

# LDTTC Workshop 5



## Morphology and Syntax

# What is morphology?

- The study of words and word structure
  - What is a word? What does a word look like?
    - It can vary from language to language
  - It's important to learn about morphology and word structure, so you can describe how your language divides words

# Glossing

- We document our language and its word structure by ‘glossing’

- Example:

Inga	har	mye	energi	hver	mandag.	(←original)
Inga	have-3sg	much	energy	each	Monday	(←gloss)
'Inga has a lot of energy every Monday'						(←translation)

- From today on, you will providing a gloss for your language when you do any translations

# What is a word?

- A **word** is a piece of language: something that you could say by itself, or that you could use as part of a phrase or sentence.
- Words are divided into parts, called **morphemes**
  - **Stem** or **base** - the smallest part of a word that carries independent meaning.
  - **Affix** - a part of a word, added to the base, to change the meaning or offer additional information

# Examples

- In the following words, can you spot the base and any **affixes**?
  - unhappy
  - **Un** + happy
  - Loveable
  - Love + **able**
  - Uncomfortable
  - **Un** + comfort + **able**

# Types of common affixes

- **Prefix** - added to the beginning of the base (example: un-)
- **Suffix** - added to the end of the base (example: -able)
- What do you see in common for the following word sets?
  1. writer, composer, hunter, player
  2. reproduce, restore, regain, reload

# Affixes

- Affixes can also show grammatical function
  - a) number contrasts in nouns: *cars, desks, teachers,*
  - b) degree levels in adjectives: *easier, cheaper, slower*
  - c) background information about time (i.e. **tense**) in verbs: *asked, talked, developed*

# Other morphological processes

- **Compounding** is the formation of new words by adjoining two or more words.

e.g. after + noon = afternoon; bed + room = bedroom

- **Reduplication** refers to the morphological process in which part (or all) of the word is repeated

e.g. Tagalog: *bili* 'buy' *bibili* 'will buy'

- **Alternation** indicates an internal, systematic change within a word.

e.g. foot (singular)/feet (plural)

- **Suppletion** refers to an unsystematic change.

e.g. **went** (as compared to go/goes/going)



# Glossing your language

- When you do a translation, you should use interlinear glossing - write out what each **morpheme** in your sentence is.
- Example:

‘The dogs are barking at the postman who crossed the road.’

The dogs are barking at the postman who crossed the road

The dog-s are bark-ing at the postman who cross-ed the road  
Det dog-pl be.3.Pl bark-Cont at Det postman who cross-PST Det road

# Keep in mind while glossing

- Align each morpheme with its gloss Don't do this:

The dog-s are bark-ing at the postman who cross-ed the road

Det dog-pl be.3.Pl bark-Cont at Det postman who cross-PST Det road

- Separate each morpheme with a '-' in both the original text and gloss

dog-s

dog-pl

- But separate grammatical content that occurs in a single morpheme with a '.'

are

be.3.Pl

# Your Turn!

- Work with your mentor and see if you can
  - 1) identify different affixes in your language.
  - 2) observe other morphological processes in your language (e.g. compounding, reduplication, alternation, suppletion)
  - 3) complete a three-line transcription of a sentence
- In addition, we would like you to share with us if you
  - 4) encounter any difficulty in identifying the morphological processes in your language
  - 5) find something you feel is extraordinarily amazing in your language related to today's topic.

# Wrap Up

- Questions?
- Interesting morphemes?
  
- Next week - Recording!
  - Please bring in something (a story, poem, song) that you would like to record and translate
- Thank you!





