



香港浸會大學
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

An Animated and Narrated Glossary of
Terms used in Linguistics
presents

Root and Stem **(morphology)**



香港浸會大學
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Breaking things up

antidisestablishmentarianism

There's something special about the piece "establish". It is the smallest unit in the entire word that provides the core meaning. This the **ROOT**.

Slide 2



Compositionality

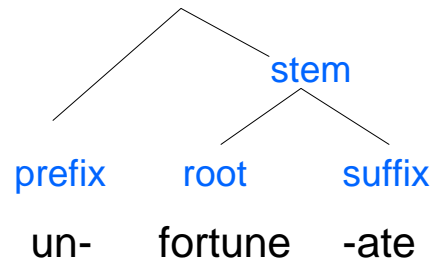
Consider these:

fortune

fortunate

unfortunate

**unfortune*
WHY?



Slide 3



Root and Stem

- Root

In concatenative morphology, the root is the unit that provides **the core meaning** and to which affixes may be attached.

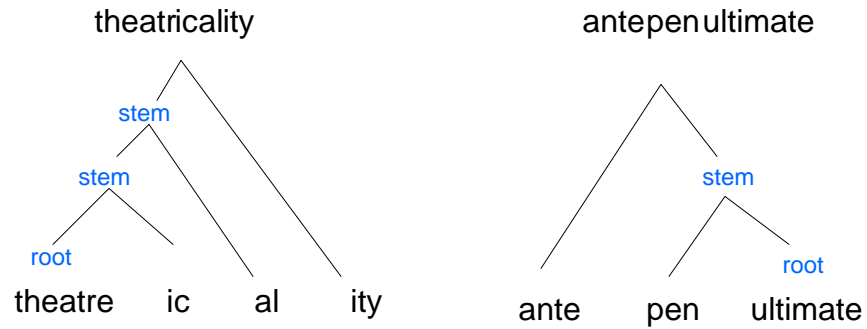
- Stem

In concatenative morphology, the stem is the unit to which affixes are attached.

Slide 4



Example



Note: *Theatre* and *ultimate* here are also stems, since all roots are potential stems.

Slide 5



Root with Infix

Tagalog

sulat “write”

sumulat “to write”

sulat

um

Slide 6



Free or bound

- Not all roots and stems are free morphemes

E.g. *geography*
geo + graphy

Slide 7



Further reading

- Fromkin, Victoria and Robert Rodman (1998) *An Introduction to Language*, 6th edition, Chapter 3. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Fromkin, Victoria, Robert Rodman and Nina Hyams (2003) *An Introduction to Language*, 7th edition, Chapter 3. Boston: Thomson Heinle.
- Radford, Andrew, Martin Atkinson, David Britain, Harald Clahsen and Andrew Spencer (1999) *Linguistics: An Introduction*, pp.162-3 Cambridge University Press.
- Spencer, Andrew (1991) *Morphological Theory*, pp.5 and 461(note 10). Blackwell.
- Tserdanelis, Georgios and Wai Yi Peggy Wong (eds.) (2004) *Language Files: Materials for an Introduction of Language and Linguistics*, 9th edition, Chapter 5. The Ohio State University Press.
- Yule, George (1996) *The Study of Language*, 2nd edition, pp. 75-76. Cambridge University Press.

Slide 8



香港浸會大學
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

The End

Wee, Lian-Hee and Winnie H.Y. Cheung (2009)
An animated and narrated glossary of terms used in Linguistics.
Hong Kong Baptist University.