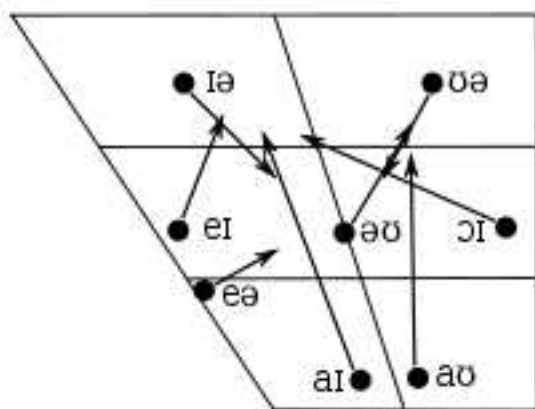
Unstressed vowels vary in quality:

/i/ (as in HAPPY) ranges from close front [i] to close-mid retracted front [eʔ];

/u/ (as in INFLUENCE) ranges from close advanced back [uʔ] to close-mid retracted central [ʔʔ]; according to the phonetician Jane Setter, the typical pronunciation of this vowel is a weakly rounded, mid-centralized close back unrounded vowel, transcribed in the IPA as [uʔʔ] or simply [ʔʔ];

/ʔ/ (as in COMMA) ranges from close-mid central [ʔ] to open-mid central [ʔ].

## Diphthongs and Triphthongs





Diphthongs of RP. From Roach (2004, p. 242)

Diphthong	Example
Closing	
/e?/ (About this soundlisten)	/be?/ bay
/a?/ (About this soundlisten)	/ba?/ buy
/??/ (About this soundlisten)	/b??/ boy
/??/ (About this soundlisten)	/b??/ beau
/a?/	/ba?/ bough
Centring	
/??/	/b??/ beer
/??/	/b??/ boor
(formerly /??/)	/b??/ boar

The centring diphthongs are gradually being eliminated in RP. The vowel /??/ (as in "door", "boar") had largely merged with /??/ by the Second World War, and the vowel /??/ (as in "poor", "tour") has more recently merged with /??/ as well among most speakers, although the sound /??/ is still found in conservative speakers. See poor–pour merger. The remaining centring glide /??/ is increasingly pronounced as a monophthong [??], although without merging with any existing vowels.

The diphthong /??/ is pronounced by some RP speakers in a noticeably different way when it occurs before /l/, if that consonant is syllable-final and not followed by a vowel (the context in which /l/ is pronounced as a "dark l"). The realization of /??/ in this case begins with a more back, rounded and sometimes more open vowel quality; it may be transcribed as [??] or [??]. It is likely that the backness of the diphthong onset is the result of allophonic variation caused by the raising of the back of the tongue for the /l/. If the speaker has "l-vocalization" the /l/ is realized as a back rounded vowel, which again is likely to cause backing and rounding in a preceding vowel as coarticulation effects. This phenomenon has been discussed in several blogs by John C. Wells. In the recording included in this article the phrase 'fold his cloak' contains examples of the /??/ diphthong in the two different contexts. The onset of the pre-/l/ diphthong in 'fold' is slightly more back and rounded than that in 'cloak', though the allophonic transcription does not at present indicate this.

RP also possesses the triphthongs /a??/ as in *tire*, /a??/ as in *tower*, /??/?/ as in *lower*, /e??/ as in *layer* and /???/ as in *loyal*. There are different possible realisations of these items: in slow, careful speech they may be pronounced as a two-syllable triphthong with three distinct vowel qualities in succession, or as a monosyllabic triphthong. In more casual speech the middle vowel may be considerably reduced, by a process known as smoothing, and in an extreme form of this process the triphthong may even be reduced to a single vowel, though this is rare, and almost never found in the case of /???/. In such a case the difference between /a??/, /a??/, and /??/ in *tower*, *tire*, and *tar* may be neutralised with all three units realised as [??] or [ä?]. This type of smoothing is known as the tower–tire, tower–tar and tire–tar mergers.

## Triphthongs

As two syllables    Triphthong    Loss of mid-element    F u r t h e r simplified as    Example

[aʔ.ʔ]	[aʔʔ]	[aʔʔ]	[aʔ]	tire
[ʔʔ.ʔ]	[ʔʔʔ]	[ʔʔʔ]	[ʔʔ]	tower
[ʔʔ.ʔ]	[ʔʔʔ]	[ʔʔʔ]	[ʔʔ]	lower
[eʔ.ʔ]	[eʔʔ]	[ʔʔʔ]	[ʔʔ]	layer
[ʔʔ.ʔ]	[ʔʔʔ]	[ʔʔʔ]	[ʔʔ]	loyal

## BATH vowel

There are differing opinions as to whether /æ/ in the BATH lexical set can be considered RP. The pronunciations with /ʔʔ/ are invariably accepted as RP. The English Pronouncing Dictionary does not admit /æ/ in BATH words and the Longman Pronunciation Dictionary lists them with a § marker of non-RP status. John Wells wrote in a blog entry on 16 March 2012 that when growing up in the north of England he used /ʔʔ/ in "bath" and "glass", and considers this the only acceptable phoneme in RP. Others have argued that /æ/ is too categorical in the north of England to be excluded. Clive Upton believes that /æ/ in these words must be considered within RP and has called the opposing view "south-centric". Upton's Oxford Dictionary of Pronunciation for Current English gives both variants for BATH words. A. F. Gupta's survey of mostly middle-class students found that /æ/ was used by almost everyone who was from clearly north of the isogloss for BATH words. She wrote, "There is no justification for the claims by Wells and Mugglestone that this is a sociolinguistic variable in the north, though it is a sociolinguistic variable on the areas on the border [the isogloss between north and south]". In a study of speech in West Yorkshire, K. M. Petyt wrote that "the amount of /ʔʔ/ usage is too low to correlate meaningfully with the usual factors", having found only two speakers (both having attended boarding schools in the south) who consistently used /ʔʔ/.

Jack Windsor Lewis has noted that the Oxford Dictionary's position has changed several times on whether to include short /æ/ within its prescribed pronunciation. The BBC Pronouncing Dictionary of British Names uses only /ʔʔ/, but its author, Graham Pointon, has stated on his blog that he finds both variants to be acceptable in place names.

Some research has concluded that many people in the North of England have a dislike of the /ʔʔ/ vowel in BATH words. A. F. Gupta wrote, "Many of the northerners were noticeably hostile to /grʔʔs/, describing it as 'comical', 'snobbish', 'pompous' or even 'for morons'." On the subject, K. M. Petyt wrote that several respondents "positively said that they did not prefer the long-vowel form or that they really detested it or even that it was incorrect". Mark Newbrook has assigned this phenomenon the name "conscious rejection", and has cited the BATH vowel as "the main instance of conscious rejection of RP" in his research in West Wirral.

## French words

John Wells has argued that, as educated British speakers often attempt

to pronounce French names in a French way, there is a case for including / ?~/ (as in bon), and /æ~/ and /?~:/ (as in vingt-et-un), as marginal members of the RP vowel system. He also argues against including other French vowels on the grounds that very few British speakers succeed in distinguishing the vowels in bon and banc, or in rue and roue.

### **Alternative notation**

Not all reference sources use the same system of transcription. In particular:

/æ/ as in trap is also written /a/.

/e/ as in dress is also written /?/.

/?/ as in cup is also written /?/.

/?/ as in foot is also written /?/.

/??/ as in nurse is also written /??/.

/a?/ as in price is also written /??/.

/a?/ as in mouse is also written /??/.

/e?/ as in square is also written /??/, and is also sometimes treated as a long monophthong /??/.

/e?/ as in face is also written /??/.

/??/ as in near is also written /??/.

/??/ before /l/ in a closed syllable as in goal is also written /??/.

/u?/ as in goose is also written /??/.

Most of these variants are used in the transcription devised by Clive Upton for the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1993) and now used in many other Oxford University Press dictionaries.

The linguist Geoff Lindsey has argued that the system of transcription for RP has become outdated and has proposed a new system as a replacement.

### **Historical variation**

Like all accents, RP has changed with time. For example, sound recordings and films from the first half of the 20th century demonstrate that it was usual for speakers of RP to pronounce the /æ/ sound, as in land, with a vowel close to [?], so that land would sound similar to a present-day pronunciation of lend. RP is sometimes known as the Queen's English, but recordings show that even Queen Elizabeth II has changed her pronunciation over the past 50 years, no longer using an [?]-like vowel in words like land.

A comparison of the formant values of /i? æ ?? ? ? u?/ for older (black) and younger (light blue) RP speakers. From de Jong et al. (2007, p. 1814)

Some changes in RP during the 20th century include:

Words such as CLOTH, gone, off, often were pronounced with /??/ instead of /?/, so that often and orphan were homophones (see lot–cloth split). The Queen still uses the older pronunciations, but it is rare to hear them on the BBC any more.

also pursuit is commonly heard with /j/ and revolutionary less so but more commonly than evolution. For a subset of these, a yod has been lost over time: for example, in all of the words beginning suit, however the yod is sometimes deliberately reinserted in historical or stressed contexts such as "a suit in chancery" or "suitable for an aristocrat".

The flapped variant of /t/ and /d/ (as in much of the West Country, Ulster, most North American varieties including General American, Australian English, and the Cape Coloured dialect of South Africa) is not used very often.

RP has undergone wine–whine merger (so the sequence /hw/ is not present except among those who have acquired this distinction as the result of speech training). The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, based in London, still teaches these two sounds for international breadth as distinct phonemes. They are also distinct from one another in most of Scotland and Ireland, in the northeast of England, and in the southeastern United States.

Unlike some other varieties of English language in England, there is no h-dropping in words like head or horse. As shown in the spoken specimen below, in hurried phrases such as "as hard as he could" h-dropping commonly applies to the word he.

Unlike most Southern Hemisphere English accents, RP has not undergone the weak-vowel merger, meaning that pairs such as Lenin/Lennon are distinct.

In traditional RP [ɹ] is an allophone of /r/ (it is used intervocalically, after /ʔ, ɔ/ and sometimes even after /b, g/).

### **Conservative RP**

This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.

Find sources: "Received Pronunciation" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (October 2018) (Learn how and when to remove this template message)

Conservative Received Pronunciation is a conservative standard of pronunciation of British English. Formerly the prestige model of pronunciation, it has declined in favour of other, less-conservative dialects, primarily Contemporary Received Pronunciation (Contemporary RP) also known as Modern RP. Conservative RP is the standard adhered to in the First and Second Editions of the Oxford English Dictionary, which, starting with the Third edition, has been modelled on Contemporary RP.[citation needed] Other terms for Conservative RP are Traditional RP and Upper RP (the latter in reference to the association of the standard to the upper class and aristocracy). Notable speakers of Conservative RP include Queen Elizabeth II and other older members of the British Royal Family, Sir Winston Churchill and commentators of Pathé News and, prior to the 1960s, the BBC.

The phonological features of Conservative RP which are distinct from Contemporary RP, include:

## Vowels and diphthongs

Happy tensing: this feature concerns the vowel at the end of words ending in *ʔyʔ*, *ʔieʔ*, *ʔeeʔ*, etc., which is normally transcribed with the symbol *ʔiʔ*. In Conservative RP, this vowel can be assigned to the */ʔ/* phoneme, whereas in Contemporary RP it can be assigned to the */iʔ/* phoneme, as it is more tense.

The phonetic realization of the */e/* phoneme is more close ([e]) than in Contemporary RP, in which it is more open [ɛ]. The more closed realization is also found in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Similarly, the quality of the */æ/* phoneme is [æ], akin to General American and General Australian. However, the majority of Contemporary RP speakers realize this vowel as fully open [a], as do speakers from Northern England and Scotland.

The quality of the NURSE vowel */ʔʔ/* is realised as [ʔʔ] by some conservative speakers, and [ʔʔ ~ ʔʔ] by others. In Contemporary RP, the [ʔʔ] realization is not heard.

Many terms have */ʔʔ/* in Conservative RP, yet */ʔʔ/* in the speech of Contemporary RP speakers, including *cross*, *often*, *cloth*, *salt*, *because*, *gone*, etc. Similarly, the term *mass* (with reference to the Catholic ritual) may be pronounced as */mʔʔs/* by conservative speakers, with *data* also possessing this vowel, */'dʔʔtʔ/*. For Contemporary RP speakers, the former tends to have the short */æ/* vowel, whereas the latter has a diphthong */eʔ/*.

In some cases, where Contemporary RP has the schwa */ʔʔ/*, Conservative RP preserves */ʔʔ/*, for instance, the final vowel in the following: *devil*, *kindness*, *witness*, *private*, *toilet*, *fortunate*.

Contemporary RP speakers realize */ʔʔ/* as [ʔʔ] before the dark l ([ʔʔ]), so that *goal* has a different vowel from *goat*. This allophone is not used by conservative speakers.

Two diphthongs which exist in Conservative RP may not in Contemporary RP. The first has disappeared in the speech of all but the most conservative British speakers and some speakers of Southern American English, the hoarse-horse distinction. For speakers who differentiate, *hoarse* is realised as */hʔʔs/* and *horse* is */hʔʔs/*. The vowel in words such as *tour*, *moor*, *sure* is */ʔʔ/* for all Conservative RP speakers, but has merged with */ʔʔ/* for many Contemporary speakers. Taking the two mergers into account, results in a number of three-way mergers, which were hitherto distinct, such as *poor*, *paw* and *pore* (*/pʔʔʔ/*, */pʔʔʔ/*, */pʔʔʔ/*) all becoming */pʔʔʔ/*.

The */ʔʔʔ/* phoneme (as in *fair*, *care*, *there*) is realized as a true centring diphthong [ʔʔʔ] in the conservative variety, whereas speakers of Contemporary RP tend to realise it as a long monophthong [ʔʔʔ].

The */eʔʔ/* phoneme has a somewhat different starting point in the conservative variety, namely [eʔ]. For Contemporary speakers, this vowel tends to be realised as [ʔʔʔ].

## Consonants

Unlike with vowels and diphthongs, consonantal phonemes have not undergone change, with one exception. For speakers of Conservative Received Pronunciation in the late 19th century, it was standard for the

consonant combination ?wh? to be realised as /?/ (also transcribed /hw/), as can still be heard in the 21st century in the speech of many speakers in Ireland and Scotland and a large minority in the Southern United States. Since the beginning of the 20th century, however, the /?/ phoneme ceased to be a feature of Conservative RP, except by the most precise speakers who have learnt to differentiate, meaning it has ceased to be a native feature of English outside Ireland, Scotland (and some bordering areas of England) and the Southern United States.

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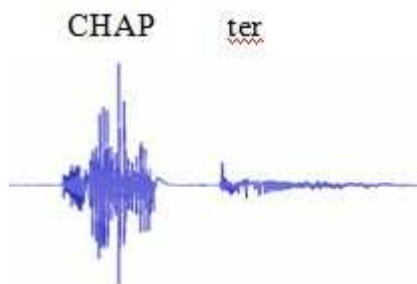
## 1.7. WORD STRESS

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When a word has more than two syllables in English, one syllable will receive more importance than the others when it is pronounced. This is the syllable that receives the primary word stress. This means that, compared to the other ones, the vowel sound of that syllable will be slightly:

louder,  
longer,  
at a higher pitch.

For example, the word *chapter* is stressed on the first syllable. The first syllable, *chap-*, will be louder and slightly longer than the last syllable *-ter*. The intensity of each syllable in this example can be illustrated as follows:



Listen to the following words and pay attention to which syllable in the word is stressed:

comPUter  
GOvernment  
enVIronment  
DICTionary  
beHAVior  
VIolence  
SENtence

### Phonetic Realization

There are various ways in which stress manifests itself in the speech stream, and these depend to some extent on which language is being spoken. Stressed syllables are often louder than non-stressed syllables, and may have a higher or lower pitch. They may also sometimes be pronounced



longer. There are sometimes differences in place or manner of articulation – in particular, vowels in unstressed syllables may have a more central (or "neutral") articulation, while those in stressed syllables have a more peripheral articulation. Stress may be realized to varying degrees on different words in a sentence; sometimes the difference between the acoustic signals of stressed and unstressed syllables are minimal.

These particular distinguishing features of stress, or types of prominence in which particular features are dominant, are sometimes referred to as particular types of accent – dynamic accent in the case of loudness, pitch accent in the case of pitch (although that term usually has more specialized meanings), quantitative accent in the case of length, and qualitative accent in the case of differences in articulation. These can be compared to the various types of accent in music theory. In some contexts, the term stress or stress accent is used to mean specifically dynamic accent (or as an antonym to pitch accent in its various meanings).

A prominent syllable or word is said to be accented or tonic; the latter term does not imply that it carries phonemic tone. Other syllables or words are said to be unaccented or atonic. Syllables are frequently said to be in pretonic or post-tonic position; certain phonological rules apply specifically to such positions. For instance, in American English, /t/ and /d/ are flapped in post-tonic position.

In Mandarin Chinese, which is a tonal language, stressed syllables have been found to have tones realized with a relatively large swing in fundamental frequency, while unstressed syllables typically have smaller swings. (See also Stress in Standard Chinese.)

Stressed syllables are often perceived as being more forceful than non-stressed syllables.

### **Lexical Stress**

Lexical stress, or word stress, is the stress placed on a given syllable in a word. The position of lexical stress in a word may depend on certain general rules applicable in the language or dialect in question, but in other languages, it must be learned for each word, as it is largely unpredictable. In some cases, classes of words in a language differ in their stress properties; for example, loanwords into a language with fixed stress may preserve stress placement from the source language, or the special pattern for Turkish placenames.

### **Non-phonemic Stress**

In some languages, the placement of stress can be determined by rules. It is thus not a phonemic property of the word, because it can always be predicted by applying the rules.

Languages in which the position of the stress can usually be predicted by a simple rule are said to have fixed stress. For example, in Czech, Finnish, Icelandic and Hungarian, the stress almost always comes on the first syllable of a word. In Armenian the stress is on the last syllable of a word. In Quechua, Esperanto, and Polish, the stress is almost always on the penult (second-last syllable). In Macedonian, it is on the antepenult (third-last syllable).



Other languages have stress placed on different syllables but in a predictable way, as in Classical Arabic and Latin, where stress is conditioned by the structure of particular syllables. They are said to have a regular stress rule.

Statements about the position of stress are sometimes affected by the fact that when a word is spoken in isolation, prosodic factors (see below) come into play, which do not apply when the word is spoken normally within a sentence. French words are sometimes said to be stressed on the final syllable, but that can be attributed to the prosodic stress that is placed on the last syllable (unless it is a schwa, when it is the second-last) of any string of words in that language. Thus, it is on the last syllable of a word analyzed in isolation. The situation is similar in Standard Chinese. French (some authors add Chinese ) can be considered to have no real lexical stress.

### **Phonemic Stress**

Languages in which the position of stress in a word is not fully predictable are said to have phonemic stress. For example, English, Russian, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Stress is usually truly lexical and must be memorized as part of the pronunciation of an individual word. In some languages, such as Spanish, Portuguese, Lakota and, to some extent, Italian, stress is even represented in writing using diacritical marks, for example in the Spanish words *célebre* and *celebré*. Sometimes, stress is fixed for all forms of a particular word, or it can fall on different syllables in different inflections of the same word.

In such languages with phonemic stress, the position of stress can serve to distinguish otherwise identical words. For example, the English words *insight* (/ˈnʌsaɪt/) and *incite* (/ˈnʌsaɪt/) are distinguished in pronunciation only by the fact that the stress falls on the first syllable in the former and on the second syllable in the latter. Examples from other languages include German *umschreiben* ([ˈʊmʃʁaɪbən] "to rewrite" vs. [ʊmʃʁaɪbən] "to paraphrase"); and Italian *ancora* ([aˈkora] "anchor" vs. [aˈkoːra] "more, still, yet").

In many languages with lexical stress, it is connected with alternations in vowels and/or consonants, which means that vowel quality differs by whether vowels are stressed or unstressed. There may also be limitations on certain phonemes in the language in which stress determines whether they are allowed to occur in a particular syllable or not. That is the case with most examples in English and occurs systematically in Russian, such as *zamok* ([ˈzamək], "castle") vs. *zámok* ([zámək], "lock"); and in Portuguese, such as the triplet *sábia* ([ˈsabiɐ], "wise woman"), *sabia* ([sabiɐ], "knew"), *sabiá* ([sabiˈa], "thrush").

Dialects of the same language may have different stress placement. For instance, the English word *laboratory* is stressed on the second syllable in British English (*labóratory* often pronounced "labóratry", the second o being silent), but the first syllable in American English, with a secondary stress on the "tor" syllable (*láboratory* often pronounced "lábratory"). The Spanish word *video* is stressed on the first syllable in Spain (*vídeo*) but on the second syllable in the Americas (*vidéo*). The Portuguese words for Madagascar and the continent Oceania are stressed on the third syllable in European

Portuguese (Madagáscar and Oceânia), but on the fourth syllable in Brazilian Portuguese (Madagascar and Oceania).

### Compounds

With very few exceptions, English compound words are stressed on their first component. And even such exceptions, for example *mankind*, are instead often stressed on the first component by some people or in some kinds of English. Sometimes the same components as those of a compound word are used in a descriptive phrase with a different meaning and with stress on both words, but that descriptive phrase is then not usually considered a compound: *bláck bírd* (any bird that is black) and *bláckbird* (a specific bird species) and *páper bág* (a bag made of paper) and *páper bag* (very rarely used to mean a bag for carrying newspapers but is often also used to mean a bag made of paper).

### Levels of stress

Some languages are described as having both primary stress and secondary stress. A syllable with secondary stress is stressed relative to unstressed syllables but not as strongly as a syllable with primary stress. As with primary stress, the position of secondary stress may be more or less predictable depending on language. In English, it is not fully predictable, but the different secondary stress of the words *organization* and *accumulation* (on the first and second syllable, respectively) is predictable due to the same stress of the verbs *órganize* and *accúmlate*. In some analyses, for example the one found in Chomsky and Halle's *The Sound Pattern of English*, English has been described as having four levels of stress: primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary, but the treatments often disagree with one another.

Peter Ladefoged and other phoneticians have noted that it is possible to describe English with only one degree of stress, as long as unstressed syllables are phonemically distinguished for vowel reduction. They believe that the multiple levels posited for English, whether primary–secondary or primary–secondary–tertiary, are mere phonetic detail and not true phonemic stress, and often, the alleged secondary stress is not characterized by the increase in respiratory activity normally associated with primary stress in English or with all stress in other languages. (For further detail see *Stress and vowel reduction in English*.)

### Prosodic stress

#### *Extra stress*

Prosodic stress, or sentence stress, refers to stress patterns that apply at a higher level than the individual word – namely within a prosodic unit. It may involve a certain natural stress pattern characteristic of a given language, but may also involve the placing of emphasis on particular words because of their relative importance (contrastive stress).

An example of a natural prosodic stress pattern is that described for French above; stress is placed on the final syllable of a string of words (or if that is a schwa, the next-to-final syllable). A similar pattern has been claimed for English (see § Levels of stress above): the traditional distinction between (lexical) primary and secondary stress is replaced partly by a prosodic rule

stating that the final stressed syllable in a phrase is given additional stress. (A word spoken alone becomes such a phrase, hence such prosodic stress may appear to be lexical if the pronunciation of words is analyzed in a standalone context rather than within phrases.)

Another type of prosodic stress pattern is quantity sensitivity – in some languages additional stress tends to be placed on syllables that are longer (morally heavy).

Prosodic stress is also often used pragmatically to emphasize (focus attention on) particular words or the ideas associated with them. Doing this can change or clarify the meaning of a sentence; for example:

I didn't take the test yesterday. (Somebody else did.)

I didn't take the test yesterday. (I did not take it.)

I didn't take the test yesterday. (I did something else with it.)

I didn't take the test yesterday. (I took one of several.)

I didn't take the test yesterday. (I took something else.)

I didn't take the test yesterday. (I took it some other day.)

As in the examples above, stress is normally transcribed as italics in printed text or underlining in handwriting.

In English, stress is most dramatically realized on focused or accented words. For instance, consider the dialogue

"Is it brunch tomorrow?"

"No, it's dinner tomorrow."

In it, the stress-related acoustic differences between the syllables of "tomorrow" would be small compared to the differences between the syllables of "dinner", the emphasized word. In these emphasized words, stressed syllables such as "din" in "dinner" are louder and longer. They may also have a different fundamental frequency, or other properties.

The main stress within a sentence, often found on the last stressed word, is called the nuclear stress.

### **Stress and vowel reduction**

In many languages, such as Russian and English, vowel reduction may occur when a vowel changes from a stressed to an unstressed position. In English, unstressed vowels may reduce to schwa-like vowels, though the details vary with dialect (see Stress and vowel reduction in English). The effect may be dependent on lexical stress (for example, the unstressed first syllable of the word photographer contains a schwa /f?'t?gr?f?r/, whereas the stressed first syllable of photograph does not /'fo?t??græf - gr??f/), or on prosodic stress (for example, the word of is pronounced with a schwa when it is unstressed within a sentence, but not when it is stressed).

Many other languages, such as Finnish and the mainstream dialects of Spanish, do not have unstressed vowel reduction; in these languages vowels in unstressed syllables have nearly the same quality as those in stressed syllables.

## Stress and rhythm

Some languages, such as English, are said to be stress-timed languages; that is, stressed syllables appear at a roughly constant rate and non-stressed syllables are shortened to accommodate that, which contrasts with languages that have syllable timing (e.g. Spanish) or mora timing (e.g. Japanese), whose syllables or moras are spoken at a roughly constant rate regardless of stress. For details, see Isochrony.

## Historical Effects

It is common for stressed and unstressed syllables to behave differently as a language evolves. For example, in the Romance languages, the original Latin short vowels /e/ and /o/ have often become diphthongs when stressed. Since stress takes part in verb conjugation, that has produced verbs with vowel alternation in the Romance languages. For example, the Spanish verb *volver* has the form *volví* in the past tense but *vuelvo* in the present tense (see Spanish irregular verbs). Italian shows the same phenomenon but with /o/ alternating with /uo/ instead. That behavior is not confined to verbs; note for example Spanish *viento* "wind" from Latin *ventum*, or Italian *fuoco* "fire" from Latin *focum*.

## Stress "deafness"

An operational definition of word stress may be provided by the stress "deafness" paradigm. The idea is that if listeners perform poorly on reproducing the presentation order of series of stimuli that minimally differ in the position of phonetic prominence (e.g. [númi]/[numí]), the language doesn't have word stress. The task involves a reproduction of the order of stimuli as a sequence of key strokes, whereby key '1' is associated with one stress location (e.g. [númi]) and key '2' with the other (e.g. [numí]). A trial may be from 2 to 6 stimuli in length. Thus, the order [númi-númi-numí-númi] is to be reproduced as '1121'. It was found that listeners whose native language was French performed significantly worse than Spanish listeners in reproducing the stress patterns by key strokes. The explanation is that Spanish has lexically contrastive stress, as evidenced by the minimal pairs like *tópo* ("mole") and *topó* ("[he/she/it] met"), while in French, stress does not convey lexical information and there is no equivalent of stress minimal pairs as in Spanish.

An important case of stress "deafness" relates to Persian. The language has generally been described as having contrastive word stress or accent as evidenced by numerous stem and stem-clitic minimal pairs such as /mʔhi/ [mʔ.hí] ("fish") and /mʔh-i/ [mʔ'.hi] ("some month"). The authors argue that the reason that Persian listeners are stress "deaf" is that their accent locations arise postlexically. Persian thus lacks stress in the strict sense.

## Spelling and notation for stress

The orthographies of some languages include devices for indicating the position of lexical stress. Some examples are listed below:

In Modern Greek, all polysyllables are written with an acute accent (´) over the vowel of the stressed syllable. (The acute accent is also used on some monosyllables in order to distinguish homographs, as in ? ("the") and ? ("or"); here the stress of the two words is the same.)

In Spanish orthography, stress may be written explicitly with a single acute accent on a vowel. Stressed antepenultimate syllables are always written with that accent mark, as in *árabe*. If the last syllable is stressed, the accent mark is used if the word ends in the letters *n*, *s*, or a vowel, as in *está*. If the penultimate syllable is stressed, the accent is used if the word ends in any other letter, as in *cárcel*. That is, if a word is written without an accent mark, the stress is on the penult if the last letter is a vowel, *n*, or *s*, but on the final syllable if the word ends in any other letter. However, as in Greek, the acute accent is also used for some words to distinguish various syntactical uses (e.g. *té* "tea" vs. *te* a form of the pronoun *tú*; *dónde* "where" as a pronoun or *wh*-complement, *donde* "where" as an adverb). For more information, see *Stress in Spanish*.

In Portuguese, stress is sometimes indicated explicitly with an acute accent (for *i*, *u*, and open *a*, *e*, *o*), or circumflex (for close *a*, *e*, *o*). The orthography has an extensive set of rules that describe the placement of diacritics, based on the position of the stressed syllable and the surrounding letters.

In Italian, the grave accent is needed in words ending with an accented vowel, e.g. *città*, "city", and in some monosyllabic words that might otherwise be confused with other words, like *là* ("there") and *la* ("the"). It is optional for it to be written on any vowel if there is a possibility of misunderstanding, such as *condomìni* ("condominiums") and *condòmini* ("joint owners"). See Italian alphabet § Diacritics.

Though not part of normal orthography, a number of devices exist that are used by linguists and others to indicate the position of stress (and syllabification in some cases) when it is desirable to do so. Some of these are listed here.

Most commonly, the stress mark is placed before the beginning of the stressed syllable, where a syllable is definable. However, it is occasionally placed immediately before the vowel. In the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), primary stress is indicated by a high vertical line (primary stress mark: ' ) before the stressed element, secondary stress by a low vertical line (secondary stress mark: ?).

Linguists frequently mark primary stress with an acute accent over the vowel, and secondary stress by a grave accent.

In English dictionaries that show pronunciation by respelling, stress is typically marked with a prime mark placed after the stressed syllable: /si-lab'-e-fi-kay'-shen/.

In ad hoc pronunciation guides, stress is often indicated using a combination of bold text and capital letters. For example, si-lab-if-i-KAY-shun or si-LAB-if-i-KAY-shun.

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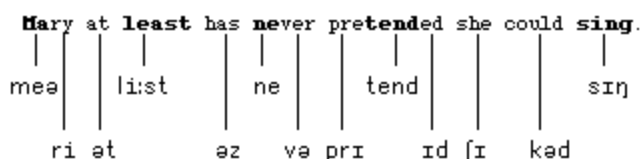
## 1.8. WEAK FORMS

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Weak forms are syllable sounds that become unstressed in connected speech and are often then pronounced as a schwa. In the sentence below the first 'do' is a weak form and the second is stressed.

We have seen that the vowels in UNSTRESSED SYLLABLES can suffer reduction, usually to  $\text{ə}$ , often to  $\text{ɪ}$ , and sometimes to  $\text{ʊ}$ . But what happens if the WHOLE WORD is unstressed?

As we saw in the page on sentence stress, short structural words are often completely unstressed. One of the examples was



In this sentence, the words "at", "has", "she" and "could" are all unstressed, and have weak vowels:

ət əz fɪ kəd

We call these weak forms.


Remember the rules for how to assign sentence stress, and remember that if you have learnt English as an L2, you are likely to have learnt these words in their citation form, which is their strong form - you've learnt to say /frɪm/ and /hæz/ instead of /frɪm/ and /əz/.

### What happens when a strong form becomes weak?


This is a detailed review of the different types of changes which structural words undergo when they become weak. For a complete look-up table of these changes, try this

Words which change their strong vowel to  $\ominus$


Prepositions

at for from of to  5, 14-16


Aux verbs

am are can do does had has have must shall should was were will  
would  37-39


Adverbs conjunctions articles

a an and as but some than that the  36

Pronouns

her them us you your  29

Words which change their strong vowel to  $\text{ɪ}$  ( $\text{ɪ}$ )

be been he him his she we  33, 35

Words which change their vowel before vowels

H-dropping

Weak forms which drop their initial h

except at the beginning of utterances

had has had have he her him his  29-35

When strong, when weak ?

Quite often, strong forms are used instead of weak forms. The following is a summary of when strong forms are likely to occur.



		Before consonants	Before vowels	
• <b>ɪ/i to i</b>	be	bɪ, bi	bi	aɪl bɪ 'ðeə aɪl bi 'əʊvə 'ðeə he (h)ɪ, i (h)i ɪf ɪ 'wɒnts ɪf i 'ɑːksks ʃe ʃɪ, fi ʃi ʃɪ 'wɒnts tu ʃi 'ɔːt tu
• <b>ə, u to u</b>	do	də, du	du	'wɒt də wɪ du 'ɔːl əv əs 'wɒnt to tə tu tə 'denmɑːk tu 'aɪslənd you jə, ju ju 'wɪl jə 'kɑːm wɪl ju 'ɑːsk
• <b>add -r</b>	for	fə	fər	fə 'taʊni fər 'æliːs her (h)ə (h)ər hə 'mʌðə hər 'ʌŋk! there ðə ðər ðə 'kaːnt bi ðər 'ɪznt eni are ə ər ə ðeɪ 'ɔːl ər 'ɔːl əv ðəm were wə wər wə ðeɪ 'ɔːl wər 'ɔːl əv ðəm your jə jər jə 'mʌðə jər 'ɑːnt
<b>articles:</b>	a	ə	ən	ə 'dɔː ən 'əʊpən dɔː the ðə ði ðə 'dɔː ði 'əʊpən 'dɔː

## 1.9. SENTENCE STRESS-DIVISION AND GROUPS

Sentence stress is the music of spoken English. Like word stress, sentence stress can help you to understand spoken English, even rapid spoken English.

Sentence stress is what gives English its rhythm or "beat". You remember that word stress is accent on one syllable within a word. Sentence stress is accent on certain words within a sentence.

In a sentence or an intonation group some of the words are greater importance than the others. This largely depends on the situation or context. Words which provide most of the information are brought out in speech by means of sentence-stress. Thus sentence stress is a special prominence given to one or more words according to their relative importance in a sentence.

The main function of sentence-stress is to single out the communicative centre of the sentence which introduces new information. The prominence



with a rising intonation (high final pitch), indicates a question. ↗ ↘

### Falling Intonation (↘)

(The pitch of the voice falls at the end of the sentence.)

Falling intonation is the most common intonation pattern in English.

It is commonly found in statements, commands, wh-questions (information questions),

confirmatory question tags and exclamations.

#### Statements

Nice to meet ↘you.

I'll be back in a ↘minute.

She doesn't live here ↘anymore.

Dad wants to change his ↘car.

Here is the weather ↘forecast.

Cloudy weather is expected at the end of the ↘week.

We should work together more ↘often

I'm going for a walk in the ↘park.

#### Commands

Write your name ↘here.

Show me what you've ↘written.

Leave it on the ↘desk.

Take that picture ↘down.

Throw that ↘out.

Put your books on the ↘table.

Take your hands out of your ↘pockets.

#### Wh- questions (requesting information.)

(questions beginning with 'who', 'what', 'why', 'where', 'when', 'which', and 'how')

What country do you come ↘from?

Where do you ↘work?

Which of them do you ↘prefer?

When does the shop ↘open?

How many books have you ↘bought?

Which coat is ↘yours?

Whose bag is ↘this?

Questions Tags that are statements requesting confirmation rather than questions.

Not all tag questions are really questions.

Some of them merely ask for confirmation or invite agreement, in which case we use a falling tone at the end.

He thinks he's so clever, doesn't ↘he?

She's such a nuisance, isn't *ʌ*she?

I failed the test because I didn't revise, did *ʌ* I?

It doesn't seem to bother him much, does *ʌ* it?

Exclamations

How nice of *ʌ* you!

That's just what I *ʌ*need!

You don't *ʌ* say!

What a beautiful *ʌ* voice!

That's a *ʌ*surprise!

Rising Intonation (*↑*)

(The pitch of the voice rises at the end of a sentence.)

Rising intonation invites the speaker to continue talking.

It is normally used with yes/no questions, and question tags that are real questions.

Yes/no Questions

(Questions that can be answered by 'yes' or 'no'.)

Do you like your new *↑*teacher?

Have you finished *↑*already?

May I borrow your *↑*dictionary?

Do you have any *↑*magazines?

Do you sell *↑*stamps?

Questions tags that show uncertainty and require an answer (real questions).

We've met already, *↑*haven't we?

You like fish, *↑*don't you?

You're a new student *↑*aren't you?

The view is beautiful, *↑*isn't it?

We sometimes use a combination of rising and falling intonation in the same sentence.

The combination is called Rise-Fall or Fall-Rise intonation.

## Functions

All vocal languages use pitch pragmatically in intonation—for instance for emphasis, to convey surprise or irony, or to pose a question. Tonal languages such as Chinese and Hausa use intonation in addition to using pitch for distinguishing words. Many writers have attempted to produce a list of distinct functions of intonation. Perhaps the longest was that of W.R. Lee, who proposed ten. J.C. Wells and E. Couper-Kuhlen both put forward six functions. Wells's list is given below; the examples are not his:

attitudinal function (for expressing emotions and attitudes)

example: a fall from a high pitch on the 'mor' syllable of "good morning" suggests more excitement than a fall from a low pitch

grammatical function (to identify grammatical structure)

example: it is claimed that in English a falling pitch movement is associated with statements, but a rising pitch turns a statement into a yes-no question, as in He's going ?home?. This use of intonation is more typical of American English than of British.

focusing (to show what information in the utterance is new and what is already known)

example: in English I saw a ?man in the garden answers "Whom did you see?" or "What happened?", while I ?saw a man in the garden answers "Did you hear a man in the garden?"

discourse function (to show how clauses and sentences go together in spoken discourse)

example: subordinate clauses often have lower pitch, faster tempo and narrower pitch range than their main clause, as in the case of the material in parentheses in "The Red Planet (as it's known) is fourth from the sun"

psychological function (to organize speech into units that are easy to perceive, memorize and perform)

example: the utterance "You can have it in red blue green yellow or ?black" is more difficult to understand and remember than the same utterance divided into tone units as in "You can have it in ?red | ?blue | ?green | ?yellow | or ?black"

indexical function (to act as a marker of personal or social identity)

example: group membership can be indicated by the use of intonation patterns adopted specifically by that group, such as street vendors or preachers. The so-called high rising terminal, where a statement ends with a high rising pitch movement, is said to be typical of younger speakers of English, and possibly to be more widely found among young female speakers.

It is not known whether such a list would apply to other languages without alteration.

# UNIT 2

## MORPHOLOGY

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### STRUCTURE

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- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Structure of Words
- 2.3 Concept of Morpheme/Allomorph
- 2.4 Types of Morpheme
- 2.5 Processes of Word Formation

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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- ❖ Know about morphology
- ❖ To know about structure of words
- ❖ To know about concept of morpheme/allomorph
- ❖ To know about types of morpheme
- ❖ To know about processes of word formation

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### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

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In linguistics, morphology is the study of words, how they are formed, and their relationship to other words in the same language. It analyzes the structure of words and parts of words, such as stems, root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Morphology also looks at parts of speech, intonation and stress, and the ways context can change a word's pronunciation and meaning. Morphology differs from morphological typology, which is the classification of languages based on their use of words, and lexicology, which is the study of words and how they make up a language's vocabulary.

Morphology is the study of words. Morphemes are the minimal units of words that have a meaning and cannot be subdivided further. There are two main types: free and bound. Free morphemes can occur alone and bound morphemes must occur with another morpheme. An example of a free morpheme is "bad", and an example of a bound morpheme is "ly." It is bound because although it has meaning, it cannot stand alone. It must be attached to another morpheme to produce a word.

While words, along with clitics, are generally accepted as being the smallest units of syntax, in most languages, if not all, many words can be related to other words by rules that collectively describe the grammar for that language. For example, English speakers recognize that the words dog and dogs are closely related, differentiated only by the plurality morpheme

"-s", only found bound to noun phrases. Speakers of English, a fusional language, recognize these relations from their innate knowledge of English's rules of word formation. They infer intuitively that dog is to dogs as cat is to cats; and, in similar fashion, dog is to dog catcher as dish is to dishwasher. By contrast, Classical Chinese has very little morphology, using almost exclusively unbound morphemes ("free" morphemes) and depending on word order to convey meaning. (Most words in modern Standard Chinese ["Mandarin"], however, are compounds and most roots are bound.) These are understood as grammars that represent the morphology of the language. The rules understood by a speaker reflect specific patterns or regularities in the way words are formed from smaller units in the language they are using, and how those smaller units interact in speech. In this way, morphology is the branch of linguistics that studies patterns of word formation within and across languages and attempts to formulate rules that model the knowledge of the speakers of those languages.

Phonological and orthographic modifications between a base word and its origin may be partial to literacy skills. Studies have indicated that the presence of modification in phonology and orthography makes morphologically complex words harder to understand and that the absence of modification between a base word and its origin makes morphologically complex words easier to understand. Morphologically complex words are easier to comprehend when they include a base word.

Polysynthetic languages, such as Chukchi, have words composed of many morphemes. The Chukchi word "t?mey??levtp??t?rk?n", for example, meaning "I have a fierce headache", is composed of eight morphemes t?-mey?-?-levt-p??t-?-rk?n that may be glossed. The morphology of such languages allows for each consonant and vowel to be understood as morphemes, while the grammar of the language indicates the usage and understanding of each morpheme.

The discipline that deals specifically with the sound changes occurring within morphemes is morphophonology.

Free morpheme: bad

Bound morpheme: -ly

Word: badly

When we talk about words, there are two groups: lexical (or content) and function (or grammatical) words. Lexical words are called open class words and include nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. New words can regularly be added to this group. Function words, or closed class words, are conjunctions, prepositions, articles and pronouns; and new words cannot be (or are very rarely) added to this class.

Affixes are often the bound morpheme. This group includes prefixes, suffixes, infixes, and circumfixes. Prefixes are added to the beginning of another morpheme, suffixes are added to the end, infixes are inserted into other morphemes, and circumfixes are attached to another morpheme at the beginning and end. Following are examples of each of these:

Prefix: re- added to do produces redo

Suffix: -or added to edit produces editor

Infix: -um- added to fikas (strong) produces fumikas (to be strong) in Bontoc

Circumfix: ge- and -t to lieb (love) produces geliebt (loved) in German

There are two categories of affixes: derivational and inflectional. The main difference between the two is that derivational affixes are added to morphemes to form new words that may or may not be the same part of speech and inflectional affixes are added to the end of an existing word for purely grammatical reasons. In English there are only eight total inflectional affixes:

-s	3rd person singular present	she waits
-ed	past tense	he walked
-ing	progressive	she's watching
-en	past participle	she has eaten
-s	plural	three tables
-'s	possessive	Holly's cat
-er	comparative	you are taller
-est	superlative	you are the tallest

The other type of bound morphemes are called bound roots. These are morphemes (and not affixes) that must be attached to another morpheme and do not have a meaning of their own. Some examples are *ceive* in *perceive* and *mit* in *submit*.

### English Morphemes

Free

Open Class

Closed Class

Bound

Affix

Derivational

Inflectional

Root

There are six ways to form new words. Compounds are a combination of words, acronyms are derived from the initials of words, back-formations are created from removing what is mistakenly considered to be an affix, abbreviations or clippings are shortening longer words, eponyms are created from proper nouns (names), and blending is combining parts of words into one.

Compound: doghouse

Acronym: NBA (National Basketball Association) or scuba (self-contained underwater breathing apparatus)

Back-formation: edit from editor  
Abbreviation: phone from telephone  
Eponym: sandwich from Earl of Sandwich  
Blending: smog from smoke and fog

## 2.2. STRUCTURE OF WORDS

In linguistics, a word of a spoken language can be defined as the smallest sequence of phonemes that can be uttered in isolation with objective or practical meaning. For many languages, words also correspond to sequences of graphemes ("letters") in their standard writing systems that are delimited by spaces wider than the normal inter-letter space, or by other graphical conventions. The concept of "word" is usually distinguished from that of a morpheme, which is the smallest unit of speech which has a meaning, even if it will not stand on its own.

In many languages, the notion of what constitutes a "word" may be mostly learned as part of learning the writing system. This is the case of the English language, and of most languages that are written with alphabets derived from the ancient Latin or Greek alphabets.

There still remains no consensus among linguists about the proper definition of "word" in a spoken language that is independent of its writing system, nor about the precise distinction between it and "morpheme". This issue is particularly debated for Chinese and other languages of East Asia, and may be moot for Afro-Asiatic languages.

### Root Words

Many English words are formed by taking basic words and adding combinations of prefixes and suffixes to them. A basic word to which affixes (prefixes and suffixes) are added is called a root word because it forms the basis of a new word. The root word is also a word in its own right. For example, the word lovely consists of the word love and the suffix -ly.

In contrast, a root is the basis of a new word, but it does not typically form a stand-alone word on its own. For example, the word reject is made up of the prefix re- and the Latin root ject, which is not a stand-alone word.

### Common Word Roots

Root	Meaning	Example	Definition
agri	field	agronomy	field-crop production and soil management
anthropo	man	anthropology	the study of man
astro	star	astronaut	one who travels in interplanetary space
bio	life	biology	the study of life
cardio	heart	cardiac	pertaining to the heart
cede	go	precede	to go before
chromo	color	chromatology	the science of colors



demos	people	democracy	government by the people
derma	skin	epidermis	the outer layer of skin
dyna	power	dynamic	characterized by power and energy
geo	earth	geology	the study of the earth
helio	sun	heliotrope	any plant that turns toward the sun
hydro	water	hydroponics	growing of plants in water reinforced with nutrients
hypno	sleep	hypnosis	a state of sleep induced by suggestion
ject	throw	eject	to throw out
magni	great, big	magnify	to enlarge, to make bigger
man(u)	hand	manuscript	written by hand
mono	one	monoplane	airplane with one wing
ortho	straight	orthodox	right, true, straight opinion
pod	foot	pseudopod	false foot
psycho	mind	psychology	study of the mind in any of its aspects
pyro	fire	pyrometer	an instrument for measuring temperatures
script	write	manuscript	hand written
terra	earth	terrace	a raised platform of earth
thermo	heat	thermometer	instrument for measuring heat
zoo	animal	zoology	the study of animals

### **Common Latin Roots**

Latin Root	Definition	Examples
ambi	both	ambiguous, ambidextrous
aqua	water	aquarium, aquamarine
aud	to hear	audience, audition
bene	good	benefactor, benevolent
cent	one hundred	century, percent
circum	around	circumference, circumstance
contra/counter	against	contradict, encounter
dict	to say	dictation, dictator
duc/duct	to lead	conduct, induce
fac	to do; to make	factory, manufacture
form	shape	conform, reform
fort	strength	fortitude, fortress
fract	to break	fracture, fraction
ject	throw	projection, rejection
jud	judge	judicial, prejudice
mal	bad	malevolent, malefactor

mater	mother	material, maternity
mit	to send	transmit, admit
mort	death	mortal, mortician
multi	many	multimedia, multiple
pater	father	paternal, paternity
port	to carry	portable, transportation
rupt	to break	bankrupt, disruption
scrib/scribe	to write	inscription, prescribe
sect/sec	to cut	bisect, section
sent	to feel; to send	consent, resent
spect	to look	inspection, spectator
struct	to build	destruction, restructure
vid/vis	to see	video, televise
voc	voice; to call	vocalize, advocate

#### ***Common Greek Roots***

Greek Root	Definition	Examples
anthropo	man; human; humanity	anthropologist, philanthropy
auto	self	autobiography, automobile
bio	life	biology, biography
chron	time	chronological, chronic
dyna	power	dynamic, dynamite
dys	bad; hard; unlucky	dysfunctional, dyslexic
gram	thing written	epigram, telegram
graph	writing	graphic, phonograph
hetero	different	heteronym, heterogeneous
homo	same	homonym, homogenous
hydr	water	hydration, dehydrate
hypo	below; beneath	hypothermia, hypothetical
logy	study of	biology, psychology
meter/metr	measure	thermometer, perimeter
micro	small	microbe, microscope
mis/miso	hate	misanthrope, misogyny
mono	one	monologue, monotonous
morph	form; shape	morphology, morphing
nym	name	antonym, synonym
phil	love	philanthropist, philosophy
phobia	fear	claustrophobia, phobic

phon	sound	phone, symphony
photo/phos	light	photograph, phosphorous
pseudo	false	pseudonym, pseudoscience
psycho	soul; spirit	psychology, psychic
scope	viewing instrument	microscope, telescope
techno	art; science; skill	technique, technological
tele	far off	television, telephone
therm	heat	thermal, thermometer

### ***Affixes***

One method of understanding the meanings of new words is to analyze the different parts of the word and the meanings of those parts. Many new words are formed by adding an affix to the beginning or end of a Latin or Greek root or root word. When affixes are added to the beginning of roots or root words, they are called prefixes. For example, the most common prefix is *un-*, which means not or opposite of. If you add *un-* to the word *happy*, the new word becomes *unhappy*, which means not happy. When affixes are added to the end of roots or root words, they are called suffixes. The most common suffixes are *-s* and *-es*, which mean more than one (or the plural) of the word. Adding *-es* to *wish*, changes the meaning of the word to more than one wish.

#### Common Prefixes

Prefix	Definition	Examples
anti-	against	antclimax
de-	opposite	devalue
dis-	not; opposite of	discover
en-, em-	cause to	enact, empower
fore-	before; front of	foreshadow, forearm
in-, im-	in	income, impulse
in-, im-, il-, ir-	not	indirect, immoral, illiterate, irreverent
inter-	between; among	interrupt
mid-	middle	midfield
mis-	wrongly	misspell
non-	not	nonviolent
over-	over; too much	overeat
pre-	before	preview
re-	again	rewrite
semi-	half; partly; not fully	semifinal
sub-	under	subway
super-	above; beyond	superhuman
trans-	across	transmit

un-	not; opposite of	unusual
under-	under; too little	underestimate
<b>Common Suffixes</b>		
Suffix	Definition	Examples
-able, -ible	is; can be	affordable, sensible
-al, -ial	having characteristics of	universal, facial
-ed	past tense verbs; adjectives	the dog walked, the walked dog
-en	made of	golden
-er, -or	one who;	person connected with teacher, professor
-er	more	taller
-est	the most	tallest
-ful	full of	helpful
-ic	having characteristics of	poetic
-ing	verb forms;	present participles sleeping
-ion, -tion, -ation,		
-tion	act; process	submission, motion, relation, edition
-ity, -ty	state of	activity, society
-ive, -ative,		
-itive	adjective form of noun	active, comparative, sensitive
-less	without	hopeless
-ly	how something is	lovely
-ment	state of being; act of	contentment
-ness	state of; condition of	openness
-ous, -eous, -ious	having qualities of	riotous, courageous,
gracious		
-s, -es	more than one	trains, trenches
-y	characterized by	gloomy

### **Prefix**

A prefix is an affix which is placed before the stem of a word. Adding it to the beginning of one word changes it into another word. For example, when the prefix un- is added to the word happy, it creates the word unhappy. Particularly in the study of languages, a prefix is also called a preformative, because it alters the form of the words to which it is affixed.

Prefixes, like other affixes, can be either inflectional, creating a new form of the word with the same basic meaning and same lexical category (but playing a different role in the sentence), or derivational, creating a new word with a new semantic meaning and sometimes also a different lexical category. Prefixes, like all other affixes, are usually bound morphemes.

In English, there are no inflectional prefixes; English uses suffixes instead for that purpose.

The word prefix is itself made up of the stem fix (meaning "attach", in this case), and the prefix pre- (meaning "before"), both of which are derived from Latin roots.

### **Common Prefixes**

ante-	before	antebellum	before the war
anti-	against	antifreeze	liquid used to guard against freezing
auto-	self	automatic	self-acting or self-regulating
bene-	good	benefit	an act of kindness; a gift
circum-	around	circumscribe	to draw a line around; to encircle
contra-	against	contradict	to speak against
de-	reverse, remove	defoliate	remove the leaves from a tree
dis-	apart	dislocate	to unlodge
dys-	bad	dysfunctional	not functioning
ecto-	outside	ectoparasite	parasite living on the exterior of animals
endo-	within	endogamy	marriage within the tribe
ex-	out	excavate	to dig out
equi-	equal	equidistant	equal distance
extra-	beyond	extraterrestrial	beyond the earth
hyper-	over	hypertension	high blood pressure
hypo-	under	hypotension	low blood pressure
in-	in	interim	in between
inter-	between	intervene	come between
intra-	within	intramural	within bounds of a school
intro-	in, into	introspect	to look within, as one's own mind
macro-	large	macroscopic	large enough to be observed by the naked eye
mal-	bad	maladjusted	badly adjusted
micro-	small	microscopic	so small that one needs a microscope to observe
multi-	many	multimillionaire	one having two or more million dollars
neo-	new	neolithic	new stone age
non-	not	nonconformist	one who does not conform
pan-	all	pantheon	a temple dedicated to all gods
poly-	many	polygonal	having many sides
post-	after	postgraduate	after graduating
pre-	before	precede	to go before
pro-	for	proponent	a supporter
proto-	first	prototype	first or original model

pseudo-	false	pseudonym	false name; esp., an author's pen-name
re-, red-	back again	rejuvenate	to make young
re-, red-	together	reconnect	to put together again
retro-	backward	retrospect	a looking back on things
semi-	half	semicircle	half a circle
sub-	under	submerge	to put under water
super-	above	superfine	extra fine
tele-	far	telescope	seeing or viewing afar
trans-	across	transalpine	across the Alps

**Number prefixes**

uni- one	tetra- four	oct- eight
mono- one	quint- five	nov- nine
bi- two	pent- five	dec- ten
duo- two	sex- six	lat- side
di- two	hex- six	ped- foot
tri- three	sept- seven	pod- foot
quad- four	hept- seven	

**Math & Science Affixes and Roots**

Root or Affix	Example
aqua (water)	aquarium
hydro (water)	hydroplane
hemi (half)	hemisphere
semi (half)	semicircle
equi (equal)	equivalent
tele (far off)	telescope
micro (small)	microfilm
onomy (science of)	astronomy
ology (study of)	geology
uni (one)	universe
bi (two)	bicycle
tri (three)	triangle
octa (eight)	octagon
dec (ten)	decade
centi (hundred)	centimeter
milli (thousand)	millimeter
bio (life)	biology
astro (star)	astronaut
thermo (heat)	thermodynamic

meter (measure)	diameter
ped (foot)	pedestrian
pod (foot)	tripod

Prefixes that mean "no": a- de- dis-, in- non- un-, contra

Examples: disqualify, nondescript, unscrupulous, contradict, inadvertent

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
a-, an-	without, not	asexual, atypical, amoral, anarchy
de-	reverse action, away	defrost, demystify, desensitize, deduct
dis-, dif-, di-	not, apart	dissatisfied, disorganized, different, divert
in-, il-, it-, im-	not	inappropriate, invisible, illegal, impossible
non-	not	nonproductive, nonessential, nonsense
un-	not	unlikely, unnoticeable, unreliable
contra-, counter-	against	contrary, contradict, counterproductive

Prefixes that indicate "when," "where," or "more": pre-, post-, ante-, inter-, infra-, traps-, sub-, circum-, ultra-

Examples: premature, postscript, anteroom, intervene, transformation

Prefix	Meaning	Examples
pre-, pro-	before	pre-dinner, preliminary, previous, prologue
post-	after	postwar, postoperative, postpone
ante-	before	antecedent, antechamber
inter-	between, among	interstate, intercept, interfere
intra-	within	intramural, intrastate, intravenous
trans-	across	transcontinental, transparent, transaction
sub-	under	submarine, submerge, subjugate
circum-	around	circumnavigate, circumference
ultra-	beyond, on the far side of, excessive	ultrasonic, ultraviolet, ultraconservative

## 2.3. CONCEPT OF MORPHEME/ALLOMORPH

A morpheme is the smallest syntactical and meaningful linguistic unit that contains a word, or an element of the word such as the use of –s whereas this unit is not divisible further into smaller syntactical parts.

A morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in a language. A morpheme is not identical to a word. The main difference between them is that a morpheme sometimes does not stand alone, but a word, by definition, always stands alone. The linguistics field of study dedicated to morphemes is called morphology. When a morpheme stands by itself, it is considered as a root because it has a meaning of its own (such as the morpheme cat). When it depends on another morpheme to express an idea, it is an affix because it has a grammatical function (such as the –s in cats to indicate that it is plural). Every word comprises one or more morphemes.



A morpheme can be loosely defined as a minimal unit having more or less constant meaning associated with more or less constant form. Morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in the grammar of language. In English grammar and morphology, a morpheme is a meaningful linguistic unit consisting of a word such as dog, or a word element, such as the -s at the end of dogs, that can't be divided into smaller meaningful parts.

Morphemes are the smallest units of meaning in a language. They are commonly classified as either free morphemes, which can occur as separate words or bound morphemes, which can't stand alone as words.

Many words in English are made up of a single free morpheme. For example, each word in the following sentence is a distinct morpheme: "I need to go now, but you can stay." Put another way, none of the nine words in that sentence can be divided into smaller parts that are also meaningful.

There are three points to note with respect to morphemes.

First, they are distinct from semantic feature, in that morphemes have a more or less constant form, which is usually reflected by their spelling.

Ex ; the sense of the words man, boy, stallion, and colt.

Second, the definition of morpheme as a minimal unit with more or less constant meaning associated with more or less constant form should be taken as a general rule of thumb rather than a hard and fast criterion

Ex : the word boys and girls.

Boys ? boy + s

Girls ? girl + s

Where the -s in each word represent the same plural morpheme (the plural morpheme is often symbolized (PLU) rather than (S) to distinguish it from other morphemes spelled with - s, such as the possessive morpheme in boys)

Third, it is important to note that identical spelling don't necessarily indicate the same morpheme

Ex : buyer and shorter

Buyer ? means something like "one who"

Shorter ? comparative morpheme

Lexical and Grammatical Morpheme

The distinction between lexical and grammatical morphemes is not well defined, although many linguists seem to agree that is a useful division to make

Lexical morphemes have a sense (i.e. meaning) in and of themselves.

- Nouns : boy
- Verb : buy
- Adjective : big

Grammatical morphemes, on the other hand, don't really have a sense in and of themselves. Instead they express some sort of relationship between lexical morphemes.

- preposition : at, on, beside etc

- article : a, an and the
- conjunction : but, and, both etc.

### Free and Bound Morphemes

In contrast to the division between lexical and grammatical morphemes, the distinction between free and bound morphemes is straight forward. Free morphemes are those that can stand alone as words. They may be lexical (serve, press) or they may be grammatical (at, and).

Bound morphemes, on the other hand, cannot stand alone as word. Like wise, they may be lexical (clued) as in exclude, include and preclude or they may be grammatical (Plu) plural as in boys, girls and cats.

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## 2.4. TYPES OF MORPHEME

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Morpheme is generally considered as grammatical unit. In linguistic it is a small unit of language and its study is called morphology. These are not typical words of a language. Morphemes are different from normal word. You must be thinking now how these are different if both are small units of language. The basic different between the types of morphemes and a word is the freestanding property. Morphemes do not necessarily exist as free word whereas word is always free standing. A word may have one or more than one morphemes. But, a morpheme can never comprise of any words inside it. Another difference is that they may or may not be semantic. It is not always necessary that these types morphemes are semantic.

You can classify these types of morphemes into two main types. If you want to understand the details of morphology then you must understand what is this morpheme and its related types. Two types of morphemes are free morphemes and bound morphemes. Any morpheme you study must be belonging to any of these categories. They are not belonging to both of these categories. Let's see these types in details.

Free morphemes are those that have an independent identity. They sparsely act as a word and they may also appear along with other lexemes. As single word they act like town, city etc and along with lexemes they are like town hall. Second part of morphemes always comes with words and it is a part of the words. They are in conjunction with other bound morphemes or a root. Suppose 'UN' this is one example of bound morpheme. You can't use it alone and it always comes along with conjunction. These are called affixes in English. These are must bound types of morphemes that may be suffix or prefix.

Other than these two main types of morphemes bound morphemes are also sub divided into two categories. These are derivational morphemes and inflectional morphemes. Derivational morphemes as the name indicates are derived forms. When they are used in the sentences they change the part of speech. They change an adjective to a noun. Or they change a noun into adjective. Derivative morphemes can also change semantic meanings. Let's see this example. Happiness is a word in which happy is bound to morpheme 'ness'. In this example an adjective is changed into a noun. In another example unkind, 'UN' is morpheme which is bound to a root word kind and it has changed the semantic of the word. Second types of

morphemes are the inflectional. This only changes the tense of the verb. Neither part of speech of a morpheme changes in this inflectional nor semantic. The only difference is observed in the tense. Suppose example of wait. After adding 'ed' into wait it becomes waited. Another type is cranberry morpheme. They are not affixes and these are also called unique morphemes that are only used as single words. Another type is allomorphs that have no effect on semantic and part of speech but they only produce a difference in pronunciation.

There are two types of morphemes which are:

### **Free Morpheme**

The free morpheme is just a simple word that has a single morpheme; thus, it is free and can occur independently. For instance, in "David wishes to go there," "go" is a free morpheme.

### **Bound Morpheme**

By contrast to a free morpheme, a bound morpheme is used with a free morpheme to construct a complete word, as it cannot stand independently. For example, in "The farmer wants to kill duckling," the bound morphemes "-er," "s," and "ling" cannot stand on their own. They need free morphemes of "farm," "want" and "duck" to give meanings.

Bound morphemes are of two types which include:

#### ***Inflectional Morpheme***

This type of morpheme is only a suffix. It transforms the function of words by adding -ly as a suffix to the base of the noun, such as in "friend," which becomes "friendly." Now it contains two morphemes "friend" and "-ly." Here, "-ly" is an inflectional morpheme, as it has changed the noun "friend" into an adjective "friendly."

#### ***Derivational Morpheme***

This type of morpheme uses both prefix as well as suffix, and has the ability to change function as well as meaning of words. For instance, adding the suffix "-less" to the noun "meaning" makes the meaning of this word entirely different.

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## **2.5. PROCESSES OF WORD FORMATION**

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In linguistics, word formation is the creation of a new word. Word formation is sometimes contrasted with semantic change, which is a change in a single word's meaning. The boundary between word formation and semantic change can be difficult to define: a new use of an old word can be seen as a new word derived from an old one and identical to it in form. See 'conversion'.

Nowadays, the terms 'word formation' does not have a clear cut, universally accepted usage. It is sometimes referred to all processes connected with changing the form of the word by, for example, affixation, which is a matter of morphology. In its wider sense word formation denotes the processes of creation of new lexical units. Although it seems that the difference between morphological change of a word and creation of a new term is quite easy to perceive, there is sometimes a dispute as to whether

blending is still a morphological change or making a new word. There are, of course, numerous word formation processes that do not arouse any controversies and are very similar in the majority of languages.

## Clipping

Clipping is the word formation process which consists in the reduction of a word to one of its parts (Marchand: 1969). Clippings are, also, known as "shortenings." Clipping mainly consists of the following types:

1. Back clipping
2. Fore-clipping
3. Middle clipping
4. Complex clipping

### **Back clipping**

Back clipping or apocopation is the most common type, in which the beginning is retained. The unclipped original may be either a simple or a composite. Examples are: ad (advertisement), cable (cablegram), doc (doctor), exam (examination), gas (gasoline), math (mathematics), memo (memorandum), gym (gymnastics, gymnasium) mutt (muttonhead), pub (public house), pop (popular concert), trad (traditional jazz), fax (facsimile).

### **Fore-clipping**

Fore-clipping or aphaeresis retains the final part. Examples are: phone (telephone), varsity (university), chute (parachute), coon (raccoon), gator (alligator), pike (turnpike).

### **Middle clipping**

In middle clipping or syncope, the middle of the word is retained. Examples are: flu (influenza), tec (detective), polly (apollinaris), jams (pyjamas), shrink (head-shrinker).

### **Complex Clipping**

Clipped forms are also used in compounds. One part of the original compound most often remains intact. Examples are: cablegram (cable telegram), op art (optical art), org-man (organization man), linocut (linoleum cut). Sometimes both halves of a compound are clipped as in navicert (navigation certificate). In these cases it is difficult to know whether the resultant formation should be treated as a clipping or as a blend, for the border between the two types is not always clear. According to Bauer (1993), the easiest way to draw the distinction is to say that those forms which retain compound stress are clipped compounds, whereas those that take simple word stress are not. By this criterion bodbiz, Chicom, Comsymp, Intelsat, midcult, pro-am, sci-fi, and sitcom are all compounds made of clippings. According to Marchand (1969), clippings are not coined as words belonging to the standard vocabulary of a language. They originate as terms of a special group like schools, army, police, the medical profession, etc., in the intimacy of a milieu where a hint is sufficient to indicate the whole. For example, in school slang originated exam, math, lab, and spec(ulation), tick(et = credit) originated in stock-exchange slang, whereas vet(eran), cap(tain), are army slang. While clipping terms of some influential groups

can pass into common usage, becoming part of Standard English, clippings of a socially unimportant class or group will remain groap slang.

### **Acronymy**

Acronyms and initialisms are abbreviations, such as NATO, laser, and IBM, that are formed using the initial letters of words or word parts in a phrase or name. Acronyms and initialisms are usually pronounced in a way that is distinct from that of the full forms for which they stand: as the names of the individual letters (as in IBM), as a word (as in NATO), or as a combination (as in IUPAC). Another term, alphabetism, is sometimes used to describe abbreviations pronounced as the names of letters.

Examples :

pronounced as a word, containing only initial letters:

FNMA: (Fannie Mae) Federal National Mortgage Association

laser: light amplification by the stimulated emission of radiation

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

scuba: self-contained underwater breathing apparatus

pronounced as a word, containing non-initial letters:

Amphetamine: Alpha-methyl-phenethylamine

Gestapo: Geheime Staatspolizei ("secret state police")

Interpol: International Criminal Police Organization

radar: radio detection and ranging

pronounced only as the names of letters

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid

LED: light-emitting diode

OB-GYN: obstetrics and gyn(a)ecology or obstetrician and gyn(a)ecologist

shortcut incorporated into name

3M: (three em) originally Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company

E<sup>3</sup>: (e three) Electronic Entertainment Exposition

W3C: (double-u three cee) World Wide Web Consortium

recursive acronyms, in which the abbreviation itself is the expansion of one initial (particularly enjoyed by the open-source community)

GNU: GNU's Not Unix!

HURD: HIRD of Unix-Replacing Daemons, where "HIRD" stands for "HURD of Interfaces Representing Depth"

VISA: VISA International Service Association

XNA: XNA's Not Acronymed - Microsoft's new game development framework

pseudo-acronyms are used because, when pronounced as intended, they resemble the sounds of other words:

ICQ: "I seek you"

IOU: "I owe you"

OU812: "Oh, you ate one, too?", a Van Halen album

CQR: "secure", a brand of boat anchor

multi-layered acronyms:

GTK+: GIMP Tool Kit, i.e. GNU Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit, i.e. GNU's Not Unix Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit

GAIM: GTK+ AOL Instant Messenger, i.e. GIMP Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger, i.e. GNU Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger, i.e. GNU's Not Unix Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger

VHDL: VHSIC Hardware Description Language, i.e. Very High Speed Integrated Circuits Hardware Description Language

## Blending

A blend is a word formed from parts of two other words. These parts are sometimes, but not always, morphemes.

A blend is different from a portmanteau word in that a portmanteau refers strictly to a blending of two function words, similar to a contraction.

### *Formation of blendings*

Most blends are formed by one of the following methods:

1. The beginning of one word is added to the end of the other. For example, brunch is a blend of breakfast and lunch. This is the most common method of blending.

2. The beginnings of two words are combined. For example, cyborg is a blend of cybernetic and organism.

3. One complete word is combined with part of another word. For example, guesstimate is a blend of guess and estimate.

4. Two words are blended around a common sequence of sounds. For example, the word Californication, from a song by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, is a blend of California and fornication.

5. Multiple sounds from two component words are blended, while mostly preserving the sounds' order. Poet Lewis Carroll was well known for these kinds of blends. An example of this is the word slithy, a blend of lithe and slimy. This method is difficult to achieve and is considered a sign of Carroll's verbal wit.

When two words are combined in their entirety, the result is considered a compound word rather than a blend. For example, bagpipe is a compound, not a blend,

## Back-formation

Back-formation refers to the process of creating a new lexeme (less precisely, a new "word") by removing actual or supposed affixes. The resulting neologism is called a back-formation. Back-formations are shortened words created from longer words, thus back-formations may be viewed as a sub-type of clipping.



For example, the noun resurrection was borrowed from Latin, and the verb resurrect was then backformed hundreds of years later from it by removing the -ion suffix. This segmentation of resurrection into resurrect + ion was possible because English had many examples of Latinate words that had verb and verb+-ion pairs — in these pairs the -ion suffix is added to verb forms in order to create nouns (such as, insert/insertion, project/projection, etc.).

Back formation may be similar to the reanalyses of folk etymologies when it rests on an erroneous understanding of the morphology of the longer word. For example, the singular noun asset is a back-formation from the plural assets. However, assets is originally not a plural; it is a loan-word from Anglo-Norman asetz (modern French assez). The -s was reanalyzed as a plural suffix.

### ***Back-formation in the English Language***

Many words came into English by this route: Pease was once a mass noun but was reinterpreted as a plural, leading to the back-formation pea. The noun statistic was likewise a back-formation from the field of study statistics. In Britain the verb burgle came into use in the 19th century as a back-formation from burglar (which can be compared to the North America verb burglarize formed by suffixation).

Even though many English words are formed this way, new coinages may sound strange, and are often used for humorous effect. For example, grunted or pervious (from disgruntled and impervious) would be considered mistakes today, and used only in humorous contexts. The comedian George Gobel regularly used original back-formations in his humorous monologues. Bill Bryson mused that the English language would be richer if we could call a tidy-haired person shevelled - as an opposite to dishevelled.

Frequently back-formations begin in colloquial use and only gradually become accepted. For example, enthuse (from enthusiasm) is gaining popularity, though it is still considered substandard by some today.

The immense celebrations in Britain at the news of the relief of the Siege of Mafeking briefly created the verb to maffick, meaning to celebrate both extravagantly and publicly. "Maffick" was a back-formation from Mafeking, a place-name that was treated humorously as a gerund or participle.

### ***Derivation***

Derivation is used to form new words, as with happi-ness and un-happy from happy, or determination from determine. A contrast is intended with the process of inflection, which uses another kind of affix in order to form variants of the same word, as with determine/determine-s/determin-ing/determin-ed.

A derivational suffix usually applies to words of one syntactic category and changes them into words of another syntactic category. For example, the English derivational suffix -ly changes adjectives into adverbs (slow ? slowly).

Some examples of English derivational suffixes:

adjective-to-noun: -ness (slow ? slowness)



adjective-to-verb: -ize (modern ? modernize)  
 noun-to-adjective: -al (recreation ? recreational)  
 noun-to-verb: -fy (glory ? glorify)  
 verb-to-adjective: -able (drink ? drinkable)  
 verb-to-noun: -ance (deliver ? deliverance)

Although derivational affixes do not necessarily modify the syntactic category, they modify the meaning of the base. In many cases, derivational affixes change both the syntactic category and the meaning: modern ? modernize ("to make modern"). The modification of meaning is sometimes predictable: Adjective + ness ? the state of being (Adjective); (stupid? stupidity).

A prefix (write ? re-write; lord ? over-lord) will rarely change syntactic category in English. The derivational prefix un- applies to adjectives (healthy ? unhealthy), some verbs (do ? undo), but rarely nouns. A few exceptions are the prefixes en- and be-. En- (em- before labials) is usually used as a transitive marker on verbs, but can also be applied to adjectives and nouns to form transitive verb: circle (verb) ? encircle (verb); but rich (adj) ? enrich (verb), large (adj) ? enlarge (verb), rapture (noun) ? enrapture (verb), slave (noun) ? enslave (verb). The prefix be-, though not as productive as it once was in English, can function in a similar way to en- to mark transitivity, but can also be attached to nouns, often in a causative or privative sense: siege (noun) ? besiege (verb), jewel (noun) ? bejewel (verb), head (noun) ? behead (verb).

Note that derivational affixes are bound morphemes. In that, derivation differs from compounding, by which free morphemes are combined (lawsuit, Latin professor). It also differs from inflection in that inflection does not change a word's syntactic category and creates not new lexemes but new word forms (table ? tables; open ? opened).

Derivation may occur without any change of form, for example telephone (noun) and to telephone. This is known as conversion. Some linguists consider that when a word's syntactic category is changed without any change of form, a null morpheme is being affixed.

## **Borrowing**

Borrowing is just taking a word from another language. The borrowed words are called loan words. A loanword (or loan word) is a word directly taken into one language from another with little or no translation. By contrast, a calque or loan translation is a related concept whereby it is the meaning or idiom that is borrowed rather than the lexical item itself. The word loanword is itself a calque of the German Lehnwort. Loanwords can also be called "borrowings".

### ***Loanwords in English***

English has many loanwords. In 1973, a computerized survey of about 80,000 words in the old Shorter Oxford Dictionary (3rd edition) was published in *Ordered Profusion* by Thomas Finkenstaedt and Dieter Wolff. Their estimates for the origin of English words were as follows:

French, including Old French and early Anglo-French: 28.3%

Latin, including modern scientific and technical Latin: 28.24%

Germanic languages, including Old and Middle English: 25%

Greek: 5.32%

No etymology given or unknown: 4.03%

Derived from proper names: 3.28%

All other languages contributed less than 1%

However, if the frequency of use of words is considered, words from Old and Middle English occupy the vast majority.

Examples:

Biology, boxer, ozone from German

Jacket, yoghurt, kiosk from Turkish

Pistol, robot from Czech

### **Coinage**

Coinage is the invention of totally new words. The typical process of coinage usually involves the extension of a product name from a specific reference to a more general one. For example, think of Kleenex, Xerox, and Kodak. These started as names of specific products, but now they are used as the generic names for different brands of these types of products.

### **Compounding**

A compound is a lexeme (a word) that consists of more than one other lexeme. An endocentric compound consists of a head, i.e. the categorical part that contains the basic meaning of the whole compound, and modifiers, which restrict this meaning. For example, the English compound doghouse, where house is the head and dog is the modifier, is understood as a house intended for a dog. Endocentric compounds tend to be of the same part of speech (word class) as their head, as in the case of doghouse. (Such compounds were called karmadharaya in the Sanskrit tradition.)

Exocentric compounds do not have a head, and their meaning often cannot be transparently guessed from its constituent parts. For example, the English compound white-collar is neither a kind of collar nor a white thing. In an exocentric compound, the word class is determined lexically, disregarding the class of the constituents. For example, a must-have is not a verb but a noun. English language allows several types of combinations of different word classes:

N + N lipstick, teapot

A + N fast food, soft drink

V + N breakfast, sky-dive

N + V sunshine, babysit

N + A capital-intensive, waterproof

A + A deaf-mute, bitter-sweet

Like derivational rules, compounding rules may differ in productivity. In English, the N + N rule/pattern is extremely productive, so that novel compounds are created all the time and are hardly noticed. By contrast, the

V + N rule/pattern is unproductive and limited to a few lexically listed items. Apart from endocentric and exocentric compounds there is another type of compound which requires an interpretation different from the ones introduced so far. Consider the hyphenated words in the examples below:

- a. singer-songwriter
- scientist-explorer
- poet-translator
- hero-martyr
- b. the doctor-patient gap
- the nature-nurture debate
- a modifier-head structure
- the mind-body problem

Both sets of words are characterized by the fact that none of the two members of the compound seems in any sense more important than the other. They could be said to have two semantic heads, none of them being subordinate to the other. Given that no member is semantically prominent, but both members equally contribute to the meaning of the compound, these compounds have been labeled copulative compounds (or dvandva compounds in Sanskrit grammarian terms).

Why are the copulative compounds in (a & b) divided into two different sets (a) and (b)? The idea behind this differentiation is that copulatives fall into two classes, depending on their interpretation. Each form in (a) refers to one entity that is characterized by both members of the compound. A poet-translator, for example, is a person who is both as a poet and a translator. This type of copulative compound is sometimes called appositional compound. By contrast, the dvandvas in (b) denote two entities that stand in a particular relationship with regard to the following noun. The particular type of relationship is determined by the following noun. The doctor-patient gap is thus a gap between doctor and patient, the nature-nurture debate is a debate on the relationship between nature and nurture, and so on. This second type of copulative compound is also known as coordinative compound. If the noun following the compound allows both readings, the compound is in principle ambiguous. Thus a scientist-philosopher crew could be a crew made up of scientist-philosophers, or a crew made up of scientists and philosophers. It is often stated that dvandva compounds are not very common in English (e.g. Bauer 1983:203), but in a more recent study by Olson (2001) hundreds of attested forms are listed, which shows that such compounds are far from marginal.

The above mentioned word formation processes are the most frequent or important in the English language, but it is rarely the case that only one process occurs in one word. Words can be loaned and then back formed, later on gaining an affix. There are practically no boundaries to those processes other than human ingenuity.

## SYNTAX

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### STRUCTURE

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- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Elements of Grammar
- 3.3 Nouns, Pronouns and the Basic NP
- 3.5 Adjective and Adverb
- 3.6 Preposition and Prepositional Phrase
- 3.7 The Simple Sentence

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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- ❖ Know about syntax
- ❖ To know about elements of grammar
- ❖ To know about nouns, pronouns and the basic NP
- ❖ To know about adjective and adverb
- ❖ To know about preposition and prepositional phrase
- ❖ To know about the simple sentence

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### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

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Syntax is a set of rules in a language. It dictates how words from different parts of speech are put together in order to convey a complete thought.

Syntax is the grammatical structure of words and phrases to create coherent sentences. Syntax is the grammatical structure of sentences. The format in which words and phrases are arranged to create sentences is called syntax.

Examples of Syntax in a Sentence:

The boy jumped happily.

The boy happily jumped.

Happily, the boy jumped.

what is a syntax meaning By rearranging just one word in the sentence, a varied syntax is formed. Each is grammatically correct and acceptable English language form.

A writer will vary sentence syntax to make writing more interesting or to emphasize a particular point.

Words and phrases must follow English rules for correct arrangement and coherent sentences.

Syntax and diction are closely related. Diction refers to the choice of words in a particular situation, while syntax determines how the chosen

words are used to form a sentence. More often than not, adopting a complex diction means a complex syntactic structure of sentences, and vice versa. In combination, syntax and diction help writers develop tone, mood, and atmosphere in a text, along with evoking readers' interest.

## 3.2. ELEMENTS OF GRAMMAR

English grammar is the way in which meanings are encoded into wordings in the English language. This includes the structure of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences, right up to the structure of whole texts.

There are historical, social, cultural and regional variations of English. Divergences from the grammar described here occur in some dialects. This article describes a generalized present-day Standard English – a form of speech and writing used in public discourse, including broadcasting, education, entertainment, government, and news, over a range of registers from formal to informal. There are differences in grammar between the standard forms of British, American, and Australian English, although these are more minor than differences in vocabulary and pronunciation.

Modern English has largely abandoned the inflectional case system of Indo-European in favor of analytic constructions. The personal pronouns retain morphological case more strongly than any other word class (a remnant of the more extensive Germanic case system of Old English). For other pronouns, and all nouns, adjectives, and articles, grammatical function is indicated only by word order, by prepositions, and by the "Saxon genitive or English possessive" ('s).

Eight "word classes" or "parts of speech" are commonly distinguished in English: nouns, determiners, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions. Nouns form the largest word class, and verbs the second-largest. Unlike many Indo-European languages, English nouns do not have grammatical gender.

### Types of Grammar

Teachers follow a course of pedagogical grammar when instructing English language learners. While students mainly have to deal with the nuts-and-bolts of prescriptive, traditional grammar (such as making sure verbs and subjects agree and where to put commas in a sentence), linguists focus on the infinitely more complex aspects of language. They study how people acquire language and debate whether every child is born with a concept of universal grammar, examining everything from how different languages compare to each other (comparative grammar) to the variety of permutations within a single language (descriptive grammar) to the way in which words and usage interrelate to create meaning (lexicogrammar).

### Word classes and phrases

Nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs form open classes – word classes that readily accept new members, such as the noun *celebutante* (a celebrity who frequents the fashion circles), and other similar relatively new words. The others are considered to be closed classes. For example, it is rare for a new pronoun to enter the language. Determiners, traditionally classified along with adjectives, have not always been regarded as a separate part of speech.

Interjections are another word class, but these are not described here as they do not form part of the clause and sentence structure of the language.

Linguists generally accept nine English word classes: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, determiners, and exclamations. English words are not generally marked for word class. It is not usually possible to tell from the form of a word which class it belongs to except, to some extent, in the case of words with inflectional endings or derivational suffixes. On the other hand, most words belong to more than one word class. For example, run can serve as either a verb or a noun (these are regarded as two different lexemes). Lexemes may be inflected to express different grammatical categories. The lexeme run has the forms runs, ran, runny, runner, and running. Words in one class can sometimes be derived from those in another. This has the potential to give rise to new words. The noun aerobics has recently given rise to the adjective aerobicized.

Words combine to form phrases. A phrase typically serves the same function as a word from some particular word class. For example, my very good friend Peter is a phrase that can be used in a sentence as if it were a noun, and is therefore called a noun phrase. Similarly, adjectival phrases and adverbial phrases function as if they were adjectives or adverbs, but with other types of phrases the terminology has different implications. For example, a verb phrase consists of a verb together with any objects and other dependents; a prepositional phrase consists of a preposition and its complement (and is therefore usually a type of adverbial phrase); and a determiner phrase is a type of noun phrase containing a determiner.

### **Basic Sentence Elements**

The basic parts of a sentence fall into two parts: the subject and the predicate. Know them well, because you can't have a sentence without them!

### **Subjects**

The subject performs the action of the sentence. It can be a noun, noun phrase, or noun clause. To analyze sentences, grammarians have distinguished three kinds of subjects:

Complete Subject - "The old, dusty books on the table haven't been read in years." The complete subject includes the entire noun phrase -- usually everything before the verb.

Simple Subject - "books". The simple subject is the main noun or pronoun stripped of all modifiers.

Compound Subject - "The cowardly mailman and the huge, barking dog didn't get along very well." A compound subject consists of two or more subjects linked together by conjunctions. Note: the simple subject of that sentence would be "mailman and dog".

See Sentence Subjects for a closer look at subjects and subject-verb inversion (placing a subject after the verb in a sentence, as in "How is Bob?").

### **Predicates**

As with subjects, predicates can be classified as complete predicates, simple predicates, and compound predicates; see this page in the UIUC



Grammar Handbook for more. To form a complete sentence, the predicate must include a verb (a finite verb, more specifically). It can also include objects, complements, and adverbials.

## Objects

The object is the receiver of the action in a sentence: "He broke the table" or "He threw the ball." Like subjects, objects can be any word or group of words functioning as a noun, and each type of object can also be categorized as a complete, simple, or compound object. Categorized by their different functions within a sentence, the three types of objects are:

Direct Object - "I wrote a letter." (What did I write? A letter.)

Indirect Object - "I wrote a letter to my friend." (Who did I write a letter to? My friend.)

Prepositional Object - "I wrote on the paper." (What did I write on? The paper.) A thread on EnglishForums.com discusses prepositional objects and their potential for confusion.

## Complements

Complements (also called predicatives) complete the predicate by modifying a noun in the sentence; copulas or linking verbs require a complement to form a complete sentence.

Subject Complement - "The car is new." The subject complement follows a linking verb and modifies the subject. It can be a predicate adjective (He is happy), a predicate noun (He is the boss), or an adverbial complement (He is in the house).

Object Complement - "I painted my room purple." The object complement modifies the direct object, either by describing it or renaming it (They elected him governor). Object complements can cause some confusion; check out this Pain in the English post. Also see Wikipedia's note on Object Complements.

Adjective Complement - "He was happy to help." The adjective complement is a special case in which a group of words modifies an adjective. If removed, the adjective complement leaves a grammatically complete sentence, but the meaning of the sentence changes. The CCC Guide to Grammar and Writing explains the use of infinitive phrases as adjective complements. Note: predicative adjectives are also sometimes called adjective complements.

Verb Complement - Some grammarians use the term "verb complement" to refer to direct and indirect objects (see the "Objects" section above), while others use it to refer to a complement occurring after a linking verb (a subject complement).

## Adverbials

An adverbial is an adverb, adverbial phrase, or adverbial clause: any word or group of words that acts as an adverb within a sentence. They usually modify verbs, but they can also modify the whole sentence. Unlike an adverbial complement (He is in the house), an adverbial isn't needed to complete a sentence (He had lunch in the house or He had lunch).



### 3.3. NOUNS, PRONOUNS AND THE BASIC NP

#### **Nouns**

A noun is a word that names something: either a person, place, or thing. In a sentence, nouns can play the role of subject, direct object, indirect object, subject complement, object complement, appositive, or adjective.

Many common suffixes form nouns from other nouns or from other types of words, such as -age (as in shrinkage), -hood (as in sisterhood), and so on, although many nouns are base forms not containing any such suffix (such as cat, grass, France). Nouns are also often created by conversion of verbs or adjectives, as with the words talk and reading (a boring talk, the assigned reading).

Nouns are sometimes classified semantically (by their meanings) as proper nouns and common nouns (Cyrus, China vs. frog, milk) or as concrete nouns and abstract nouns (book, laptop vs. heat, prejudice). A grammatical distinction is often made between count (countable) nouns such as clock and city, and non-count (uncountable) nouns such as milk and decor. Some nouns can function both as countable and as uncountable such as the word "wine" (This is a good wine, I prefer red wine).

Countable nouns generally have singular and plural forms. In most cases the plural is formed from the singular by adding -[e]s (as in dogs, bushes), although there are also irregular forms (woman/women, foot/feet, etc.), including cases where the two forms are identical (sheep, series). For more details, see English plural. Certain nouns can be used with plural verbs even though they are singular in form, as in The government were ... (where the government is considered to refer to the people constituting the government). This is a form of synesis; it is more common in British than American English. See English plural § Singulars with collective meaning treated as plural.

English nouns are not marked for case as they are in some languages, but they have possessive forms, through the addition of -'s (as in John's, children's) or just an apostrophe (with no change in pronunciation) in the case of -[e]s plurals and sometimes other words ending with -s (the dogs' owners, Jesus' love). More generally, the ending can be applied to noun phrases (as in the man you saw yesterday's sister); see below. The possessive form can be used either as a determiner (John's cat) or as a noun phrase (John's is the one next to Jane's).

The status of the possessive as an affix or a clitic is the subject of debate. It differs from the noun inflection of languages such as German, in that the genitive ending may attach to the last word of the phrase. To account for this, the possessive can be analysed, for instance as a clitic construction (an "enclitic postposition" ) or as an inflection of the last word of a phrase ("edge inflection").

#### **Categories of Nouns**

There are several categories of nouns, and there can be an overlap across the categories. For example, there are common and proper nouns, and concrete and abstract nouns, yet some nouns are both concrete and common, or concrete and proper. It will become clear as you read on.

Common nouns are the words that refer to most general things: country, evening, laughter, puppy, umbrella

Common noun examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

Cathy loves the weekends in the country.

We enjoy swimming after breakfast.

The cup fell and broke.

Proper nouns are the name that identifies someone or something, a person or a place. Proper nouns are capitalized. John is a proper noun, since the word John represents a particular, single example of a thing, John.

Proper noun examples: Mary, Jimmy, Aunt Audrey, Honda, Philadelphia

Proper noun examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

Emily loved spending time with her Aunt Nancy in Paris.

Buick and Jeep are two important carmakers.

We visited Lake Erie, which separates the United States and Canada.

Concrete nouns represent a thing that is real and tangible: pig, person, rock, smell, air, soup, Larry are all concrete nouns.

Concrete noun examples: cup, computer, diamond, rollercoaster, shampoo, Debby

Concrete noun examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

The person threw the rock across the yard.

My dog, Oreo, jumped in the air and caught the ball!

Can you smell the soup, John?

An abstract noun represents a thing that is more like a concept or idea: love, integrity, democracy, friendship, beauty, knowledge are examples of abstract nouns.

Abstract noun examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

Love and friendship are equally important.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Your mind can know a million things.

Nouns can also be categorized as countable or uncountable.

A countable noun is a thing can be numbered or counted: airplane, sock, bowl, noodle, teacher, as in two airplanes, three socks, 1000 noodles.

Countable noun examples: peach, horse, shirt, telescope

Countable noun examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

There are five dogs in the street.

I bought three tons of coal.

Margaret has six pairs of blue sandals.

Uncountable nouns can have a quantity or amount but cannot be actually counted: water, music, clothes, understanding. In the second example above, tons is a countable noun, but coal is not. Coal is referred to as an uncountable noun.

Uncountable noun examples: hate, confidence, attractiveness, wisdom

Uncountable noun examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

Love is in the air.

The four elements are air, earth, fire and water.

Her humor knows no bounds.

Collective nouns refer to a group of people or things: audience, team, bunch, family, class. When speaking of collective nouns, Americans consider them as singular, using singular verbs with them, such as the group dances happily. When speaking British English, both singular verbs and plural verbs might be used, as in the group dance crazily before the Queen.

Collective noun examples: government, jury, team, bunch, school, class, and room (the people in the room or building)

Collective noun examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

The team threw confetti when it was over.

Steve buys the band some sandwiches.

Meredith told the class she was getting married.

As mentioned above, when we talk of categories of nouns, some nouns can be described as being in more than one category. Some nouns are concrete and countable, for example, such as raindrops and wedding rings, while some are proper and uncountable, such as the Atlantic Ocean and Alaska.

### ***Forms of Nouns***

The same noun can appear in different forms, depending on how it is used.

A countable noun can be singular or plural. Most nouns in English form the plural by adding -s or -es to the noun, although there are some exceptions:

One dog, two dogs, red dog, blue dog.

I missed not just one bus today, but two buses.

New York City is one of the grandest cities in the world.

Uncountable nouns and proper nouns are always considered to be singular:

The air in the countryside and in the city is clean and fresh (not the airs).

All knowledge is a good thing (not knowledges).

Florida has mostly warm weather in the winter.

Nouns can also indicate ownership. This form of a noun is called a possessive noun, and is indicated by an apostrophe and the letter -s. It is equivalent to using the word of and the noun.

For instance, if you're telling a story about your sister Sarah, the story will begin to sound repetitive if you keep repeating "Sarah" over and over again.

Sarah has always loved fashion. Sarah announced that Sarah wants to go to fashion school.

You could try to mix it up by sometimes referring to Sarah as "my sister," but then it sounds like you're referring to two different people.

Sarah has always loved fashion. My sister announced that Sarah wants to go to fashion school.

Instead, you can use the pronouns she and her to refer to Sarah.

Sarah has always loved fashion. She announced that she wants to go to fashion school.

### **Personal Pronouns**

There are a few different types of pronouns, and some pronouns belong to more than one category. She and her are known as personal pronouns. The other personal pronouns are I and me, you, he and him, it, we and us, and they and them. If you learned about pronouns in school, these are probably the words your teacher focused on. We'll get to the other types of pronouns in a moment.

### **Antecedents**

Pronouns are versatile. The pronoun it can refer to just about anything: a bike, a tree, a movie, a feeling. That's why you need an antecedent. An antecedent is a noun or noun phrase that you mention at the beginning of a sentence or story and later replace with a pronoun. In the examples below, the antecedent is highlighted and the pronoun that replaces it is bolded.

My family drives me nuts, but I love them. The sign was too far away for Henry to read it. Sarah said she is almost finished with the application.

In some cases, the antecedent doesn't need to be mentioned explicitly, as long as the context is totally clear. It's usually clear who the pronouns I, me, and you refer to based on who is speaking.

It's also possible to use a pronoun before you mention the antecedent, but try to avoid doing it in long or complex sentences because it can make the sentence hard to follow.

I love them, but my family drives me nuts.

### **Relative Pronouns**

Relative pronouns make up another class of pronouns. They are used to connect relative clauses to independent clauses. Often, they introduce additional information about something mentioned in the sentence. Relative pronouns include that, what, which, who, and whom. Traditionally, who refers to people, and which and that refer to animals or things.

The woman who called earlier didn't leave a message. All the dogs that got adopted today will be loved. My car, which is nearly twenty years old, still runs well.

Whether you need commas with who, which, and that depends on whether the clause is restrictive or nonrestrictive.

## Who vs. Whom—Subject and Object Pronouns

Now that we've talked about relative pronouns, let's tackle the one that causes the most confusion: who vs. whom. Who is a subject pronoun, like I, he, she, we, and they. Whom is an object pronoun, like me, him, her, us and them. When the pronoun is the object of a verb or preposition, the object form is the one you want. Most people don't have much trouble with the objective case of personal pronouns because they usually come immediately after the verb or preposition that modifies it.

Please mail it to I.

Please mail it to me.

Ms. Higgins caught they passing notes.

Ms. Higgins caught them passing notes.

Is this cake for we?

Is this cake for us?

Whom is trickier, though, because it usually comes before the verb or preposition that modifies it.

Whom did you speak to earlier?

A man, whom I have never seen before, was asking about you.

Whom should I say is calling?

One way to test whether you need who or whom is to try substituting a personal pronoun. Find the place where the personal pronoun would normally go and see whether the subject or object form makes more sense.

Who/whom did you speak to earlier? Did you speak to he/him earlier?

A man, whom I have never seen before, was asking about you. Have I seen he/him before?

Whom should I say is calling? Should I say she/her is calling?

If the object pronoun (him or her) sounds right, use whom. If the subject pronoun (he or she) sounds right, use who.

Before we move on, there's one more case where the choice between subject and object pronouns can be confusing. Can you spot the problem in the sentences below?

Henry is meeting Sarah and I this afternoon. There are no secrets between you and I. It doesn't matter to him or I.

In each of the sentences above, the pronoun I should be me. If you remove the other name or pronoun from the sentence, it becomes obvious.

Henry is meeting I this afternoon. No one keeps secrets from I. It doesn't matter to I.

## Demonstrative Pronouns

That, this, these and those are demonstrative pronouns. They take the place of a noun or noun phrase that has already been mentioned.

This is used for singular items that are nearby. These is used for multiple items that are nearby. The distance can be physical or metaphorical.

Here is a letter with no return address. Who could have sent this? What a fantastic idea! This is the best thing I've heard all day. If you think gardenias

smell nice, try smelling these.

That is used for singular items that are far away. Those is used for multiple items that are far away. Again, the distance can be physical or metaphorical.

A house like that would be a nice place to live. Some new flavors of soda came in last week. Why don't you try some of those? Those aren't swans, they're geese.

### **Indefinite Pronouns**

Indefinite pronouns are used when you need to refer to a person or thing that doesn't need to be specifically identified. Some common indefinite pronouns are one, other, none, some, anybody, everybody, and no one.

Everybody was late to work because of the traffic jam. It matters more to some than others. Nobody knows the trouble I've seen.

When indefinite pronouns function as subjects of a sentence or clause, they usually take singular verbs.

### **Reflexive and Intensive Pronouns**

Reflexive pronouns end in -self or -selves: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

Use a reflexive pronoun when both the subject and object of a verb refer to the same person or thing.

Henry cursed himself for his poor eyesight. They booked themselves a room at the resort. I told myself it was nothing.

Intensive pronouns look the same as reflexive pronouns, but their purpose is different. Intensive pronouns add emphasis.

I built this house myself. Did you yourself see Loretta spill the coffee?

"I built this house" and "I built this house myself" mean almost the same thing. But "myself" emphasizes that I personally built the house—I didn't hire someone else to do it for me. Likewise, "Did you see Loretta spill the coffee?" and "Did you yourself see Loretta spill the coffee?" have similar meanings. But "yourself" makes it clear that the person asking wants to know whether you actually witnessed the incident or whether you only heard it described by someone else.

Occasionally, people are tempted to use myself where they should use me because it sounds a little fancier. Don't fall into that trap! If you use a -self form of a pronoun, make sure it matches one of the uses above.

Please call Sarah or myself if you are going to be late. Loretta, Henry, and myself are pleased to welcome you to the neighborhood.

### **Possessive Pronouns**

Possessive pronouns come in two flavors: limiting and absolute. My, your, its, his, her, our, their and whose are used to show that something belongs to an antecedent.

Sarah is working on her application. Just put me back on my bike. The students practiced their presentation after school.

The absolute possessive pronouns are mine, yours, his, hers, ours, and theirs. The absolute forms can be substituted for the thing that belongs to

the antecedent.

Are you finished with your application? Sarah already finished hers. The blue bike is mine. I practiced my speech and the students practiced theirs.

Some possessive pronouns are easy to mix up with similar-looking contractions. Remember, possessive personal pronouns don't include apostrophes.

### Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogative pronouns are used in questions. The interrogative pronouns are who, what, which, and whose.

Who wants a bag of jelly beans? What is your name? Which movie do you want to watch? Whose jacket is this?

### Noun Phrase (NP)

A noun phrase, or nominal (phrase), is a phrase that has a noun (or indefinite pronoun) as its head or performs the same grammatical function as a noun. Noun phrases are very common cross-linguistically, and they may be the most frequently occurring phrase type.

Noun phrases often function as verb subjects and objects, as predicative expressions and as the complements of prepositions. Noun phrases can be embedded inside each other; for instance, the noun phrase *some of his constituents* contains the shorter noun phrase *his constituents*.

In some more modern theories of grammar, noun phrases with determiners are analyzed as having the determiner as the head of the phrase, see for instance Chomsky (1995) and Hudson (1990).

Some examples of noun phrases are underlined in the sentences below. The head noun appears in bold.

The election-year politics are annoying for many people.

Almost every sentence contains at least one noun phrase.

"Those five beautiful shiny Arkansas Black apples" is a noun phrase of which *apples* is the head. To test, a single pronoun can replace the whole noun phrase, as in "They look delicious".

Current economic weakness may be a result of high energy prices.

Noun phrases can be identified by the possibility of pronoun substitution, as is illustrated in the examples below.

a. This sentence contains two noun phrases.

b. It contains them.

a. The subject noun phrase that is present in this sentence is long.

b. It is long.

a. Noun phrases can be embedded in other noun phrases.

b. They can be embedded in them.

A string of words that can be replaced by a single pronoun without rendering the sentence grammatically unacceptable is a noun phrase. As to whether the string must contain at least two words, see the following section.



## **Status of single words as phrases**

Traditionally, a phrase is understood to contain two or more words. The traditional progression in the size of syntactic units is word < phrase < clause, and in this approach a single word (such as a noun or pronoun) would not be referred to as a phrase. However, many modern schools of syntax – especially those that have been influenced by X-bar theory – make no such restriction. Here many single words are judged to be phrases based on a desire for theory-internal consistency. A phrase is deemed to be a word or a combination of words that appears in a set syntactic position, for instance in subject position or object position.

On this understanding of phrases, the nouns and pronouns in bold in the following sentences are noun phrases (as well as nouns or pronouns):

He saw someone.

Milk is good.

They spoke about corruption.

The words in bold are called phrases since they appear in the syntactic positions where multiple-word phrases (i.e. traditional phrases) can appear. This practice takes the constellation to be primitive rather than the words themselves. The word *he*, for instance, functions as a pronoun, but within the sentence it also functions as a noun phrase. The phrase structure grammars of the Chomskyan tradition (government and binding theory and the minimalist program) are primary examples of theories that apply this understanding of phrases. Other grammars such as dependency grammars are likely to reject this approach to phrases, since they take the words themselves to be primitive. For them, phrases must contain two or more words.

## **Components**

A typical noun phrase consists of a noun (the head of the phrase) together with zero or more dependents of various types. (These dependents, since they modify a noun, are called adnominal.) The chief types of these dependents are:

determiners, such as *the, this, my, some, Jane's*

attributive adjectives, such as *large, beautiful, sweeter*

adjective phrases and participial phrases, such as *extremely large, hard as nails, made of wood, sitting on the step*

noun adjuncts, such as *college* in the noun phrase *a college student*

nouns in certain oblique cases, in languages which have them, such as German *des Mannes* ("of the man"; genitive form)

prepositional phrases, such as *in the drawing room, of his aunt*

adnominal adverbs and adverbials, such as *(over) there* in the noun phrase *the man (over) there*

relative clauses, such as *which we noticed*

other clauses serving as complements to the noun, such as *that God exists* in the noun phrase *the belief that God exists*

infinitive phrases, such as *to sing well and to beat* in the noun phrases *a desire to sing well and the man to beat*

The allowability, form and position of these elements depend on the syntax of the language in question. In English, determiners, adjectives (and some adjective phrases) and noun modifiers precede the head noun, whereas the heavier units – phrases and clauses – generally follow it. This is part of a strong tendency in English to place heavier constituents to the right, making English more of a head-initial language. Head-final languages (e.g. Japanese and Turkish) are more likely to place all modifiers before the head noun. Other languages, such as French, often place even single-word adjectives after the noun.

Noun phrases can take different forms than that described above, for example when the head is a pronoun rather than a noun, or when elements are linked with a coordinating conjunction such as *and*, *or*, *but*. For more information about the structure of noun phrases in English, see English grammar § Noun phrases.

### Syntactic Function

Noun phrases typically bear argument functions. That is, the syntactic functions that they fulfill are those of the arguments of the main clause predicate, particularly those of subject, object and predicative expression. They also function as arguments in such constructs as participial phrases and prepositional phrases. For example:

For us the news is a concern. – the news is the subject argument

Have you heard the news? – the news is the object argument

That is the news. – the news is the predicative expression following the copula *is*

They are talking about the news. – the news is the argument in the prepositional phrase *about the news*

The man reading the news is very tall. – the news is the object argument in the participial phrase *reading the news*

Sometimes a noun phrase can also function as an adjunct of the main clause predicate, thus taking on an adverbial function, e.g.

Most days I read the newspaper.

She has been studying all night.

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## 3.5. ADJECTIVE AND ADVERB

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### Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe or modify other words, making your writing and speaking much more specific, and a whole lot more interesting. Words like *small*, *blue*, and *sharp* are descriptive, and they are all examples of adjectives. Because adjectives are used to identify or quantify individual people and unique things, they are usually positioned before the noun or pronoun that they modify. Some sentences contain multiple adjectives.

Adjectives are words that describe the qualities or states of being of nouns: *enormous*, *doglike*, *silly*, *yellow*, *fun*, *fast*. They can also describe the quantity of nouns: *many*, *few*, *millions*, *eleven*.

## ***Types of Adjectives***

Remember that adjectives can modify as well as describe other words, and you'll find it much easier to identify different types of adjectives when you see them.

### ***Articles***

There are only three articles, and all of them are adjectives: a, an, and the. Because they are used to discuss non-specific things and people, a and an are called indefinite articles. For example:

I'd like a

Let's go on an

Neither one of these sentences names a specific banana or a certain adventure. Without more clarification, any banana or adventure will do.

The word the is called the definite article. It's the only definite article, and it is used to indicate very specific people or things:

Please give me a banana. I'd like the one with the green stem.

Let's go on an adventure. The Grand Canyon mule ride sounds perfect!

### ***Possessive Adjectives***

As the name indicates, possessive adjectives are used to indicate possession. They are:

My

Your

His

Her

Its

Our

Their

Possessive adjectives also function as possessive pronouns.

### ***Demonstrative Adjectives***

Like the article the, demonstrative adjectives are used to indicate or demonstrate specific people, animals, or things. These, those, this and that are demonstrative adjectives.

These books belong on that

This movie is my favorite.

Please put those cookies on the blue plate.

### ***Coordinate Adjectives***

Coordinate adjectives are separated with commas or the word and, and appear one after another to modify the same noun. The adjectives in the phrase bright, sunny day and long and dark night are coordinate adjectives. In phrases with more than two coordinate adjectives, the word and always appears before the last one; for example: The sign had big, bold, and bright letters.

Be careful, because some adjectives that appear in a series are not coordinate. In the phrase green delivery truck, the words green and delivery are not separated by a comma because green modifies the phrase delivery truck. To eliminate confusion when determining whether a pair or group of adjectives is coordinate, just insert the word and between them. If and works, then the adjectives are coordinate and need to be separated with a comma.

### ***Numbers Adjectives***

When they're used in sentences, numbers are almost always adjectives. You can tell that a number is an adjective when it answers the question "How many?"

The stagecoach was pulled by a team of six

He ate 23 hotdogs during the contest, and was sick afterwards.

Interrogative Adjectives

There are three interrogative adjectives: which, what, and whose. Like all other types of adjectives, interrogative adjectives modify nouns. As you probably know, all three of these words are used to ask questions.

Which option sounds best to you?

What time should we go?

Whose socks are those?

### ***Indefinite Adjectives***

Like the articles a and an, indefinite adjectives are used to discuss non-specific things. You might recognize them, since they're formed from indefinite pronouns. The most common indefinite adjectives are any, many, no, several, and few.

Do we have any peanut butter?

Grandfather has been retired for many

There are no bananas in the fruit bowl.

I usually read the first few pages of a book before I buy it.

We looked at several cars before deciding on the best one for our family.

### ***Attributive Adjectives***

Attributive adjectives talk about specific traits, qualities, or features – in other words, they are used to discuss attributes. There are different kinds of attributive adjectives:

Observation adjectives such as real, perfect, best, interesting, beautiful or cheapest can indicate value or talk about subjective measures.

Size and shape adjectives talk about measurable, objective qualities including specific physical properties. Some examples include small, large, square, round, poor, wealthy, slow and

Age adjectives denote specific ages in numbers, as well as general ages. Examples are old, young, new, five-year-old, and

Color adjectives are exactly what they sound like – they're adjectives that indicate color. Examples include pink, yellow, blue, and

Origin adjectives indicate the source of the noun, whether it's a person, place, animal or thing. Examples include American, Canadian, Mexican, French.

Material adjectives denote what something is made of. Some examples include cotton, gold, wool, and

Qualifier adjectives are often regarded as part of a noun. They make nouns more specific; examples include log cabin, luxury car, and pillow cover.

### ***Adjectives Modify Nouns***

Most students learn that adjectives are words that modify (describe) nouns. Adjectives do not modify verbs or adverbs or other adjectives.

#### ***Example***

Margot wore a beautiful hat to the pie-eating contest.

Furry dogs may overheat in the summertime.

My cake should have sixteen candles.

The scariest villain of all time is Darth Vader.

In the sentences above, the adjectives are easy to spot because they come immediately before the nouns they modify.

But adjectives can do more than just modify nouns. They can also act as a complement to linking verbs or the verb to be. A linking verb is a verb like to feel, to seem, or to taste that describes a state of being or a sensory experience.

That cow sure is happy.

It smells gross in the locker room.

Driving is faster than walking.

The technical term for an adjective used this way is predicate adjective.

### ***Uses of Adjectives***

Adjectives tell the reader how much—or how many—of something you're talking about, which thing you want passed to you, or which kind of something you want.

Please use three white flowers in the arrangement.

Three and white are modifying flowers.

Often, when adjectives are used together, you should separate them with a comma or conjunction. See "Coordinate Adjectives" below for more detail.

I'm looking for a small, good-tempered dog to keep as a pet.

My new dog is small and good-tempered.

### ***Degrees of Comparison***

Adjectives come in three forms: absolute, comparative, and superlative. Absolute adjectives describe something in its own right.

A cool guy

A messy desk

A mischievous cat  
Garrulous squirrels

Comparative adjectives, unsurprisingly, make a comparison between two or more things. For most one-syllable adjectives, the comparative is formed by adding the suffix -er (or just -r if the adjective already ends with an e). For two-syllable adjectives ending in -y, replace -y with -ier. For multi-syllable adjectives, add the word more.

A cooler guy  
A messier desk  
A more mischievous cat  
More garrulous squirrels

Superlative adjectives indicate that something has the highest degree of the quality in question. One-syllable adjectives become superlatives by adding the suffix -est (or just -st for adjectives that already end in e). Two-syllable adjectives ending in -y replace -y with -iest. Multi-syllable adjectives add the word most. When you use an article with a superlative adjective, it will almost always be the definite article (the) rather than a or an. Using a superlative inherently indicates that you are talking about a specific item or items.

The coolest guy  
The messiest desk  
The most mischievous cat  
The most garrulous squirrels

### ***Coordinate Adjectives***

Coordinate adjectives should be separated by a comma or the word and. Adjectives are said to be coordinate if they modify the same noun in a sentence.

This is going to be a long, cold winter.

Isobel's dedicated and tireless efforts made all the difference.

But just the fact that two adjectives appear next to each other doesn't automatically mean they are coordinate. Sometimes, an adjective and a noun form a single semantic unit, which is then modified by another adjective. In this case, the adjectives are not coordinate and should not be separated by a comma.

My cat, Goober, loves sleeping on this tattered woolen sweater.

No one could open the old silver locket.

In some cases, it's pretty hard to decide whether two adjectives are coordinate or not. But there are a couple of ways you can test them. Try inserting the word and between the adjectives to see if the phrase still seems natural. In the first sentence, "this tattered and woolen sweater" doesn't sound right because you really aren't talking about a sweater that is both tattered and woolen. It's a woolen sweater that is tattered. Woolen sweater forms a unit of meaning that is modified by tattered.

Another way to test for coordinate adjectives is to try switching the order of the adjectives and seeing if the phrase still works. In the second

sentence, you wouldn't say "No one could open the silver old locket." You can't reverse the order of the adjectives because silver locket is a unit that is modified by old.

### ***Adjectives vs. Adverbs***

As mentioned above, many of us learned in school that adjectives modify nouns and that adverbs modify verbs. But as we've seen, adjectives can also act as complements for linking verbs. This leads to a common type of error: incorrectly substituting an adverb in place of a predicate adjective. An example you've probably heard before is:

I feel badly about what happened.

Because "feel" is a verb, it seems to call for an adverb rather than an adjective. But "feel" isn't just any verb; it's a linking verb. An adverb would describe how you perform the action of feeling—an adjective describes what you feel. "I feel badly" means that you are bad at feeling things. If you're trying to read Braille through thick leather gloves, then it might make sense for you to say "I feel badly." But if you're trying to say that you are experiencing negative emotions, "I feel bad" is the phrase you want.

It's easier to see this distinction with a different linking verb. Consider the difference between these two sentences:

Goober smells badly.

Goober smells bad.

"Goober smells badly" means that Goober, the poor thing, has a weak sense of smell. "Goober smells bad" means Goober stinks—poor us.

When Nouns Become Adjectives and Adjectives Become Nouns

One more thing you should know about adjectives is that, sometimes, a word that is normally used as a noun can function as an adjective, depending on its placement. For example:

Never try to pet someone's guide dog without asking permission first.

Guide is a noun. But in this sentence, it modifies dog. It works the other way, too. Some words that are normally adjectives can function as nouns:

Candice is working on a fundraiser to help the homeless.

In the context of this sentence, homeless is functioning as a noun. It can be hard to wrap your head around this if you think of adjectives and nouns only as particular classes of words. But the terms "adjective" and "noun" aren't just about a word's form—they're also about its function.

### **Adverb**

An adverb is a word that is used to change, modify or qualify several types of words including an adjective, a verb, a clause, another adverb, or any other type of word or phrase, with the exception of determiners and adjectives, that directly modify nouns. A good way to understand adverbs is to think about them as the words that provide context. Specifically, adverbs provide a description of how, where, when, in what manner and to what extent something is done or happens. Normally, we can spot an adverb by the fact that it often ends in -ly, but there are lots of adverbs that don't end in this way. Moreover, adverbs can be used in many combinations with each other.



Traditionally considered a single part of speech, adverbs perform a wide variety of functions, making it difficult to treat them as a single, unified category. However, spotting an adverb, especially one that ends in -ly is easy. Adverbs normally help paint a fuller picture by describing how something happens, such as

When? She always arrives early.

How? He drives carefully.

Where? They go everywhere together.

In what way? She eats slowly.

To what extent? It is terribly hot.

This function of providing more information about how something is done is called the adverbial function, and it may be accomplished by using adverbial clauses and adverbial phrases as well as by adverbs that stand alone.

There are many rules for using adverbs, and these rules often depend upon which type of adverb you are using. Remember these basics and using adverbs to make sentences more meaningful will be easier for you.

Adverbs can always be used to modify verbs. Notice that the second of these two sentences is much more interesting simply because it contains an adverb:

The dog ran. (You can picture a dog running, but you don't really know much more about the scene.)

The dog ran excitedly. (You can picture a dog running, wagging its tail, panting happily, and looking glad to see its owner. You can paint a much more interesting picture in your head when you know how or why the dog is running.)

Adverbs are often formed by adding the letters "-ly" to adjectives. This makes it very easy to identify adverbs in sentences. There are many exceptions to this rule; everywhere, nowhere, and upstairs are a few examples.

An adverb can be used to modify an adjective and intensify the meaning it conveys. For example:

He plays tennis well. (He knows how to play tennis and sometimes he wins.)

He plays tennis extremely well. (He knows how to play tennis so well that he wins often.)

As you read the following adverb examples, you'll notice how these useful words modify other words and phrases by providing information about the place, time, manner, certainty, frequency, or other circumstances of activity denoted by the verbs or verb phrases in the sentences.

## Types of Adverbs

### *Adverbs of Manner*

An adverb of manner will explain how an action is carried out. Very often adverbs of manner are adjectives with -ly added to the end, but this is

certainly not always the case. In fact, some adverbs of manner will have the same spelling as the adjective form.

Some examples of adverbs of manner include:

Slowly

Rapidly

Clumsily

Badly

Diligently

Sweetly

Warmly

Sadly

Adverb of manner examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

She passed the exam **easily**.

They walk **quickly** to catch the train.

The dinner party went **badly**.

John answered the question **correctly**.

Notice how the adjectives are formed by adding -ly to the adjectives bad, correct and quick, although there is a slight spelling change when forming an adverb with the adjective easy.

As mentioned, some adverbs of manner take the same spelling as the adjective and never add an -ly to the end:

The boys had worked **hard**.

The car drives **fast**.

Julia dances **well**.

### ***Adverbs of place***

An adverb of place, sometimes called spatial adverbs, will help explain where an action happens. Adverbs of place will be associated with the action of the verb in a sentence, providing context for direction, distance and position: southeast, everywhere, up, left, close by, back, inside, around. These terms don't usually end in -ly.

Adverbs of place examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

### **Directions**

New York is located **north** of Philadelphia.

They traveled **down** the mountainside.

First, I looked **here**, and then I looked **there**, but I can't find them anywhere.

Notice that here and there are often used at the beginning of a sentence to express emphasis or in exclamation.

**Here** comes the sun.

**There** is love in the air.

Here you are!

Many times, adverbs of place can be used as prepositions as well. The difference is, when the phrase is used as an adverb, it is modifying a verb; when it is used as a preposition, it is always followed by a noun.

New York is located north of Philadelphia -> New York is on the map.

They travelled down river -> They travelled in the first compartment.

That puppy was walking around by itself-> We put a collar around its neck.

Distance

There was a deli

Jane is moving far away.

Carly is sitting close to me.

Position

The treasure lies underneath the box.

The cat is sleeping on the bed.

Why are you standing in the middle of the dancefloor?

In addition, some adverbs of position will refer to a direction of movement. These often end in -ward or -wards.

Oscar travelled onward to Los Angeles.

Hannah looked upwards to the heavens.

Molly, move forward to the front of the queue, please.

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### 3.6. PREPOSITION AND PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE

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#### Preposition

A preposition is a word used to link nouns, pronouns, or phrases to other words within a sentence. They act to connect the people, objects, time and locations of a sentence. Prepositions are usually short words, and they are normally placed directly in front of nouns. In some cases, you'll find prepositions in front of gerund verbs.

A nice way to think about prepositions is as the words that help glue a sentence together. They do this by expressing position and movement, possession, time and how an action is completed. Indeed, several of the most frequently used words in all of English, such as *of*, *to*, *for*, *with*, *on* and *at*, are prepositions. Explaining prepositions can seem complicated, but they are a common part of language and most of us use them naturally without even thinking about it.

In fact, it's interesting to note that prepositions are regarded as a 'closed class' of words in the English language. This means, unlike verbs and nouns, no new words are added to this group over time. In a way, it reflects their role as the functional workhorse of the sentence. They are unassuming and subtle, yet vitally important to the meaning of language.

There are two very important rules to remember when using prepositions. Because they are somewhat vague, learning about prepositions and using them correctly in sentences takes practice. Because 1:1 translation is often impossible when dealing with prepositions, even the most advanced English students have some difficulty at first.

The first rule is that to make sentences clear, specific prepositions are needed. For example, the preposition *in* means one thing and the preposition *on* cannot substitute for it in all cases. Some prepositions are interchangeable but not always. The correct preposition means one particular thing and using a different preposition will give the sentence a very different meaning. I want to see you *in* the house now, Bill! means something very different from I want to see you *on* the house now, Bill! *In* the house means Bill should go through the door, walk inside, and stand in the hall or living room. *On* the house means Bill would need to get a ladder and climb to the roof where he would be on top of the house.

The second rule for using prepositions is that prepositions are generally followed by nouns or pronouns. There was a time in the past when teachers held strictly to this rule, but it made for some clunky sentences. I am seeking someone I can depend *on* ends with the preposition *on*, so people who insisted that sentences shouldn't end with a preposition would be forced to use convoluted and unnatural phrasing. To avoid ending that sentence above with a preposition, you'd have to say, someone I can depend *on* is whom I am seeking.

There are more than 100 prepositions in the English language. In addition, there are endless possibilities for creating prepositional phrases, phrases that begin with a preposition and end with a noun or pronoun. In the following sections, you will find examples of prepositions, types of prepositions, a comprehensive list of prepositions, and some helpful preposition exercises. As you read the examples and study the list, remember that prepositions usually convey concepts such as comparison, direction, place, purpose, source possession, and time.

#### Examples of Prepositions

In the following sentences, examples of prepositions have been italicized. As you read, consider how using different prepositions or even different types of prepositions in place of the examples might change the relationship between the rest of the words in the sentence.

I prefer to read *in* the library.

He climbed up *the* ladder to get *onto* the roof.

Please sign your name *on* the dotted line after you read the contract.

Go down *the* stairs and through *the* door.

He swam across *the* pool.

Take your brother with *you*.

#### ***Simple Prepositions***

Simple prepositions are words like *at*, *for*, *in*, *off*, *on*, *over*, and *under*. These common prepositions can be used to describe a location, time or place.

Some examples of common prepositions used in sentences are:

He sat *on* the chair.

There is some milk *in* the fridge.

She was hiding *under* the table.

The cat jumped *off* the counter.

He drove over the bridge.  
She lost her ring at the beach.  
The book belongs to Anthony.  
They were sitting by the tree.  
We are running in the gym today.  
The sun is above the clouds.  
She lives near her workplace.  
She drew the picture with a crayon.  
He swam at the lake.  
I walked down the street.  
We located the key for the lock.  
The car went through the tunnel.  
I got a package from a friend.  
I have liked that song since 1999.  
She put the flowers by the window.  
The food was placed on the table.

### ***Double Prepositions***

Double prepositions are two simple prepositions used together, often indicating direction. Some examples are into, upon, onto, out of, from within.

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful princess.  
The baby climbed onto the table.  
It is up to us to find the answer.  
The loud noise came from within the stadium.  
She never leaves without her phone.  
The bird sat atop the oak tree.  
The caterpillar turned into a butterfly.  
I was unable to get out of the appointment.

### ***Compound Prepositions***

Compound prepositions (or complex prepositions) consist of two or more words, usually a simple preposition and another word, to convey location. Some examples are in addition to, on behalf of, and in the middle of.

She sat across from Marie.  
I attended the meeting on behalf of my company.  
We were in the middle of the storm.  
He has gym class in addition to his regular classes today.  
He picked up the penny from beneath the couch.  
Aside from singing, she also plays the piano at the bar.  
My car is parked in front of the mailbox.  
The weather will be good this weekend according to Tom.

### **Participle Prepositions**

Participle prepositions have endings such as -ed and -ing. Examples are words such as considering, during, concerning, provided.

She is interested in anything concerning horses.

He works one job during the day and another at night.

The dog kept following him home.

All the neighbors were there including the new one.

The principal was asking questions regarding her behavior.

Considering his age, he did a great job.

He was frustrated at the situation.

The teacher said no talking during class.

### **Phrase Prepositions**

Phrase prepositions (or prepositional phrases) include a preposition, an object, and the object's modifier. Examples include phrases like on time, at home, before class, and on the floor.

I will get to the conference on time.

The baseball game was canceled after the heavy rain.

John found his homework under the bed.

The children loved the gifts from their grandparents.

He succeeded with a little help.

We met to discuss the project before class.

She left muddy footprints on the clean floor.

According to his wishes, his funeral will be private.

### **Prepositions of Place**

To confuse matters a bit, the most common prepositions to indicate time – on, at, in – are also the most common prepositions to indicate position. However, the rules are a little clearer as place prepositions are a more rigid concept than time prepositions.

Prepositions of place examples in the following sentences are in bold for easy identification.

The cat is **on** the table.

The dogs are **in** the kennel.

We can meet **at** the crossroads.

The guidelines can be broken down as follows:

On is used when referring to something with a surface:

The sculpture hangs **on** the wall.

The images are **on** the page.

The specials are **on** the menu, which is **on** the table.

In is used when referring to something that is inside or within confined boundaries. This could be anything, even a country:

Jim is **in** France, visiting his aunt **in** the hospital.

The whiskey is in the jar in the fridge.

The girls play in the garden.

At is used when referring to something at a specific point:

The boys are at the entrance at the movie theater.

He stood at the bus stop at the corner of Water and High streets.

We will meet at the airport.

Lot's of other prepositions of place, such as under, over, inside, outside, above and below are used in English. There is, however, a lot less confusion as they refer to rigid positions rather than abstract ones.

The cat is under the table.

Put the sandwich over there.

The key is locked inside the car.

They stepped outside the house.

Major is ranked above corporal.

He is waving at you from below the stairs.

### **Prepositional Phrase**

A prepositional phrase is a group of words consisting of a preposition, its object, and any words that modify the object. Most of the time, a prepositional phrase modifies a verb or a noun. These two kinds of prepositional phrases are called adverbial phrases and adjectival phrases, respectively.

At a minimum, a prepositional phrase consists of one preposition and the object it governs. The object can be a noun, a gerund (a verb form ending in “-ing” that acts as a noun), or a clause.

He arrived in time .

Is she really going out with that guy ?

To these two basic elements, modifiers can be freely added.

He arrived in the nick of time.

Is she really going out with that tall, gorgeous guy?

Some of the most common prepositions that begin prepositional phrases are to, of, about, at, before, after, by, behind, during, for, from, in, over, under, and with.

### ***Prepositional Phrases That Modify Nouns***

When a prepositional phrase acts upon a noun, we say it is behaving adjectivally because adjectives modify nouns. A prepositional phrase that behaves adjectivally is called, quite logically, an adjectival phrase.

The cat in the middle is the cutest.

I always buy my milk from the convenience store on Main Street .

My mother has always wanted to live in a cabin by the lake .

In the first of these sentences, in the middle answers the question of which cat the writer thinks is the cutest. Similarly, on Main Street gives us information about which store the writer is describing, and by the lake tells



us what kind of cabin the writer's mother is dreaming about. All of these adjectival phrases provide specificity to a noun in order to enhance our understanding.

### ***Prepositional Phrases That Modify Verbs***

When a prepositional phrase acts upon a verb, we say it is behaving adverbially because adverbs modify verbs. A prepositional phrase that behaves adverbially is called an adverbial phrase.

To find the person who stole the last cookie, look behind you.

Harry drank his Butterbeer with fervor.

In the first sentence, behind you answers the question "Look where?" In the second, with fervor answers the question "Drank how?"

Prepositional Phrases Acting as Nouns

Less frequently, prepositional phrases can function like nouns in a sentence.

During the national anthem is the worst time to blow your nose.

After the game will be too late for us to go to dinner.

### ***How to Avoid Excessive Prepositional Phrases***

It is tempting to overuse prepositions and prepositional phrases. If you see more than one preposition for every ten or fifteen words in your writing, you should edit some of them out. You may be surprised at how much more elegant and economical your writing is when you make the effort to do this.

It is best to behave with caution when running with a sword in the presence of Magneto.

There is nothing grammatically incorrect about this sentence, but it has two "with" phrases, an "of" phrase, and an "in" phrase, which is a sure sign that it could be written more efficiently.

In Magneto's presence, run cautiously with swords.

Here, it was possible to replace one of the prepositional phrases, with caution with the correlating adverb cautiously. Of Magneto was simply a possessive that can be easily converted into Magneto's. Four prepositional phrases have been reduced to two.

Another way to reduce prepositional phrases is to switch from a passive voice to an active voice. There is a famous example to illustrate this concept.

Why was the road crossed by the chicken?

Clearly, the passive voice makes this sentence fussy and the prepositional phrase by the chicken seems a bit silly. It would be better written in an active voice, with the chicken in the driver's seat where it belongs.

Why did the chicken cross the road?

### ***Commonly Used Prepositional Phrases***

There are certain prepositions that we use more often than others. They pop up in our daily speech and writing. Let's take a look at some of them in the context of prepositional phrases:

According to the weather forecast  
Across many deserts  
After many tries  
Amid the confusion  
Around the world  
Before we start the meeting  
Between a rock and a hard place  
By the light of the moon  
Like a beautiful swan  
Near the ocean  
Of my boss  
Off the top  
Out the door  
Through the looking glass  
Throughout the thick forest  
To the amusement park  
For more, enjoy this list of common prepositions.

### ***Prepositional Phrases as Adjectives***

Adjectives modify nouns, pronouns, and other adjectives. They can be simple words that provide more detail. For example, "The old book sounded so intriguing." However, prepositional phrases can also act as adjectives, providing additional detail about nouns. Take a look at the manner in which they can tell us more about the nearby noun (indicated in italics):

The book with the *tattered cover* has been read many times.  
All the passengers aboard the *runaway train* were frightened.  
The present inside the *big box* is mine.  
Our boss put out a memo regarding the *new rule*.  
The clues within the first few chapters will lead to the *murderer*.  
His is only one voice among many, but it will be *heard*.  
The extra blanket is in the box under the *bed*.  
Saul, unlike many others, will remain *there*.  
The car beside the red one is the one I want to *buy*.  
The area outside the boundary is *dangerous to cross*.  
All rooms below deck are for *sleeping*.  
Tell me the story about the *dragon slayer*.

### ***Prepositional Phrases as Adverbs***

While adjectives modify nouns, adverbs modify verbs and other adverbs. They, too, can be simple words. For example, "She *frantically* raced for the door." Prepositional phrases can also act as adverbs, providing additional detail about verbs (indicated in italics). Here are some examples:

Racing toward the finish line, Sarah realized she just might *win*.  
My shopping list needs to be put into my *purse*.

The balloon drifted up the stairs.  
Put the fresh flowers on a high shelf.  
Our team won against all odds.  
The tiger crept over the grass.  
We will order pizza during halftime.  
I will climb up the highest mountain tomorrow.  
I love to take my truck off the road.  
The baby cried well into the night.

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### **3.7. THE SIMPLE SENTENCE**

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A simple sentence in grammar has only one main or independent clause and no dependent or subordinate clauses. Comprising a subject and a predicate, this short and independent syntactic entity intends to convey a complete idea or meanings of an idea.

A simple sentence is also known as a clausal sentence. It may have a modifier besides a subject, verb, and object. Though it is simple, sometimes it can have compound verbs and compound subjects. It may or may not use commas but it stays simple in construction. For instance, "Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability." (Of Studies, by Francis Bacon)

#### **Common Use of Simple Sentence**

The pen is mightier than the sword.  
Alice everyday goes to library to study.  
Perhaps the decline of this country has already started.  
The management of your company has executed its duties excellently.  
People who live in glass houses should not throw stones.  
They have lost thousands of jobs to Asia, South America, and Mexico.

#### **Parts of Simple Sentences**

All sentences have one main important part: an independent clause. Sometimes, they also include other words, like objects and/or modifiers.

##### ***a. Independent Clause***

An independent clause has a subject and a predicate and makes sense on its own as a complete sentence. In fact, an independent clause itself is a simple sentence! Here are a few:

The cat ate.  
He ate ice cream.  
He went to the beach.  
The wolf ate steak at the zoo.

So, you can see that all of the clauses above work as sentences. All sentences have an independent clause, but all simple sentences have ONE independent clause.

##### ***B. Objects***

An object is the word affected by the verb or preposition in a sentence.

Objects are usually nouns or pronouns that answer questions like “who,” “what,” “where,” and “when?” Here, the objects are purple.

The dog ate bacon. What did the dog eat?

The dog ate bacon at the park. Where did he eat it?

I took my dog to the park. Who did you take there?

We went to the park yesterday. When did you go?

So, you can see that the highlighted objects answer the questions above. They make the sentences more informational than they would be without objects.

### c. **Modifiers**

A modifier is an adjective or adverb that “modifies” other words in a sentence to make it more descriptive. They help give a clearer idea about the things in the sentence. Here, the modifiers are gray. Let’s start with a simple sentence:

The panda ate corn.

Now, let’s add modifiers:

The fat panda quickly ate the buttery corn.

Modifiers make the sentence more detailed. We now know that the panda was fat, that he ate quickly, and that the corn was buttery! Modifiers can make sentences much more interesting.

### **Types of Simple Sentence**

There are two different types of simple sentence. Depending upon structure, these include:

**Compound Verbs and Compound Subjects** – Some sentences have a single subject and two or more verbs. Other sentences have a single verb and two or more subjects. For example:

The dog barked and ran (Compound verb)

Jack and Jill went up a hill. (Compound noun)

Arnold and Juan play cricket every evening. (Compound noun)

The cat and the dog yowled and howled, respectively. (Compound verb)

Julia and Mary hired a taxi to airport. (Compound noun)

The italicized words in the above simple sentences are compound verbs, or compound nouns, respectively.

**Single Subject and a Single Verb** – This type of simple sentence has only one subject and one verb. For example:

The staff performed well.

A white shirt always looks sharp.

He sold it for a high price on Amazon.

You have to dream to make your dream come true.

## UNIT

# 4

## SOMANTICS

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### STRUCTURE

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- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 The Terms 'Semantics' and 'Meaning'
- 4.3 Seven Types of Meaning
- 4.4 Components and Contrasts of Meaning (Synonymy, Antonymy, Hyponymy, Prototypes)
- 4.5 Lexical Relations (Homonymy, Homophony, Polysemy, Metonymy)

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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- ❖ Know about semantics
- ❖ To know about the terms 'Semantics' and 'Meaning'
- ❖ To know about seven types of meaning
- ❖ To know about components and contrasts of meaning (Synonymy, Antonymy, Hyponymy, Prototypes)
- ❖ To know about lexical relations (Homonymy, Homophony, Polysemy, Metonymy)

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### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

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Semantics is the linguistic and philosophical study of meaning in language, programming languages, formal logics, and semiotics. It is concerned with the relationship between signifiers—like words, phrases, signs, and symbols—and what they stand for in reality, their denotation.

In International scientific vocabulary semantics is also called semasiology. The word semantics was first used by Michel Bréal, a French philologist. It denotes a range of ideas—from the popular to the highly technical. It is often used in ordinary language for denoting a problem of understanding that comes down to word selection or connotation. This problem of understanding has been the subject of many formal enquiries, over a long period of time, especially in the field of formal semantics. In linguistics, it is the study of the interpretation of signs or symbols used in agents or communities within particular circumstances and contexts. Within this view, sounds, facial expressions, body language, and proxemics have semantic (meaningful) content, and each comprises several branches of study. In written language, things like paragraph structure and punctuation bear semantic content; other forms of language bear other semantic content. The formal study of semantics intersects with many other fields of inquiry, including lexicology, syntax, pragmatics, etymology and others. Independently, semantics is also a well-defined field in its own right, often

with synthetic properties. In the philosophy of language, semantics and reference are closely connected. Further related fields include philology, communication, and semiotics. The formal study of semantics can therefore be manifold and complex.

Semantics contrasts with syntax, the study of the combinatorics of units of a language (without reference to their meaning), and pragmatics, the study of the relationships between the symbols of a language, their meaning, and the users of the language. Semantics as a field of study also has significant ties to various representational theories of meaning including truth theories of meaning, coherence theories of meaning, and correspondence theories of meaning. Each of these is related to the general philosophical study of reality and the representation of meaning. In 1960s psychosemantic studies became popular after Osgood's massive cross-cultural studies using his semantic differential (SD) method that used thousands of nouns and adjective bipolar scales. A specific form of the SD, Projective Semantics method uses only most common and neutral nouns that correspond to the 7 groups (factors) of adjective-scales most consistently found in cross-cultural studies (Evaluation, Potency, Activity as found by Osgood, and Reality, Organization, Complexity, Limitation as found in other studies). In this method, seven groups of bipolar adjective scales corresponded to seven types of nouns so the method was thought to have the object-scale symmetry (OSS) between the scales and nouns for evaluation using these scales. For example, the nouns corresponding to the listed 7 factors would be: Beauty, Power, Motion, Life, Work, Chaos, Law. Beauty was expected to be assessed unequivocally as "very good" on adjectives of Evaluation-related scales, Life as "very real" on Reality-related scales, etc. However, deviations in this symmetric and very basic matrix might show underlying biases of two types: scales-related bias and objects-related bias. This OSS design meant to increase the sensitivity of the SD method to any semantic biases in responses of people within the same culture and educational background.

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## 4.2. THE TERMS 'SEMANTICS' AND 'MEANING'

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Semantics is the study of meaning in language. It can be applied to entire texts or to single words. For example, "destination" and "last stop" technically mean the same thing, but students of semantics analyze their subtle shades of meaning.

Semantics is one of the important branches of linguistics, and deals with interpretation and meaning of the words, sentence structure, and symbols. It deals with the reading comprehension of the readers, in how they understand others and their interpretations. In addition, semantics constructs a relation between adjoining words and clarifies the sense of a sentence, whether the meanings of words are literal or figurative.

Semantics involves the deconstruction of words, signals, and sentence structure. It influences our reading comprehension as well as our comprehension of other people's words in everyday conversation. Semantics play a large part in our daily communication, understanding, and language learning without us even realizing it.

For example, in everyday use, a child might make use of semantics to understand a mom's directive to "do your chores" as, "do your chores whenever you feel like it." However, the mother was probably saying, "do your chores right now."

Since meaning in language is so complex, there are actually different theories used within semantics, such as formal semantics, lexical semantics, and conceptual semantics.

**Formal Semantics** - Formal semantics uses techniques from math, philosophy, and logic to analyze the broader relationship between language and reality, truth and possibility. Has your teacher ever asked you to use an "if... then" question? It breaks apart lines of information to detect the underlying meaning or consequence of events.

**Lexical Semantics** - Lexical semantics deconstruct words and phrases within a line of text to understand the meaning in terms of context. This can include a study of individual nouns, verbs, adjectives, prefixes, root words, suffixes, or longer phrases or idioms.

**Conceptual Semantics** - Conceptual semantics deals with the most basic concept and form of a word before our thoughts and feelings added context to it.

For example, at its most basic we know a cougar to be a large wild cat. But, the word cougar has also come to indicate an older woman who's dating a younger man. This is where context is important.

Conceptual semantics opens the door to a conversation on connotation and denotation. Denotation is the standard definition of a word. Meanwhile, connotation deals with the emotion evoked from a word. Connotation will be derived from the manner in which you interpret a word or sentence's meaning. As such, semantics and connotation are deeply entwined. For a deeper dive, read these examples and exercises on connotative words.

### **Semantics in Everyday Life**

One part of studying language is understanding the many meanings of individual words. Once you have a handle on the words themselves, context comes into play. The same word can be said to two people and they can interpret them differently.

For example, imagine a man told a woman, "I care for you... a lot." Wouldn't that made the woman's heart melt? Sure, if he just said that out of the blue, walking down the beach one day. But, what if the woman told the man, "I love you," and, after a long pause, all he said was, "I care for you... a lot." She'd be crushed. So, context (the current situation) will always play a role in everyday semantics.

Here are some examples of everyday words that can have more than one meaning:

A water pill could be a pill with water in it but it is understood to be a diuretic that causes a person to lose water from his body.

"Crash" can mean an auto accident, a drop in the Stock Market, to attend a party without being invited, ocean waves hitting the shore, or the sound of cymbals being struck together.



Depending on context, a flowering plant could be referred to as a weed or a flower.

A human can be referred to as a male, female, child, adult, baby, bachelor, father or mother.

To call someone a lady means more than simply being female. Semantics tell us that, if she's a lady, she possesses elegance and grace.

"Young" can allude to a colt, filly, piglet, baby, puppy, or kitten.

To say something was challenging leads us to believe it was not a good experience. It wasn't just difficult, it was also unpleasant.

The verb "move" can mean change place, push, pull or carry, or stir emotion.

To call someone an angel doesn't mean they inhabit heaven. Semantics leads us to believe they have a lovely disposition.

The word "create" can mean build, make, construct, erect, compose or imagine.

The simple word "on" can have many meanings, such as: on call, on the roof, on cloud nine, on edge, on fire, on purpose, on demand, on top, or on the phone.

### **Situational Semantics**

Remember the different connotations of the phrase, "I care for you?" Let's revisit the idea that a single line of text can be interpreted in different ways. Suppose a college grad was just hired to a new job. She was excited to start this new chapter; everything seemed glossy and bright.

On the first day, her boss mentions she'll have to travel to the new Miami office to help the office hit the ground running. In reality, she'll be going there to do very mundane chores like order office supplies and clean the cubicles (something that nobody else wants to do).

So, as the new employee exclaims, "You chose me? Thank you!" and the supervisor says, "Yup, I chose you all right," we'll know that, given the context of the situation, the supervisor isn't saying this in a positive light. However, the new employee will interpret it to mean something very positive.

Or, what if a husband comes home with what he labels a "brand new" coffee table. He might tell his wife it was a steal and a gorgeous new piece for their home. The wife might take one look at it and say, "This isn't new. I saw this at the local consignment shop the other day." The husband might retort, "Semantics. It's new to us!" Indeed, two people can take one word or expression and take it to mean entirely different things.

### ***Semantics in Puns***

In your reading, you may come across a pun or two. Puns like to play on words. They deliberately use multiple meanings to reshape the meaning of a sentence. So, what we understand a word to mean can be twisted to mean something else. We'll see this in the examples below. In the first one, we know littering to mean something like tossing garbage out the window as we drive. But, the play on words is being made by the fact that dogs have "litters" of puppies. They're fun! Let's take a look:

A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.

"One morning I shot an elephant in my pajamas. How he got into my pajamas I'll never know."- Groucho Marx

Let's talk about rights and lefts. You're right, so I left.

Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.

Diet slogan: Are you going the wrong weigh?

I fired my masseuse today. She just rubbed me the wrong way.

The best way to communicate with a fish is to drop them a line.

Two silkworms had a race. They ended up in a tie.

Draw Your Own Conclusions with Semantics

The study of words through semantics provides a better understanding of the multiple meanings of words. They're a nice way to spice up a story or put a twist on the conversation between two characters.

If, indeed, you're working on a short story and would like to play with semantics, take a look at *Get Creative: How to Write a Short Story*. Have fun crafting nifty conversations and making a play on words!

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### 4.3. SEVEN TYPES OF MEANING

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#### **Formal Semantics**

Originates from Montague's work (see above). A highly formalized theory of natural language semantics in which expressions are assigned denotations (meanings) such as individuals, truth values, or functions from one of these to another. The truth of a sentence, and its logical relation to other sentences, is then evaluated relative to a model.

Linguists rarely employed formal semantics until Richard Montague showed how English (or any natural language) could be treated like a formal language. His contribution to linguistic semantics, which is now known as Montague grammar, was the basis for further developments, like the categorial grammar of Bar-Hillel and colleagues, and the more recent type-logical semantics (or grammar) based on Lambek calculus.

#### ***Aims and Scope***

There is some disagreement concerning the explanatory roles attributed to formal semantics. Several theorists ground semantics on facts about communication, convention and truth, whereas others tend to see it as a syntactically-driven project primarily concerned with explaining productivity and systematicity in natural language, and thus part of a larger linguistic enterprise such as Chomskyan linguistics or any other modular view of the human linguistic ability.

#### ***Varieties of formal semantics***

Most current approaches to formal semantics fall within the paradigm of the so-called truth-conditional semantics, which attempts to explain the meaning of a sentence by providing the conditions under which it would be true. However, several adherents to the truth-conditional program have also argued that there is more to meaning than truth-conditions. Alternative

what kind of speech act the expression performs. Dummett further argues that a theory based on inference, such as Proof-theoretic semantics, provides a better foundation for this model than truth-conditional semantics does.

### ***Pragmatic intrusion***

Some authors working within the field of pragmatics have argued that linguistic meaning, understood as the output of a purely formal analysis of a sentence-type, underdetermines truth-conditions. These authors, sometimes labeled 'contextualists', argue that the role of pragmatic processes is not just pre-semantic (disambiguation or reference assignment) or post-semantic (drawing implicatures, determining speech acts), but is also key to determining the truth-conditions of an utterance. That is why some contextualists prefer to talk about 'truth-conditional pragmatics' instead of semantics.

### **Conceptual semantics**

This theory is an effort to explain properties of argument structure. The assumption behind this theory is that syntactic properties of phrases reflect the meanings of the words that head them. With this theory, linguists can better deal with the fact that subtle differences in word meaning correlate with other differences in the syntactic structure that the word appears in. The way this is gone about is by looking at the internal structure of words. These small parts that make up the internal structure of words are termed semantic primitives.

Conceptual semantics distinguishes a single, universal meaning to a word. Instead of having a lexical semantic meaning in addition to the conceptual representation of the actual referent, here the two are combined into what Jackendoff calls "lexical concepts" (Murphy 2010:59). Conceptual semantics is considered to be not just a linguistic theory, but a theory on human cognition. Like many semantic theories, Jackendoff claims that a compositional method is necessary to explore conceptualization. Just as one of the ways a physical scientist tries to understand matter is by breaking it down into progressively smaller parts, so a scientific study of conceptualization proceeds by breaking down, or decomposing, meanings into smaller parts. However, this decomposition cannot go on forever, for at some point, meanings can no longer be broken down.

This is the level of conceptual structure, the level of mental representations which encode the human understanding of the world, containing the primitive conceptual elements out of which meanings are built, plus their rules of combination. Conceptual semantics does not work with a mental dictionary, in the classical sense. There are no definitions attached to concepts and reference, only the idea of the concept or reference itself. Just as generative syntax posits a finite set of syntactic categories and rules for combining them, so, too, does Conceptual Semantics posit 'a finite set of mental primitives and a finite set of principles of mental combination' governing their interaction (Jackendoff 1990: 9). Jackendoff refers to this set of primitives and the rules governing them as the 'grammar of sentential concepts' (Jackendoff 1990: 9).

His starting point is a close analysis of the meanings of lexemes dedicated to bringing out parallelisms and contrasts which reveal the nature of the conceptual structures underlying them. Jackendoff considers the lexicon to

be made of three parts: phonological, syntactic, and conceptual. These three aspects of a concept give a "full picture of a word" (Murphy 2010:60). What his method shows, he says, is that the psychological organization on which meaning rests 'lies a very short distance below the surface of everyday lexical items – and that progress can be made in exploring it' (1991: 44). Jackendoff claims that a decompositional method is necessary to explore conceptual structure, in which the concepts underlying word meaning are broken down into their smallest elements: conceptual primitives envisaged as the semantic equivalents of phonological features. Conceptual Semantics posits 'a finite set of mental primitives and a finite set of principles of mental combination' governing their interaction. The conceptual structure of a lexical item is an element with zero or more open argument slots, which are filled by the syntactic complements of the lexical item.

### **Semantic structures**

Conceptual semantics breaks lexical concepts up into ontological categories: events, states, places, amounts, things, and property, to name a few. These ontological categories are called semantic primes, or semantic primitives. Jackendoff poses that any concept in the human brain can be expressed using these semantic primes. Conceptual semantics is compositional, in that the meanings of phrases, clauses, and sentences can be determined from the lexical concepts that make them up. (Murphy 2010:66)

### **Problems**

Jackendoff's system has been criticised for its highly abstract primitives, which linguists such as Wierzbicka (2007a, 2007b) and Goddard (1998, 2001) have called "obscure". The main reason for this is because one requires special training to understand them, and they often must be translated into plain English to be communicated. Another criticism often raised against conceptual semantics is that it is arbitrary. In its current state, there are no clear procedures for determining when a primitive is justified. Another criticism Wierzbicka and Goddard have raised is that the theory was formulated around and applied only to English, though it claims to be universal.

### **Cognitive Semantics**

Cognitive semantics approaches meaning from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. In this framework, language is explained via general human cognitive abilities rather than a domain-specific language module. The techniques native to cognitive semantics are typically used in lexical studies such as those put forth by Leonard Talmy, George Lakoff, Dirk Geeraerts, and Bruce Wayne Hawkins. Some cognitive semantic frameworks, such as that developed by Talmy, take into account syntactic structures as well. Semantics, through modern researchers can be linked to the Wernicke's area of the brain and can be measured using the event-related potential (ERP). ERP is the rapid electrical response recorded with small disc electrodes which are placed on a persons scalp.

### **Lexical Semantics**

A linguistic theory that investigates word meaning. This theory understands that the meaning of a word is fully reflected by its context.

Here, the meaning of a word is constituted by its contextual relations. Therefore, a distinction between degrees of participation as well as modes of participation are made. In order to accomplish this distinction any part of a sentence that bears a meaning and combines with the meanings of other constituents is labeled as a semantic constituent. Semantic constituents that cannot be broken down into more elementary constituents are labeled minimal semantic constituents.

### **Cross-cultural Semantics**

Various fields or disciplines have long been contributing to cross-cultural semantics. Are words like love, truth, and hate universals? Is even the word sense – so central to semantics – a universal, or a concept entrenched in a long-standing but culture-specific tradition? These are the kind of crucial questions that are discussed in cross-cultural semantics. Translation theory, ethnolinguistics, linguistic anthropology and cultural linguistics specialize in the field of comparing, contrasting, and translating words, terms and meanings from one language to another (see Herder, W. von Humboldt, Boas, Sapir, and Whorf). But philosophy, sociology, and anthropology have long established traditions in contrasting the different nuances of the terms and concepts we use. And online encyclopaedias such as the Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy, <https://plato.stanford.edu>, and more and more Wikipedia itself have greatly facilitated the possibilities of comparing the background and usages of key cultural terms. In recent years the question of whether key terms are translatable or untranslatable has increasingly come to the fore of global discussions, especially since the publication of Barbara Cassin's Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon, in 2014.

### **Computational semantics**

Computational semantics is focused on the processing of linguistic meaning. In order to do this concrete algorithms and architectures are described. Within this framework the algorithms and architectures are also analyzed in terms of decidability, time/space complexity, data structures that they require and communication protocols.

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## **4.4. COMPONENTS AND CONTRASTS OF MEANING**

### **(SYNONYMY, ANTONYMY, HYPONYMY, PROTOTYPES)**

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#### **Synonymy**

A synonym is a word or phrase that means exactly or nearly the same as another word or phrase in the same language. Words that are synonyms are said to be synonymous, and the state of being a synonym is called synonymy. For example, the words begin, start, commence, and initiate are all synonyms of one another. Words are typically synonymous in one particular sense: for example, long and extended in the context long time or extended time are synonymous, but long cannot be used in the phrase extended family. Synonyms with exactly the same meaning share a seme or denotational sememe, whereas those with inexactly similar meanings share a broader denotational or connotational sememe and thus overlap within a semantic field. The former are sometimes called cognitive synonyms and the latter, near-synonyms, plesionyms or poecilonyms.

The semantic qualities or sense relations that exist between words (lexemes) with closely related meanings (i.e., synonyms). Plural: synonymies. Contrast with antonymy.

Synonymy may also refer to the study of synonyms or to a list of synonyms.

In the words of Dagmar Divjak, near-synonymy (the relationship between different lexemes that express similar meanings) is "a fundamental phenomenon that influences the structure of our lexical knowledge" (Structuring the Lexicon, 2010).

A synonym is a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or a phrase. Antonyms are words which have the opposite (or nearly opposite) meaning. For example: new and old.

Words that are synonyms are referred to as being synonymous, and the state of being a synonym is called synonymy.

A thesaurus is a resource similar to a dictionary that helps writers to search synonyms - as a device to compose a verbose and scintillating text. This list provides some examples of commonly employed synonyms.

Utilizing synonyms is an elegant and frequently applied method to make a text more pleasant to read. If the same word is used very often in several sentences, it might very well be the case, that this same word should describe something different in each of the sentences. Since synonyms are usually nuanced variations with slightly different meanings, their use will emphasize special characteristics, and thus the text will be more precise.

### ***List of Synonyms***

#### **Action**

Come — advance, approach, arrive, near, reach

Go — depart, disappear, fade, move, proceed, recede, travel

Run — dash, escape, elope, flee, hasten, hurry, race, rush, speed, sprint

Hurry — rush, run, speed, race, hasten, urge, accelerate, bustle

Hide — conceal, cover, mask, cloak, camouflage, screen, shroud, veil

Move — plod, go, creep, crawl, inch, poke, drag, toddle, shuffle, trot, dawdle, walk, traipse, mosey, jog, plug, trudge, slump, lumber, trail, lag, run, sprint, trip, bound, hotfoot, high-tail, streak, stride, tear, breeze, whisk, rush, dash, dart, bolt, fling, scamper, scurry, skedaddle, scoot, scuttle, scramble, race, chase, hasten, hurry, hump, gallop, lope, accelerate, stir, budge, travel, wander, roam, journey, trek, ride, spin, slip, glide, slide, slither, coast, flow, sail, saunter, hobble, amble, stagger, paddle, slouch, prance, straggle, meander, perambulate, waddle, wobble, pace, swagger, promenade, lunge

Do — execute, enact, carry out, finish, conclude, effect, accomplish, achieve, attain

Have — hold, possess, own, contain, acquire, gain, maintain, believe, bear, beget, occupy, absorb, fill, enjoy

Use — employ, utilize, exhaust, spend, expend, consume, exercise



Get — acquire, obtain, secure, procure, gain, fetch, find, score, accumulate, win, earn, rep, catch, net, bag, derive, collect, gather, glean, pick up, accept, come by, regain, salvage

Keep — hold, retain, withhold, preserve, maintain, sustain, support

Put — place, set, attach, establish, assign, keep, save, set aside, effect, achieve, do, build

Take — hold, catch, seize, grasp, win, capture, acquire, pick, choose, select, prefer, remove, steal, lift, rob, engage, bewitch, purchase, buy, retract, recall, assume, occupy, consume

Make — create, originate, invent, beget, form, construct, design, fabricate, manufacture, produce, build, develop, do, effect, execute, compose, perform, accomplish, earn, gain, obtain, acquire, get

Break — fracture, rupture, shatter, smash, wreck, crash, demolish, atomize

Destroy — ruin, demolish, raze, waste, kill, slay, end, extinguish

Kill — slay, execute, assassinate, murder, destroy, cancel, abolish

Cut — gash, slash, prick, nick, sever, slice, carve, cleave, slit, chop, crop, lop, reduce

Fall — drop, descend, plunge, topple, tumble

Fly — soar, hover, flit, wing, flee, waft, glide, coast, skim, sail, cruise

Decide — determine, settle, choose, resolve

Help — aid, assist, support, encourage, back, wait on, attend, serve, relieve, succor, benefit, befriend, abet

Mark — label, tag, price, ticket, impress, effect, trace, imprint, stamp, brand, sign, note, heed, notice, designate

Plan — plot, scheme, design, draw, map, diagram, procedure, arrangement, intention, device, contrivance, method, way, blueprint

Show — display, exhibit, present, note, point to, indicate, explain, reveal, prove, demonstrate, expose

Antonyms

Begin — start, open, launch, initiate, commence, inaugurate, originate

End — stop, finish, terminate, conclude, close, halt, cessation, discontinuance, cease, halt, stay, pause, discontinue, conclude, finish, quit

Big — large, enormous, huge, immense, gigantic, vast, colossal, gargantuan, sizable, grand, great, tall, substantial, mammoth, astronomical, ample, broad, expansive, spacious, stout, tremendous, titanic, mountainous

Little — small, tiny, diminutive, shrimp, runt, miniature, puny, exiguous, dinky, cramped, limited, itzy-bitsy, microscopic, slight, petite, minute

New — fresh, unique, original, unusual, novel, modern, current, recent

Old — feeble, frail, ancient, weak, aged, used, worn, dilapidated, ragged, faded, broken-down, former, old-fashioned, outmoded, passe, veteran, mature, venerable, primitive, traditional, archaic, conventional, customary, stale, musty, obsolete, extinct



False — wrong, fake, fraudulent, counterfeit, spurious, untrue, unfounded, erroneous, deceptive, groundless, fallacious, incorrect, inaccurate, mistaken, erroneous, improper, unsuitable

True — right, accurate, proper, precise, exact, valid, genuine, real, actual, trustworthy, steady, loyal, dependable, sincere, staunch, correct, accurate, factual, true, good, just, honest, upright, lawful, moral, proper, suitable, apt, legal, fair

Fast — quick, rapid, speedy, fleet, hasty, snappy, mercurial, swiftly, rapidly, quickly, snappily, speedily, lickety-split, posthaste, hastily, expeditiously, like a flash

Slow — unhurried, gradual, leisurely, late, behind, tedious, slack

Cool — chilly, cold, frosty, wintry, icy, frigid

Hot — feverish, warm, heated, sweltering, torrid, equatorial, tropical, erotic, passionate, spicy, peppery, pungent, sharp tangy, tart, fiery, flaming, sizzling, charged, burning, seared, chafed, inflamed, irritated, red, smarting, stinging

Quiet — silent, still, soundless, mute, tranquil, peaceful, calm, restful, hushed, inaudible, reticent, reserved, taciturn, secretive, uncommunicative, tightlipped

Noisy — loudly, earsplitting, stentorian, strident, clamorous, boisterous, clangorous, deafening, roisterous, uproarious, pandemoniac

All — complete, entire, full, gross, outright, perfect, total, utter, whole, any, complete, every, sum, totality, each and every, every bit of, bar none, every single, everything, everyone

None — nothing, nobody, no one, zero, zilch, no one at all, no part, not a bit, not a soul, not a thing, not any, not anyone, not anything, not one, nonexistent, null, nadir, nil, naught, void, nada, blank, nix

Normal — daily, traditional, familiar, routine, proper, ordinary, typical, everyday, usual, commonplace, natural, classic, standard, general, bona fide, established, habitual, orthodox, prevalent, run-of-the-mill, time-honored, unvarying, average, conventional, customary, common, regular, garden-variety, household, plain, simple, balanced

Strange — abnormal, aberrant, anomalous, bent, bizarre, deviant, queer, eccentric, freakish, fanatical, odd, eerie, peculiar, weird, unorthodox, nonstandard, atypical, different, irregular, nonconforming, offbeat, unusual, extraordinary, insane, irrational, disorderly, rare, exceptional, extreme, outlandish

Descriptive

Describe — portray, characterize, picture, narrate, relate, recount, represent, report, record

Difference — disagreement, inequity, contrast, dissimilarity, incompatibility

Explain — elaborate, clarify, define, interpret, justify, account for

Idea — thought, concept, conception, notion, understanding, opinion, plan, view, belief

Look — gaze, see, glance, watch, survey, study, seek, search for, peek, peep, glimpse, stare, contemplate, examine, gape, ogle, scrutinize, inspect, leer, behold, observe, view, witness, perceive, spy, sight, discover, notice, recognize, peer, eye, gawk, peruse, explore

Story — tale, myth, legend, fable, yarn, account, narrative, chronicle, epic, sage, anecdote, record, memoir

Tell — disclose, reveal, show, expose, uncover, relate, narrate, inform, advise, explain, divulge, declare, command, order, bid, recount, repeat

Think — judge, deem, assume, believe, consider, contemplate, reflect, mediate

Feelings

Anger — enrage, infuriate, arouse, nettle, exasperate, inflame, madden

Angry — mad, furious, enraged, excited, wrathful, indignant, exasperated, aroused, inflamed

Calm — quiet, peaceful, still, tranquil, mild, serene, smooth, composed, collected, unruffled, level-headed, unexcited, detached, aloof

Eager — keen, fervent, enthusiastic, involved, interested, alive to

Fear — fright, dread, terror, alarm, dismay, anxiety, scare, awe, horror, panic, apprehension

Happy — pleased, contented, satisfied, delighted, elated, joyful, cheerful, ecstatic, jubilant, gay, tickled, gratified, glad, blissful, overjoyed

Hate — despise, loathe, detest, abhor, disfavor, dislike, disapprove, abominate

Love — like, admire, esteem, fancy, care for, cherish, adore, treasure, worship, appreciate, savor

Moody — temperamental, changeable, short-tempered, glum, morose, sullen, mopish, irritable, testy, peevish, fretful, spiteful, sulky, touchy

Sad — miserable, uncomfortable, wretched, heart-broken, unfortunate, poor, downhearted, sorrowful, depressed, dejected, melancholy, glum, gloomy, dismal, discouraged, unhappy

Scared — afraid, frightened, alarmed, terrified, panicked, fearful, unnerved, insecure, timid, shy, skittish, jumpy, disquieted, worried, vexed, troubled, disturbed, horrified, terrorized, shocked, petrified, haunted, timorous, shrinking, tremulous, stupefied, paralyzed, stunned, apprehensive

Negative

Awful — dreadful, terrible, abominable, bad, poor, unpleasant

Bad — evil, immoral, wicked, corrupt, sinful, depraved, rotten, contaminated, spoiled, tainted, harmful, injurious, unfavorable, defective, inferior, imperfect, substandard, faulty, improper, inappropriate, unsuitable, disagreeable, unpleasant, cross, nasty, unfriendly, irascible, horrible, atrocious, outrageous, scandalous, infamous, wrong, noxious, sinister, putrid, snide, deplorable, dismal, gross, heinous, nefarious, base, obnoxious, detestable, despicable, contemptible, foul, rank, ghastly, execrable

Crooked — bent, twisted, curved, hooked, zigzag

Dangerous — perilous, hazardous, risky, uncertain, unsafe

Dark — shadowy, unlit, murky, gloomy, dim, dusky, shaded, sunless, black, dismal, sad

Dull — boring, tiring, tiresome, uninteresting, slow, dumb, stupid, unimaginative, lifeless, dead, insensible, tedious, wearisome, listless, expressionless, plain, monotonous, humdrum, dreary

Fat — stout, corpulent, fleshy, beefy, paunchy, plump, full, rotund, tubby, pudgy, chubby, chunky, burly, bulky, elephantine

Gross — improper, rude, coarse, indecent, crude, vulgar, outrageous, extreme, grievous, shameful, uncouth, obscene, low

Hurt — damage, harm, injure, wound, distress, afflict, pain

Lazy — indolent, slothful, idle, inactive, sluggish

Predicament — quandary, dilemma, pickle, problem, plight, spot, scrape, jam

Trouble — distress, anguish, anxiety, worry, wretchedness, pain, danger, peril, disaster, grief, misfortune, difficulty, concern, pains, inconvenience, exertion, effort

Ugly — hideous, frightful, frightening, shocking, horrible, unpleasant, monstrous, terrifying, gross, grisly, ghastly, horrid, unsightly, plain, homely, evil, repulsive, repugnant, gruesome

Positive

Amazing — incredible, unbelievable, improbable, fabulous, wonderful, fantastic, astonishing, astounding, extraordinary

Beautiful — pretty, lovely, handsome, attractive, gorgeous, dazzling, splendid, magnificent, comely, fair, ravishing, graceful, elegant, fine, exquisite, aesthetic, pleasing, shapely, delicate, stunning, glorious, heavenly, resplendent, radiant, glowing, blooming, sparkling

Brave — courageous, fearless, dauntless, intrepid, plucky, daring, heroic, valorous, audacious, bold, gallant, valiant, doughty, mettlesome

Bright — shining, shiny, gleaming, brilliant, sparkling, shimmering, radiant, vivid, colorful, lustrous, luminous, incandescent, intelligent, knowing, quick-witted, smart, intellectual

Delicious — savory, delectable, appetizing, luscious, scrumptious, palatable, delightful, enjoyable, toothsome, exquisite

Enjoy — appreciate, delight in, be pleased, indulge in, luxuriate in, bask in, relish, devour, savor, like

Famous — well-known, renowned, celebrated, famed, eminent, illustrious, distinguished, noted, notorious

Funny — humorous, amusing, droll, comic, comical, laughable, silly

Good — excellent, fine, superior, wonderful, marvelous, qualified, suited, suitable, apt, proper, capable, generous, kindly, friendly, gracious, obliging, pleasant, agreeable, pleasurable, satisfactory, well-behaved, obedient, honorable, reliable, trustworthy, safe, favorable, profitable, advantageous, righteous, expedient, helpful, valid, genuine, ample, salubrious, estimable, beneficial, splendid, great, noble, worthy, first-rate, top-notch, grand, sterling, superb, respectable, edifying

Great — noteworthy, worthy, distinguished, remarkable, grand, considerable, powerful, much, mighty

Mischievous — prankish, playful, naughty, roguish, waggish, impish, sportive

Neat — clean, orderly, tidy, trim, dapper, natty, smart, elegant, well-organized, super, desirable, spruce, shipshape, well-kept, shapely

Popular — well-liked, approved, accepted, favorite, celebrated, common, current

Talk / Speech

Answer — reply, respond, retort, acknowledge

Ask — question, inquire of, seek information from, put a question to, demand, request, expect, inquire, query, interrogate, examine, quiz

Cry — shout, yell, yowl, scream, roar, bellow, weep, wail, sob, bawl

Say/Tell — inform, notify, advise, relate, recount, narrate, explain, reveal, disclose, divulge, declare, command, order, bid, enlighten, instruct, insist, teach, train, direct, issue, remark, converse, speak, affirm, suppose, utter, negate, express, verbalize, voice, articulate, pronounce, deliver, convey, impart, assert, state, allege, mutter, mumble, whisper, sigh, exclaim, yell, sing, yelp, snarl, hiss, grunt, snort, roar, bellow, thunder, boom, scream, shriek, screech, squawk, whine, philosophize, stammer, stutter, lisp, drawl, jabber, protest, announce, swear, vow, content, assure, deny, dispute

Mean (Something) — add up to, affect, be important, be of value, be substantive, carry weight, connote, count, denote, express, imply, intend, involve, signify, spell, stand for, suggest, value, weigh in,

Unsorted

Somewhat — a little, sort of, kind of, a bit, relatively, slightly, moderately, to some extent / degree, reasonably, partially, more or less, not much

rather, quite, fairly, by a long shot, by far, rather, significantly, well

Somehow — in a way, virtually, to a certain extent, in some measure, to some extent, to a certain degree, quasi, in a manner of speaking, effectively

anyhow, anyway, anywise, by hook or by crook, another, howsoever, in any way, somehow or other, somehow, by some means

Definite — certain, sure, positive, determined, clear, distinct, obvious

Fair — just, impartial, unbiased, objective, unprejudiced, honest

Important — necessary, vital, critical, indispensable, valuable, essential, significant, primary, principal, considerable, famous, distinguished, notable, well-known

Interesting — fascinating, engaging, sharp, keen, bright, intelligent, animated, spirited, attractive, inviting, intriguing, provocative, thought-provoking, challenging, inspiring, involving, moving, titillating, tantalizing, exciting, entertaining, piquant, lively, racy, spicy, engrossing, absorbing, consuming, gripping, arresting, enthralling, spellbinding, curious, captivating, enchanting, bewitching, appealing

Part — portion, share, piece, allotment, section, fraction, fragment

Place — space, area, spot, plot, region, location, situation, position, residence, dwelling, set, site, station, status, state

## **Antonymy**

Antonyms are words that have contrasting, or opposite, meanings. Like so much of the English language, "antonym" is rooted in the Greek language. The Greek word *anti* means opposite, while *onym* means name. Opposite name - that makes sense!

Since the English language is so complex, people may disagree about which words truly have opposite meanings. With the examples of antonyms listed below, we try to clear that up and offer some tactics for choosing the most appropriate word every time.

### **Types of Antonyms**

You may be interested to know that there are three different kinds of antonyms. Let's take a look at each one:

**Complementary:** Complementary antonyms have no middle ground. Examples include:

boy - girl, off - on, night - day, entrance - exit, exterior - interior, true - false, dead - alive, push - pull, pass - fail

**Relational:** These are similar to complementary antonyms, except that both must exist for them to be antonyms of each other. Check out these examples:

above - below, doctor - patient, husband - wife, servant - master, borrow - lend, give - receive, predator - prey, buy - sell, instructor - pupil

**Graded:** These antonyms deal with levels of comparison and they can be two words on a scale. Many are relative terms, which can be interpreted differently by different people. Examples include:

young - elderly, hard - easy, happy - wistful, wise - foolish, fat - slim, warm - cool, early - late, fast - slow, dark - pale

#### **Add a Prefix to Create an Antonym**

Sometimes, you don't need to search for another word entirely. It's possible to create an antonym simply by adding a prefix to the word.

Some examples of antonyms created by adding the prefix *dis-* are:

A

Above - below

absent - present

abundant - scarce

accept - decline, refuse

accident - intent

accomplishment - failure

accurate - inaccurate

achieve - fail

add - subtract

adjacent - distant

admire - detest  
admit – deny, reject  
adore – hate  
advance - retreat  
advantage – disadvantage  
affirm – deny  
afraid – confident  
after – before  
aid - hinder  
against - for  
agree – disagree  
alert - asleep  
alive - dead  
all - none, nothing  
allow – forbid  
alone – together  
amateur - professional  
ally - enemy  
always – never  
amuse - bore  
ancient - modern  
answer - question  
antonym - synonym  
apart – together  
apparent - obscure  
appear - disappear, vanish  
approve – disapprove  
argue - agree  
arrive – depart  
arrogant - humble  
artificial - natural  
ascend – descend  
attack - defend  
attractive – repulsive  
attract - repel  
awake – asleep  
awkward – graceful  
B  
back - front  
backward - forward  
bad – good

backward - forward  
beautiful - ugly  
before - after  
begin - end  
below - above  
bent - straight  
best - worst  
better - worse, worst  
big - little, small  
birth – death  
bitter - sweet  
black - white  
blame - praise  
bless - curse  
bitter – sweet  
blunt – sharp  
bold – timid, meek  
borrow - lend  
bottom - top  
bound - unbound, free  
boundless – limited  
bravery – cowardice  
break – repair  
brief - long  
bright - dim, dull  
brighten - fade  
broad – narrow  
build – destroy  
busy – idle  
buy - sell  
C  
calm - windy, troubled  
can - cannot, can't  
capable - incapable  
captive – free  
capture – release  
careful – careless  
cause – effect  
cautious – careless  
centre - edge  
cheap – dear, expensive



cheerful - sad, discouraged, dreary  
child – adult  
chilly – warm  
clean - dirty  
clear – vague, cloudy, opaque  
clever – stupid  
clockwise – anti-clockwise  
close – distant, open  
cold – hot  
combine – separate  
come – go  
comfort – discomfort  
common – rare  
complex – simple  
compliment – insult  
conceal – reveal  
constant – variable  
continue – interrupt  
cool – warm  
cope - original  
correct – incorrect  
courage – cowardice  
crazy – sane  
crooked - straight  
cruel – kind  
cry - laugh  
cunning – simple  
D  
dainty – clumsy  
damage - improve  
danger – safety  
dark – light  
dawn – sunset  
day - night  
decrease - increase  
deep - shallow  
definite - indefinite  
demand - supply  
despair – hope  
destroy – create  
difficult - easy

dim - bright  
disappear - appear  
discourage - encourage  
disease - health  
dismal - cheerful  
divide - unite  
doubt - trust  
down - up  
downwards - upwards  
dreary - cheerful  
dry - moist, wet  
dull - bright, shiny  
dusk - dawn  
E  
early - late  
East - West  
easy - hard, difficult  
economise - waste  
empty - full  
encourage - discourage  
end - begin, start  
entrance - exit  
even - odd  
evil - good  
excited - calm  
expand - contract, shrink  
export - import  
exterior - interior  
external - internal  
F  
fade - brighten  
fail - succeed  
false - true  
famous - unknown  
fancy - plain  
far - near  
fast - slow  
fat - thin  
feeble - sturdy, strong, powerful  
few - many  
fiction - fact

find – lose  
finish – start  
firm - flabby  
first – last  
fix - break  
float – sink  
follow - lead  
foolish - wise  
fore – aft  
forgive - blame  
free - bound, captive, restricted  
fold - unfold  
forget - remember  
found – lost  
frank - secretive  
fresh - stale  
frequent - seldom  
friend - enemy  
for - against  
fortunate - unfortunate  
full – empty  
funny – empty  
future – present, past  
G  
gather - distribute  
generous – stingy, mean  
gentle – rough, violent  
get - give  
giant - tiny, small, dwarf  
give - receive, take  
glad - sad, sorry  
gloomy - cheerful  
go – stop, come  
good - bad, evil  
grant - refuse  
great - tiny, small, unimportant, minute  
grow - shrink  
guest - host  
guilty – innocent  
H  
handsome - ugly

happy – sad, miserable  
hard – easy  
hard - soft  
harmful - harmless  
harsh – mild  
hasten - dawdle  
hate - love  
healthy - diseased, ill, sick, unhealthy  
heat - cold  
heaven - hell  
heavy - light  
help - hinder  
here - there  
hero - coward  
high - low  
hill - valley  
hinder - help  
honest – dishonest  
hopeful - hopeless  
horizontal - vertical  
hot - cold  
humble – proud  
huge – tiny  
I  
ignore - notice  
ill - healthy, well  
imitation - genuine  
immense – minute, tiny, small  
immigrate - emigrate  
important – trivial  
imprison - free  
in - out  
include - exclude  
increase - decrease  
inferior - superior  
inhale - exhale  
inner – outer  
innocent - guilty  
inside - outside  
intelligent - stupid, unintelligent  
interesting – boring, dull, uninteresting

interior - exterior  
internal - external  
intentional – accidental  
J  
jeopardize - secure  
join - separate  
junior - senior  
just - unjust  
justice – injustice  
K  
keen – uninterested  
kind – cruel, nasty  
knowledge - ignorance  
known – unknown  
L  
lack – abundance, plenty  
landlord - tenant  
large - small  
last – first  
late -early  
laugh - cry  
lawful - unlawful, illegal  
lazy - industrious  
leader - follower  
left - right  
lend -borrow  
lengthen - shorten  
lenient - strict  
left - right  
less - more  
light - dark, heavy  
life - death  
like - dislike, hate  
likely - unlikely  
limited - boundless  
little – big  
live - die  
lofty - lowly  
long - short  
loose - tight  
lose – find

loser - winner

loss – win

loud - quiet

love - hate

low – high

lower - raise

loyal - disloyal

M

mad - happy, sane

major - minor

many - few

mature - immature

maximum – minimum

mean - generous

melt – freeze

mend - break

merry - sad

messy - neat

minor - major

minority - majority

miser – spendthrift

miss - catch

misunderstand - understand

more – less

much - little

N

narrow – wide, broad

native – foreigner, stranger

natural - artificial

near - far, distant

neat - messy, untidy

negative - affirmative

never - always

new – old, ancient

nice – awful, nasty

night - day

no – yes

nobody - everybody

noisy - quiet

none – some

nothing – everything

notice – ignore  
now - then  
North - South  
O  
obedient – disobedient  
occasionally - frequently  
odd - even  
offer – refuse  
often – seldom, sometimes  
old - young  
old - new  
on - off  
open - closed, shut  
opposite- same, similar  
optimist – pessimist  
order - mess  
out - in  
outer – inner  
outside – inside  
outskirts - centre  
over – under  
P  
pass - fail  
past - present  
patient - impatient  
peace - war  
permanent – temporary  
permit - forbid  
please - displease  
plentiful - scarce  
plural - singular  
poetry - prose  
polite - rude, impolite  
poor – rich, wealthy  
poverty - wealth  
possible - impossible  
poverty - wealth, riches  
powerful – weak, feeble  
presence – absence  
pretty – ugly  
private - public



prudent - imprudent

pure - impure, contaminated

push - pull

Q

qualified – unqualified

quick - slow

question - answer

quiet - loud, noisy

R

raise - lower

rapid - slow

rare – common

rear – front

receive – send

reduce – increase

refuse – agree, accept

regular - irregular

real – fake

rest - work

rich - poor

right - left, wrong

right-side-up - upside-down

rough – smooth, soft, gentle

rude – courteous

S

sad - happy

safe – unsafe, dangerous

same – opposite, different

satisfy – unsatisfied, dissatisfy

secure – insecure

seldom - often

scatter – collect

senior - junior

separate - join, connect, together

serious – trivial, funny

second-hand – new

security – insecurity

sense - nonsense

shallow – deep

sharp - blunt

shrink – grow

short – long  
shut - open  
sick - healthy, ill  
simple - complex, hard, complicated  
singular - plural  
sink - float  
slim - fat, thick, stout  
slow – fast  
smooth - rough  
sober - drunk  
soft – hard  
solid - liquid  
some - none  
sorrow - joy  
sour - sweet  
sow -reap  
straight – crooked  
stand - lie  
start - finish  
stop - go  
strict – lenient, indulgent  
strong - weak  
success - failure  
sunny - cloudy  
synonym - antonym  
sweet - sour  
T  
take - give  
tall - short  
tame - wild  
them - us  
there - here  
thick – thin  
throw - catch  
tight - loose, slack  
tiny - big, huge  
together - apart  
top - bottom  
tough - easy, tender  
transparent - opaque  
true - false

truth - lie, untruth

U

under - over

unfold – fold

unity - division

unknown - known

unqualified - qualified

unsafe - safe

up - down

upside-down - right-side-up

upstairs - downstairs

us - them

useful - useless

V

vacant – occupied

valuable - valueless

vanish - appear

vast - tiny

victory - defeat

virtue - vice

visible - invisible

voluntary – compulsory

vowel - consonant

W

war - peace

wax - wane

weak - strong

wet - dry

white – black

weak – strong, powerful

white - black

wide - narrow

win - lose

wisdom - folly, stupidity

within – outside

worse – better

worst - best

wrong - right

Y

yes - no

young - old

14. linguistics and etymology
15. recalcitrance and adamant
16. soup and gazpacho
17. cheese and bryndza
18. bully and tyrannize
19. nephew and great-nephew
20. vaccine and vaccine-challenged
21. parasitology and parasitism
22. sport and tennis
23. apparatus and toolkit
24. giftedness and well-rounded
25. spices and ginger
26. hematology and hematopoiesis
27. disease and lipedema
28. rage and mad
29. oncology and cancer
30. predisposition and vulnerable
31. interference and intervened
32. generosity and charity
33. pudding and haggis
34. steppe and shrub-steppe
35. mango and langra
36. satisfaction and comfort
37. sentiment and mind-blowing
38. place and inn
39. emanation and light-emitting
40. detraction and downplay
41. criterion and subpar
42. well-being and exercitation
43. confectionery and chocolate
44. manner and fashion
45. building and citadel
46. drink and tea
47. feeling and anguish
48. food and meat
49. personality and goddess
50. insectophobia and arachnophobia
51. pie and pirog
52. recreation and canyoning
53. lust and desirous

54. impoliteness and shameless
55. invalidity and unsustainable
56. immunity and disenfranchise
57. goods and affluent
58. heroism and hero
59. colour and blue
60. medicine and analgesic
61. superhero and superman
62. midwifery and midwife
63. boating and sailing
64. hobby and volleyball
65. specialist and implementer
66. sob and whiny
67. repose and dream-maker
68. preference and electable
69. spotlight and highlight
70. restriction and restrictive
71. nostalgia and nostalgic
72. nobility and samurai
73. tale and anecdote
74. religion and judaism
75. coffee and espresso
76. unity and completeness
77. sausage and chorizo
78. genetics and genes
79. aliveness and life
80. susceptibility and allergic
81. standard and sub-par
82. group and we
83. opposition and cons
84. aversion and grimly
85. sound and head-phones
86. state and monarchy
87. surgery and medical
88. business-minded and competent
89. eminent and pre-eminent
90. pasta and tortellini
91. intimacy and togetherness
92. salad and tabbouleh

93. drawing and scribble
94. discretion and prudence
95. cake and pancake
96. commerce and marketing
97. resentment and envy
98. kindness and benevolence
99. kitchen and kitchen-stuff
100. brainstorming and brainwriting

## **Prototype**

A prototype is a rudimentary working sample, model, mock-up or just a simulation of the actual product based on which the other forms (MVP, final product, and variations) are developed.

The main motive behind prototyping is to validate the design of the actual product. Sometimes, creating a prototype is called materialization as it is the first step of transforming the virtual or conceptualized design into the real physical form.

A prototype is an early sample, model, or release of a product built to test a concept or process. It is a term used in a variety of contexts, including semantics, design, electronics, and software programming. A prototype is generally used to evaluate a new design to enhance precision by system analysts and users.

## ***Qualities Of A Good Prototype***

### **Representation**

A prototype is a rudimentary representation of the actual product. It represents how the product will look and/or work like.

### **Precision**

More precise the prototype, better the response and feedback.

### **Functional**

A good prototype performs the basic functions of the actual product (if possible).

### **Improvisation**

A good prototype is one which can be improvised on with minimum effort. This one of the most important aspect of prototyping as a prototype is subject to many improvisations.

## ***Types of Prototypes***

### **Basis On What They Represent**

While a prototype can be in the form of paper, digital, miniature or a partial product, all of these can be categorized into three categories on the basis of what they represent.

### **Functional Prototypes**

Functional prototypes are designed to imitate the functions of the actual product as closely as possible no matter how different they look from the

actual product. These types of prototypes are produced for the products which are dependent on the function rather than the display.

For example: creating a backend prototype without working on the frontend of the website.

### **Display Prototypes**

Display prototypes are designed with more focus on the look and feel of the product rather than the functions. These prototypes may or may not function but represent the look of the actual product very well.

Display prototypes are usually used in the fashion industry and in other industries where looks are more important.

### **Miniatures**

Miniatures are smaller versions or the basic versions of the product focused on both the functional aspect as well as the display aspect. Nevertheless, these aren't the actual products and lack many qualities of the actual product like not working at full capacity, etc.

Miniatures are usually developed by the 3D printing of the product.

### ***Basis On How They Are Used***

From a usability perspective, the prototypes can be categorized into:

#### **Throwaway prototype**

Throwaway prototype refers to the models which are eventually discarded or thrown away rather than becoming a part of the actual product. These products are only used to represent what an actual product can do. Throwaway prototypes are also called close ended prototypes

#### **Evolutionary Prototype**

Evolutionary prototyping uses a different approach than throwaway prototyping and involves building a basic but robust prototype in a manner which can further be improved and built upon to form an actual saleable product. This avoids wastage of resources.

#### **Prototype Examples**

Prototypes come in many types and shapes. It all depends on the reason for what a prototype is created. While some prototypes are developed just to represent or mimic the functioning or the look of the product (paper prototypes, HTML prototypes, etc.) to investors, some include showing a miniature version (3D print, single version of the lot, etc.) of the product with full or partial functionality.

#### **Wireframes**

The favorite. Do you know how to draw boxes and arrows? Well congratulations, you're well on your way to making a wireframe prototype that gives someone a sense of what your product does.

Of course, it's slightly more complicated than drawing some basic geometric shapes. You need to put some thought into how a product experience should look and feel like and make sure that's communicated in the wireframes you create.

The wireframe provides a skeleton of your product and gives a very low-fidelity feel for it. There's still a gap between the wireframe and an



actual tangible version of your product. But it's an excellent low-cost and low-effort for someone to get a feel for what you're thinking.

In the world of developing an MVP, this can be helpful, but this is more frequently used to gauge a user's response to your proposed design experience. It's a great tool to start a conversation with potential users so that you can dive deeper into their needs.

### **Slide deck**

An original. PowerPoint is as pervasive in the office as meetings. You can't go anywhere without running into them. Well, instead of using them to go on about quarterly projections, you can also use them to prototype a user journey of a product. PowerPoint is a great way to create a product flow just using mockups. You design your mockups and place each one in a slide. You can even use PowerPoint's interactive features so you can give the user the feeling of interacting with a product. Henry Tsai at Google Ventures goes into more depth here if you're interested in building out a PowerPoint prototype.

I've seen one successful startup start with a hardcopy printout of PowerPoint slides. The founder would swap out the pages when the user touched the right "button" on the page. It's pretty low-tech but worked really well for them.

These slide decks may seem like something that's again better to evaluate experience instead of value. I actually sold a couple of (small) deals on just a PowerPoint prototype at a previous company (technically it was Apple Keynote)!

### **Landing pages**

Ok, it's time to start thinking about gauging interest for your overall idea. A landing page prototype is a great way to see if someone is interested enough to give you an email address for future updates.

There are so many examples of this because they're pretty easy to make. One of the most well known is Buffer. They created a landing page that gave a quick articulation of what they were planning on releasing. Those interested could sign up for notifications. These signups signaled to Buffer's creators how much interest there was. While it doesn't necessarily gauge willingness to pay, it lets you start somewhere.

Of course, once you have a landing page built (and you can use a host of cheap service to create one), you still have to get traffic there. You can buy ad traffic, use social media, connect with influencers who might promote the page, or use some other similar techniques. Unfortunately, there's no magic bullet to bring everyone to it, so you'll have to grind it out to get exposure.

### **Functional frontend**

In our post about MVPs, I mentioned some friends of mine who created a website to see if anyone would be interested in buying "customized" granola. You might think that's a silly attempt, but you might have heard of a far more successful version of that tactic: Zappos.

The founder of Zappos, realizing there wasn't a way to buy quality footwear online, decided to see if there was any appetite to buy shoes online.

It's a good thing to question since a lot of folks like to purchase shoes after trying them on. It's not clear that people would buy shoes online after not having tried them on.

So he went to a nearby shoe store and took a bunch of pictures of shoes. He built a site and put the pictures of the shoes on there. If anyone bought the shoes online, he'd go over to the store, buy the shoes at full price, and ship them to the buyer.

He most likely lost money on the operation, but it's safe to say that Zappos would more than cover the value of that experiment. There's a lot of value in making existing processes (i.e., purchasing) more convenient. This extends the landing page idea further to see if there's a willingness to buy for your idea.

### **Wizard of Oz**

If you're familiar with the movie, this type of prototype might seem obvious. While you don't need to operate a giant head while speaking into a microphone, you are running a sort of facade.

At a previous company, we used this approach to see if there was interest in building out a full add-ons marketplace for our product.

We didn't have the integration completed. So when a user added an add-on to their infrastructure, one of our engineers would manually add it. Someone else would have to work with the finance department to manually update the billing.

It worked, and we built out a great add-ons marketplace with dozens of partners. The "Wizard of Oz" prototype is very similar to the functional frontend. I wanted to distinguish between replicating an existing process with a layer of value (buying a shoe but on a website) and prototyping an entirely new process (selling services through an existing product).

### **Video**

Just as trailers are a great way to hype a movie, you can use it to hype your product or service. Videos can range from showing a working prototype to just an idea.

Recently, people have become more obsessed with making viral videos, hoping it'd bring fame and fortune. Good luck.

There is no magic to produce a viral video. It happens, or it doesn't, and anyone who tells you that they know the magical formula is trying to sell you a bridge. If you think a video is a great way to show your product off, stick to simplicity. Dropbox's video is pretty straightforward (with a couple of quick jokes in there).

### **Crowdsourcing**

Crowdsourcing is basically taking the video approach to prototyping and throwing on a payment link. Crowdsourcing is a great way to see if anyone will pay for your product.

Again, like the video idea above, your description and video can range from working product to an idea. If your crowdsourcing page focuses more on an idea, you may need to add some video production quality to capture someone's eye.

There's been a lot more attention on folks calling out crowdsourcers who raise money and don't deliver on the project. Of course, this is a risk they take on, but you need to make sure you can do everything you can to minimize this risk as well. Remember, you're testing the value of your idea, not selling a dream.

### **Low fidelity product**

You can call this your alpha, beta, or whatever Greek letter suits your fancy. This prototype is a working version of your product that a user can use. You can read more about how we built our Slack integration in 20 days. Part of the process was to create a lo-fi prototype for internal evaluation of the integration before testing it with customers.

You used to need to have some moderate level technical skill to pull off even a working, barely functioning prototype. But with today's no-code (or low-code) movement, a non-technical person can create a working prototype of something. ProductHunt's Ryan Hoover offers more insight into the "no-code" movement with a lot of great examples of tools you can use. It's now so much easier for anyone to get a working prototype built.

### **Your creativity**

The sky's the limit on how you want to test the value of your idea. The eight listed here are options that I've come across, but they are certainly not an exhaustive list. Spend time thinking about what you want to accomplish, and please let us know if you've tried some other kinds of prototyping!

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## **4.5. LEXICAL RELATIONS (HOMONYMY, HOMOPHONY, POLYSEMY, METONYMY)**

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A lexical relation is a culturally recognized pattern of association that exists between lexical units in a language.

Lexical semantics (also known as lexicosemantics), is a subfield of linguistic semantics. The units of analysis in lexical semantics are lexical units which include not only words but also sub-words or sub-units such as affixes and even compound words and phrases. Lexical units make up the catalogue of words in a language, the lexicon. Lexical semantics looks at how the meaning of the lexical units correlates with the structure of the language or syntax. This is referred to as syntax-semantic interface.

### **Kinds:**

Paradigmatic Lexical Relation

Syntagmatic Lexical Relation

### **Underlying structure**

Each lexical relation has an underlying structure that describes the relationship that senses within a lexical relation set have with each other.

Here are some underlying structures of lexical relations:

simple set

scale

set of pairs

tree

## **Homonymy**

Homonyms exist in many languages but in English homonymy is more frequent than in Bulgarian. The greater the tendency for shorter words in the language, the greater possibility for the occurrence of homonymy.

The word Homonymy (from the Greek—homos: same, onoma: name) is the relation between words with identical forms but different meanings—that is, the condition of being homonyms. A stock example is the word bank as it appears in "river bank" and "savings ?bank."

### **Aristotle on Homonymy**

"Those things are called homonymous of which the name alone is common, but the account of being corresponding to the name is different...Those things are called synonymous of which the name is common, and the account of being corresponding to the name is the same."(Aristotle, Categories)

"The sweep of Aristotle's application of homonymy is in some ways astonishing. He appeals to homonymy in virtually every area of his philosophy. Along with being and goodness, Aristotle also accepts (or at times accepts) the homonymy or multivocity of: life, oneness, cause, source or principle, nature, necessity, substance, the body, friendship, part, whole, priority, posteriority, genus, species, the state, justice, and many others. Indeed, he dedicates an entire book of the *Metaphysics* to a recording and partial sorting of the many ways core philosophical notions are said to be. His preoccupation with homonymy influences his approach to almost every subject of inquiry he considers, and it clearly structures the philosophical methodology that he employs both when criticizing others and when advancing his own positive theories." (Christopher Shields, *Order in Multiplicity: Homonymy in the Philosophy of Aristotle*. Oxford University Press, 1999).

### ***Classification of homonyms***

Homonyms proper, incomplete homonyms, homophones and homographs

1. Homonyms proper belong to the same word class and as a result all their paradigmatic forms coincide: bark, n. - the noise made by a dog; bark of a tree; ball, n. - a round object used in games; ball, n. - a gathering of people for dancing.

2. Incomplete homonyms - to bark, a bark; back, n., to back, go back; base, n. 'bottom', to base - 'build or place upon', base, adj. - 'mean'.

3. Homophones - words that sound the same but differ in meaning: air - heir; arms - alms; buy - bye; him - hymn; knight - night; not - knot; ore - or; piece - peace; rain - reign; scent - cent, steel - steal; storey story; write - right - rite, etc.

4. Homographs - different in sound and meaning but accidentally identical in spelling: bow - bow; lead - lead; row - row; tear - tear; wind - wind.

Homonyms from a diachronic point of view - historically two factors lead to homonyms:

Disintegration or split of polysemy or divergent sense development, e.g. words of the box group – all derived from one another and are ultimately traced to the Lat. *Boxus*

box1 – a kind of small evergreen shrub;

box2 – receptacle made of wood, cardboard, metal, etc., usually provided with a lid;

to box1 – to put into a box;

to box2 – to slap with a hand on the ear;

to box3 – to fight with fists in padded gloves.

Homonyms the result of convergent sound development

Back in history the three words below were separate both in form and meaning

sound – healthy;

sound – strait;

sound – Lat. *sonus*

The difference between homonyms and polysemes is subtle. Lexicographers define polysemes within a single dictionary lemma, numbering different meanings, while homonyms are treated in separate lemmata. Semantic shift can separate a polysemous word into separate homonyms. For example, check as in "bank check" (or Cheque), check in chess, and check meaning "verification" are considered homonyms, while they originated as a single word derived from chess in the 14th century. Psycholinguistic experiments have shown that homonyms and polysemes are represented differently within people's mental lexicon: while the different meanings of homonyms (which are semantically unrelated) tend to interfere or compete with each other during comprehension, this does not usually occur for the polysemes that have semantically related meanings. Results for this contention, however, have been mixed.

For Dick Hebdige polysemy means that, "each text is seen to generate a potentially infinite range of meanings," making, according to Richard Middleton, "any homology, out of the most heterogeneous materials, possible. The idea of signifying practice — texts not as communicating or expressing a pre-existing meaning but as 'positioning subjects' within a process of semiosis — changes the whole basis of creating social meaning".

One group of polysemes are those in which a word meaning an activity, perhaps derived from a verb, acquires the meanings of those engaged in the activity, or perhaps the results of the activity, or the time or place in which the activity occurs or has occurred. Sometimes only one of those meanings is intended, depending on context, and sometimes multiple meanings are intended at the same time. Other types are derivations from one of the other meanings that leads to a verb or activity.

## Homophony

Homophony, musical texture based primarily on chords, in contrast to polyphony, which results from combinations of relatively independent melodies. In homophony, one part, usually the highest, tends to predominate

and there is little rhythmic differentiation between the parts, whereas in polyphony, rhythmic distinctiveness reinforces melodic autonomy.

Homophony does not necessarily suppress counterpoint, however. The "Allegretto" in Beethoven's Seventh Symphony offers an excellent example of essentially homorhythmic counterpoint, since it combines two distinct, yet rhythmically identical, melodies. An early genre featuring homophony of this sort is the 13th-century conductus.

In the 15th century, Italian secular compositions of popular derivation (e.g., the frottola) were often homophonically conceived, as were numerous 16th-century pieces by Andrea and Giovanni Gabrieli and Carlo Gesualdo. Not until the 17th century, however, with such composers as the Italians Arcangelo Corelli, Claudio Monteverdi, and Giacomo Carissimi and the German Johann Hermann Schein, did homophony become dominant in Western music. See also polyphony.

### **Polysemy**

Polysemy is the capacity for a word or phrase to have multiple meanings, usually related by contiguity of meaning within a semantic field. Polysemy is thus distinct from homonymy—or homophony—which is an accidental similarity between two words (such as bear the animal, and the verb to bear); while homonymy is often a mere linguistic coincidence, polysemy is not. In deciding between polysemy or homonymy, it might be necessary to look at the history of the word to see if the two meanings are historically related. Dictionary writers list polysemes under the same entry; homonyms are defined separately.

A polyseme is a word or phrase with different, but related senses. Since the test for polysemy is the vague concept of the relatedness, judgments of polysemy can be difficult to make. Because applying pre-existing words to new situations is a natural process of language change, looking at words' etymology is helpful in determining polysemy but not the only solution; as words become lost in etymology, what once was a useful distinction of meaning may no longer be so. Some apparently unrelated words share a common historical origin, however, so etymology is not an infallible test for polysemy, and dictionary writers also often defer to speakers' intuitions to judge polysemy in cases where it contradicts etymology. English has many polysemous words. For example, the verb "to get" can mean "procure" (I'll get the drinks), "become" (she got scared), "understand" (I get it) etc.

In linear or vertical polysemy, one sense of a word is a subset of the other. These are examples of hyponymy and hypernymy, and are sometimes called autohyponyms. For example, 'dog' can be used for 'male dog'. Alan Cruse identifies four types of linear polysemy:

autohyponymy, where the basic sense leads to a specialised sense (from "drinking (anything)" to "drinking (alcohol)")

automeronymy, where the basic sense leads to a subpart sense (from "door (whole structure)" to "door (panel)")

autohyperonymy or autosuperordination, where the basic sense leads to a wider sense (from "(female) cow" to "cow (of either sex)")



autoholonymy, where the basic sense leads to a larger sense (from "leg (thigh and calf)" to "leg (thigh, calf, knee and foot)")

In non-linear polysemy, the original sense of a word is used figuratively to provide a different way of looking at the new subject. Alan Cruse identifies three types of non-linear polysemy:

metonymy, where one sense "stands for" another (from "hands (body part)" to "hands (manual labourers)")

metaphor, where there is a resemblance between senses (from "swallowing (a pill)" to "swallowing (an argument)")

other construals (for example, from "month (of the year)" to "month (four weeks)")

There are several tests for polysemy, but one of them is zeugma: if one word seems to exhibit zeugma when applied in different contexts, it is likely that the contexts bring out different polysemes of the same word. If the two senses of the same word do not seem to fit, yet seem related, then it is likely that they are polysemous. The fact that this test again depends on speakers' judgments about relatedness, however, means that this test for polysemy is not infallible, but is rather merely a helpful conceptual aid.

The difference between homonyms and polysemes is subtle. Lexicographers define polysemes within a single dictionary lemma, numbering different meanings, while homonyms are treated in separate lemmata. Semantic shift can separate a polysemous word into separate homonyms. For example, check as in "bank check" (or Cheque), check in chess, and check meaning "verification" are considered homonyms, while they originated as a single word derived from chess in the 14th century. Psycholinguistic experiments have shown that homonyms and polysemes are represented differently within people's mental lexicon: while the different meanings of homonyms (which are semantically unrelated) tend to interfere or compete with each other during comprehension, this does not usually occur for the polysemes that have semantically related meanings. Results for this contention, however, have been mixed.

For Dick Hebdige polysemy means that, "each text is seen to generate a potentially infinite range of meanings," making, according to Richard Middleton, "any homology, out of the most heterogeneous materials, possible. The idea of signifying practice—texts not as communicating or expressing a pre-existing meaning but as 'positioning subjects' within a process of semiosis—changes the whole basis of creating social meaning".

Charles Fillmore and Beryl Atkins' definition stipulates three elements: (i) the various senses of a polysemous word have a central origin, (ii) the links between these senses form a network, and (iii) understanding the 'inner' one contributes to understanding of the 'outer' one.

One group of polysemes are those in which a word meaning an activity, perhaps derived from a verb, acquires the meanings of those engaged in the activity, or perhaps the results of the activity, or the time or place in which the activity occurs or has occurred. Sometimes only one of those meanings is intended, depending on context, and sometimes multiple meanings are intended at the same time. Other types are derivations from



one of the other meanings that leads to a verb or activity.

#### Examples

##### Man

The human species (i.e., man vs. other organisms)

Males of the human species (i.e., man vs. woman)

Adult males of the human species (i.e., man vs. boy)

This example shows the specific polysemy where the same word is used at different levels of a taxonomy. Example 1 contains 2, and 2 contains 3.

##### Mole

a small burrowing mammal

consequently, there are several different entities called moles (see the Mole disambiguation page). Although these refer to different things, their names derive from 1 (e.g. a mole burrows for information hoping to go undetected).

However: other senses of the word – the skin blemish, the breakwater, the unit of measure, and the Mexican sauce – are homonyms, not polysemes, as they are each etymologically distinct.

##### Bank

a financial institution

the building where a financial institution offers services

a synonym for 'rely upon' (e.g. "I'm your friend, you can bank on me"). It is different, but related, as it derives from the theme of security initiated by 1.

However: 1 is loaned from Italian banco, a money lenders shelf, while a river bank is a native English word. Today they can be considered homonyms with completely different meanings. But originally they were polysemous since Italian loaned the word from a Germanic language. The Proto-Germanic cognate for "shelf" is \*bankiz. A river bank is typically visually shelf-like in its flatness, and it collects deposits which a financial bank also does.

##### Door

the object which swings open to allow entrance, as in "Open the door."

the opening created thereby, as in "Walk through the door."

##### Book

a bound collection of pages

a text reproduced and distributed (thus, someone who has read the same text on a computer has read the same book as someone who had the actual paper volume)

to make an action or event a matter of record (e.g. "Unable to book a hotel room, a man sneaked into a nearby private residence where police arrested him and later booked him for unlawful entry.")

##### Newspaper

a company that publishes written news.

a single physical item published by the company.

the newspaper as an edited work in a specific format (e.g. "They changed the layout of the newspaper's front page").

The different meanings can be combined in a single sentence, e.g. "John used to work for the newspaper that you are reading."

Milk

(noun) a secretion, produced by a mammary gland, that functions to provide nutrients to offspring

The verb milk (e.g. "he's milking it for all he can get") derives from the process of obtaining milk.

Wood

the material made from trees

a geographical area with many trees

Crane

a bird with a long neck

a type of construction equipment which looks like it has a long neck to strain out one's neck

Happiness

joy and similar emotions experienced in the here and now

feeling good about my overall life as-a-whole

Mouse

a small rodent characteristically having a pointed snout, small rounded ears, a body-length scaly tail and a high breeding rate.

a hand-held pointing device that detects two-dimensional motion relative to a surface, which moves the cursor in accordance with its move.

## Metonymy

Metonymy (/m?'t?n?mi/) is a figure of speech in which a thing or concept is referred to by the name of something closely associated with that thing or concept.

Metonymy is the use of a linked term to stand in for an object or concept. You'll find examples of metonymy used frequently in both literature and everyday speech. You might use it yourself without even realizing it.

Sometimes metonymy is chosen because it's a well-known characteristic of the concept. A famous example is, "The pen is mightier than the sword," from Edward Bulwer Lytton's play *Richelieu*. This sentence has two metonyms:

"Pen" stands for "the written word."

"Sword" stands for "military aggression."

Metonyms are members of the figurative language family, so they serve as colorful ways to take the ordinary and dress it up in something poetic or beautiful.

Here are some broad kinds of relationships where metonymy is frequently used:

**Containment:** When one thing contains another, it can frequently be used metonymically, as when "dish" is used to refer not to a plate but to the food it contains, or as when the name of a building is used to refer to the entity it contains, as when "the White House" or "the Pentagon" are used to refer to the U.S. presidential staff or the military leadership, respectively.

A physical item, place, or body part used to refer to a related concept, such as "the bench" for the judicial profession, "stomach" or "belly" for appetite or hunger, "mouth" for speech, various terms[which?] for the genitalia for sexual desire or satisfaction of said desire, being "in diapers" for infancy, "palate" for taste, "the altar" or "the aisle" for marriage, "hand" for someone's responsibility for something ("he had a hand in it"), "head" or "brain" for mind or intelligence, or "nose" for concern about someone else's affairs, (as in "keep your nose out of my business"). A reference to Timbuktu, as in "from here to Timbuktu," usually means a place or idea is too far away or mysterious. Metonymy of objects or body parts for concepts is common in dreams.

**Tools/instruments:** Often a tool is used to signify the job it does or the person who does the job, as in the phrase "his Rolodex is long and valuable" (referring to the Rolodex instrument, which keeps contact business cards ... meaning he has a lot of contacts and knows many people). Also "the press" (referring to the printing press), or as in the proverb, "The pen is mightier than the sword."

**Product for process:** This is a type of metonymy where the product of the activity stands for the activity itself. For example, in "The book is moving right along," the book refers to the process of writing or publishing.

Punctuation marks often stand metonymically for a meaning expressed by the punctuation mark. For example, "He's a big question mark to me" indicates that something is unknown. In the same way, 'period' can be used to emphasise that a point is concluded or not to be challenged.

**Synecdoche:** A part of something is often used for the whole, as when people refer to "head" of cattle or assistants are referred to as "hands." An example of this is the Canadian dollar, referred to as the loonie for the image of a bird on the one-dollar coin. United States one hundred-dollar bills are often referred to as "Bens", "Benjamins" or "Franklins" because they bear a portrait of Benjamin Franklin. Also, the whole of something is used for a part, as when people refer to a municipal employee as "the council" or police officers as "the law".

**Toponyms:** A country's capital city or some location within the city is frequently used as a metonym for the country's government, such as Washington, D.C., in the United States; Ottawa in Canada; Tokyo in Japan; New Delhi in India; Downing Street or Whitehall in the United Kingdom; and the Kremlin in Russia. Similarly, other important places, such as Wall Street, Madison Avenue, Silicon Valley, Hollywood, Vegas, and Detroit are commonly used to refer to the industries that are located there (finance, advertising, high technology, entertainment, gambling, and motor vehicles, respectively). Such usage may persist even when the industries in question have moved elsewhere, for example, Fleet Street continues to be used as a metonymy for the British national press, though it is no longer located in the physical street of that name.

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