

# **Even More Morphology**

administrative notes:

- No class on Tuesday
- This class will move
- not in a section? e-mail me!
- fieldwork teamwork

Languages are sometimes informally classified by how likely their morphemes are to be bound.

**Isolating** languages; not many bound morphemes

*Chinese*

Tā chī fàn le

he eat meal "PAST"

'He ate the meal'

**Polysynthetic** languages; opposite of isolating

*Wampanoag*

nu-pâhk-nuhtô-peepeenaw-uchuchôhq-ôkan-uhtyâ -eenun -eum -unôn-ak

1 clear skill look reflection device make person POSS 1PL AN.PL

'our very skillful mirror makers'

**Agglutinative** languages; morphemes easily separable from each other

*Turkish*

tani -sh -tir -il -di -lar  
know each-other cause passive past 3PL  
'They are introduced to each other'

**Fusional/inflectional** languages; morphemes tend to squash together  
'portmanteau morphemes'

*Russian*

komnat -u  
room Feminine.Singular.Accusative

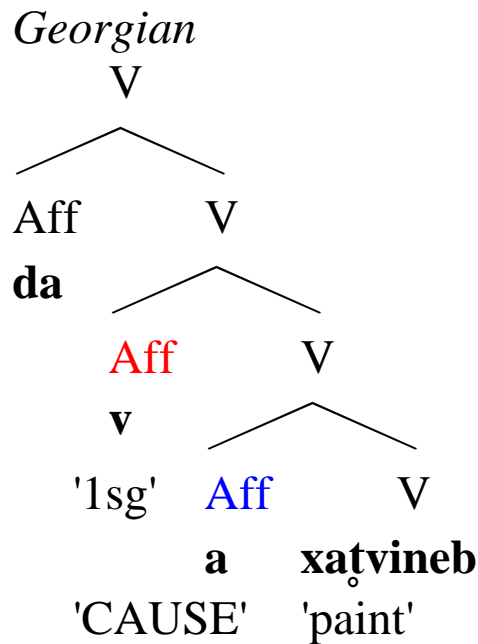
komnat -y  
room Feminine.Plural.Accusative

brat -a  
brother Masculine.Animate.Singular.Accusative

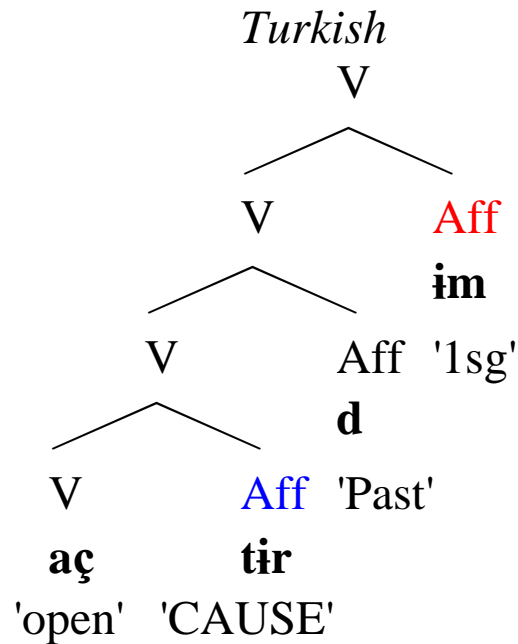
So we've seen that there's a lot that's language-specific. Is anything universal?

why, yes:

**inflectional** morphology (agreement, tense, etc.) is always 'higher'  
**derivational** morphology (category-changing, causative...)



'I will have him paint it'



'I had him open it'

two morals of the preceding discussion:

- words have internal structure (allows us to state universals)
- even in morphology, there are universals

## More on words with internal structure: English compounds

### compounds

greenhouse

wet suit

bluebird

### noncompounds

green house

wet suit

blue bird

## More on words with internal structure: English compounds

distinguishing compounds from noncompounds:

- opacity for modification:  
The diver had a very wet suit.



## More on words with internal structure: English compounds

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The diver had a very wet suit.

- opacity for inflection:

The [fox hunter]**s** didn't have a license.

\*The [fox**es** hunter]**s** didn't have a license.

The football player [drop kick]**ed** the ball.

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distinguishing compounds from noncompounds:

- opacity for modification:

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- opacity for inflection:

The [fox hunter]s didn't have a license.

\*The [foxes hunter]s didn't have a license.

The football player [drop kick]ed the ball.

- (sometimes) a difference in stress:

wét suit      wét súit

## More on words with internal structure: English compounds

### endocentric compounds

dog food

wisdom tooth

policeman

### exocentric compounds

redneck

sabertooth

Toronto Maple Leaf

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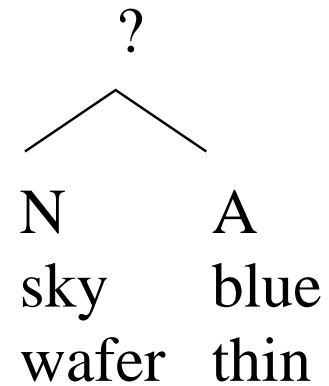
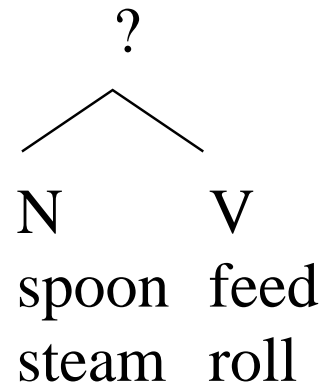
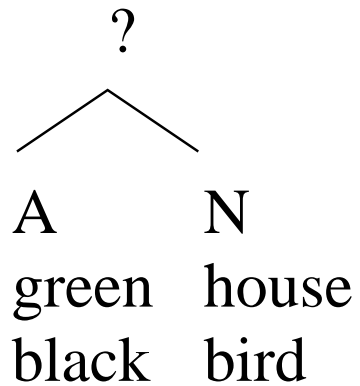
Toronto Maple Leaf

- exocentric compounds are semantically less compositional
- exocentric compounds don't take irregular morphology:

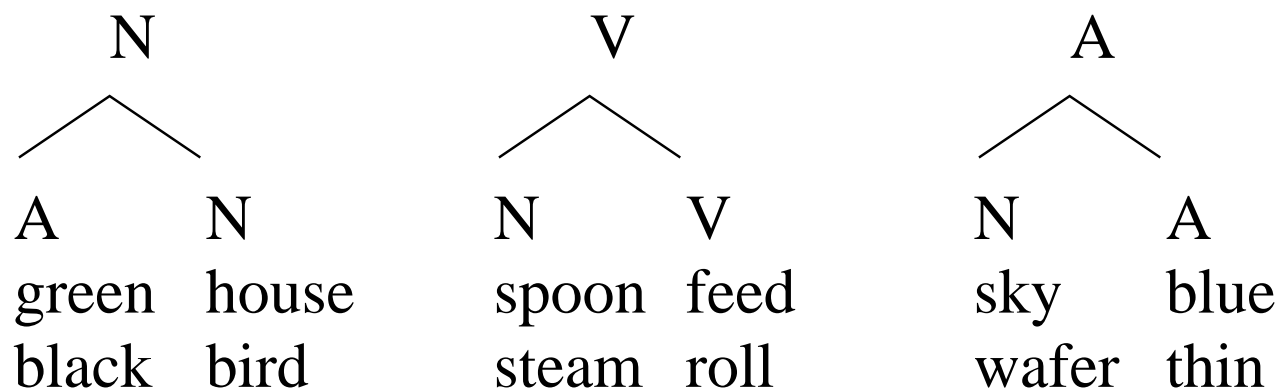
sabertooths, Toronto Maple Leafs

I'll be concentrating on endocentric compounds in what follows...

## More on words with internal structure: English compounds



## More on words with internal structure: English compounds



-->English compounds are (mostly) **right-headed**.

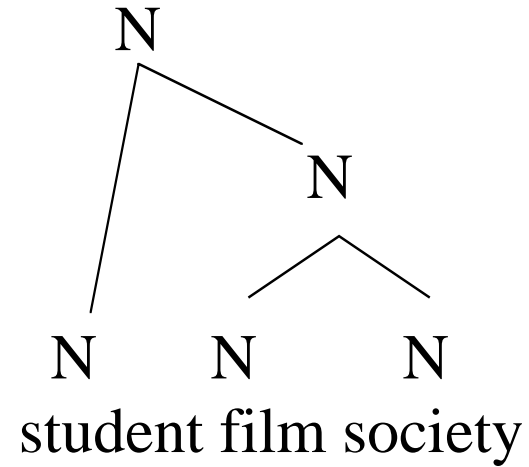
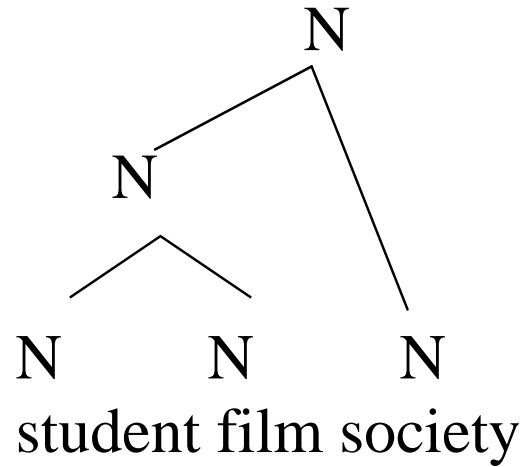
(how about the compounds in your language?)

## More on words with internal structure: English compounds

- film society
- student film society
- student film society president
- ...



## More on words with internal structure: English compounds



## More “Universal Grammar”

### Wampanoag

nuwâmôn	‘I love him/her’
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Gademaani

2 (‘you’) > 1 (‘I/me’) > 3 (‘he/she/him/her’)



Two imaginable kinds of lexicons:

teach  
teacher  
teachers  
teaching  
mine  
miner  
miners  
mining  
....

teach  
mine  
-er  
-s  
-ing

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(the **wrong** theory) (the **right** theory)

We've seen evidence that words are broken up into **morphemes**  
(evidence that the **right** theory is right)

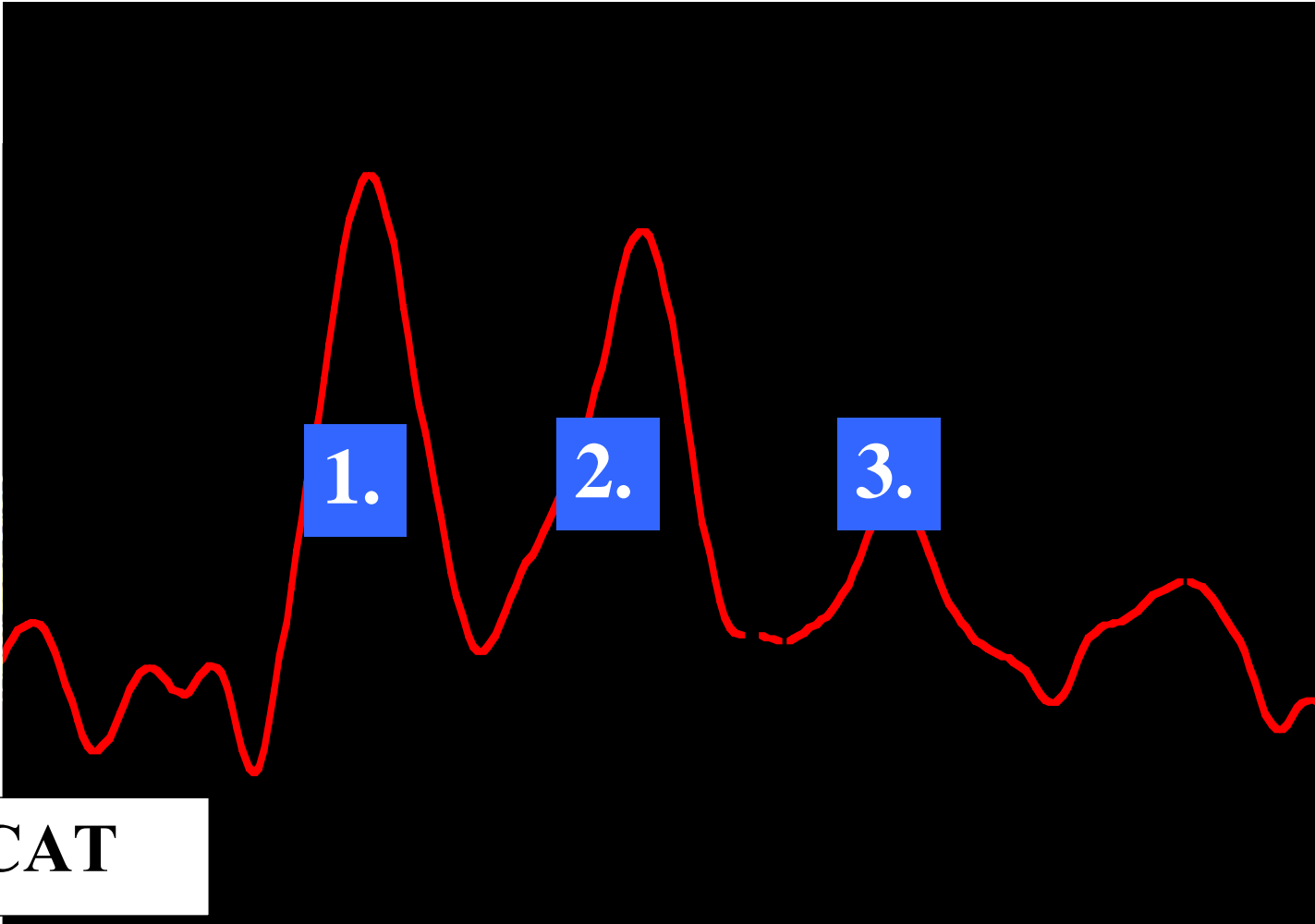
- gives you a lexicon with fewer entries
  - the plight of the Nimborans (27,000 forms per verb)
- lots of evidence that we manipulate morphemes, including:
  - application of morphemes to new words (wug-**s**)
  - creation of new morphemes (**Watergate**, **Monicagate**...)
  - backformation (sculptor > sculpt, pease > pea)

## **Another argument for breaking words into morphemes: MEG (magnetoencephalography)**

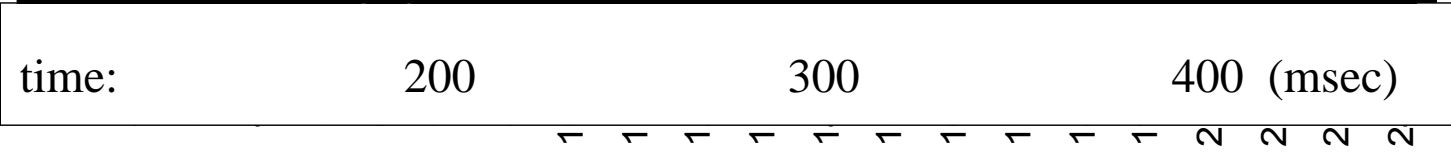
- involves measurement of electrical events in the brain  
(by measuring magnetic fields on the scalp)

**M170      M250      M350**

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**CAT**



The speed of the M350 can be affected by a number of factors

(**priming**):

- if you've recently seen a "semantically related" word, it speeds up ("idea.....notion")
- if you've recently seen exactly the same word, it speeds up even more ("dog....dog")
- if you've recently seen a phonologically similar word, it slows down ("spinach....spin")

...which leads us inexorably to the punchline! next week.