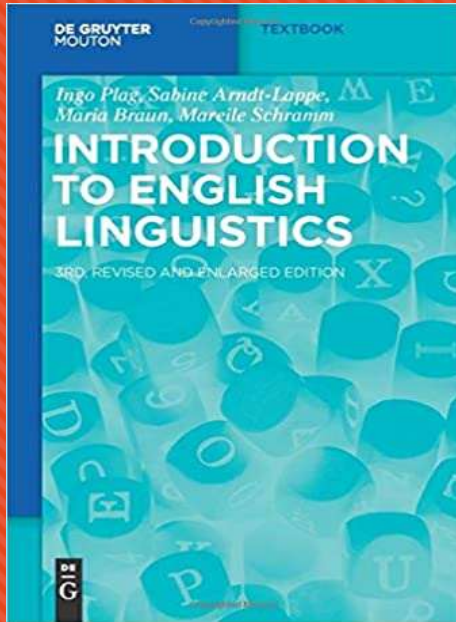




SAPIENZA  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

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Materiale didattico destinato ad esclusivo uso interno



# Module A: Fundamentals of English Linguistics

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# The structure of the English language

1. Phonetics/phonology = pronunciation
  2. Morphology = structure of words
  3. Syntax = sentence patterns
  4. Lexis/lexicon and semantics = vocabulary
  5. Pragmatics = meaning in context
- } Morphosyntax=grammar

# Phonetics vs phonology

- **Phonetics:** study of how sounds are produced, transmitted and perceived:
  1. **Articulatory:** how vocal organs are used to produce sounds;
  2. Acoustic: how air vibrates when sounds are produced;
  3. Auditory: how sounds are perceived and processed by the hearer.
- **Phonology:** study of the abstract categories that make up the sound system of a language (single sounds, syllables, words)

# The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

- Phonetic/phonological transcription: visual representation of speech sounds through phonetic symbols. A set of phonetic symbols creates a phonetic alphabet;
- It is based on the phonographic relationship (correspondence between speech and writing), given the highly fluctuating spelling of English;
- IPA → alphabetic system of phonetic notation to standardize the representation of the sounds of any language;
- Square brackets [... ] are used for phonetic transcriptions;
- Slashes /.../ are used for phonological transcriptions;
- Pointed brackets <> signal ordinary written letters;
- For example:
  - [k] represents a concrete sound, a sound produced by a speaker (phonetics);
  - /k/ represents an abstract speech sound, the sound how it should be pronounced (phonology);
  - <k> is the letter 'k' as in the word "kite" (spelling)

# Which English?



- **Standard British English (UK)** – it is NOT **Received Pronunciation** any longer;
- **General American (US)**.



# The phonemic chart

Dr. Fabio Ciambella

iː see	I hjs	ʊ put	uː too
e ten	ə ago	ɜː her	ɔː saw
æ hat	ʌ but	aː car	ɒ hot

Iə ear	eɪ say	
ʊə pure	ɔɪ boy	əʊ so
eə air	aɪ buy	aʊ now

p pen	b book	t tea	d day	tʃ chair	dʒ jam	k key	g go
f four	v very	θ thin	ð that	s sun	z zoo	ʃ she	ʒ vision
m man	n no	ŋ sing	h hat	l look	r red	w want	j yes

VOWELS

long sounds

short sounds

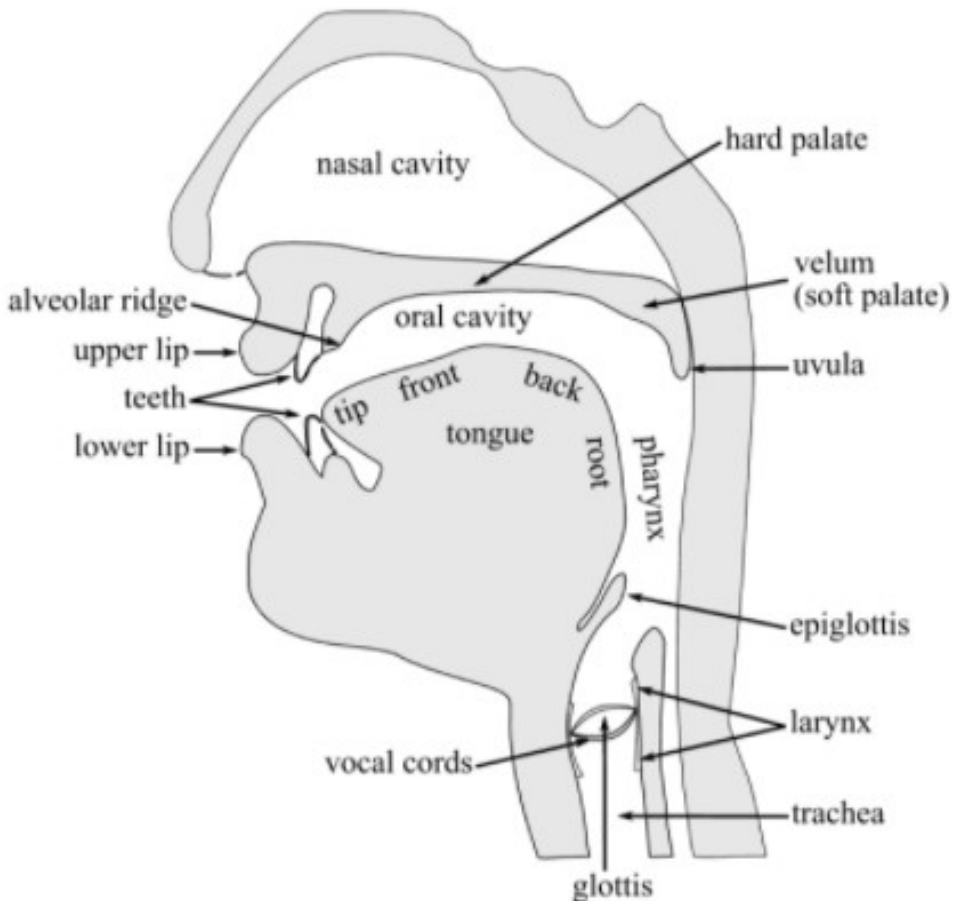
DIPHTHONGS

CONSONANTS

voiced consonants

unvoiced consonants

# Producing sounds in English



- Pulmonic egressive airstream mechanism: the air is pushed out from the lungs, through the mouth and/or nose
- The space above the larynx is called the vocal tract;
- It is formed by two cavities: nasal and oral;
- The oral cavity includes the mouth and the pharynx;
- All the parts involved in sound production are called articulators (active, which can be moved, e.g. tongue, and passive, which cannot, e.g. teeth)



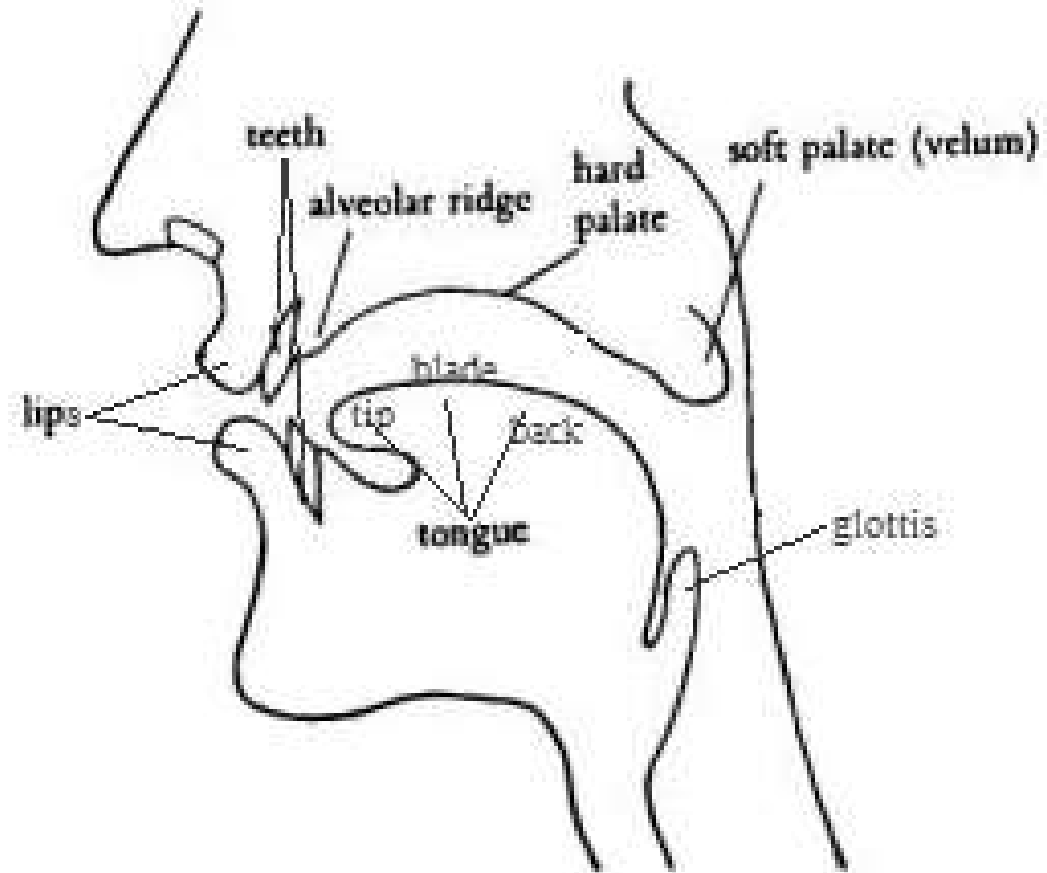
# Consonant sounds: classification

- **Consonant:** obstruction of the air-stream in the pharynx or in the upper vocal tract;
- **VPM** label: classification of the consonants according to:
  1. **Voicing** – are vocal cords used?;
  2. **Place of articulation** (8 in English) – where the air is obstructed;
  3. **Manner of articulation** – nature of the air obstruction

Voicing	Place of articulation (8 in English)	Manner of articulation
Voiced; Voiceless	Bilabial (p, b, m, w); Labio-dental (f, v); (Inter)dental (θ, ð); Alveolar (t, d, s, z, n, l, r/ɹ); Postalveolar/palato-alveolar (ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ); Palatal (j); Velar (k, g, ŋ); Glottal (h)	Plosive or stop (p, t, k, b, d, g); Fricative (f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h); Affricate (tʃ, dʒ); Nasal (m, n, ŋ); Lateral or liquid (l); Approximant or glide (r/ɹ, j, w)

## Places of articulation (8)

- **Bilabials:** lips are brought together;
- **Labio-dentals:** upper teeth touch the lower lip;
- **(Inter-)dentals:** the tip of the tongue is between upper and lower teeth;
- **Alveolars:** tip of the tongue touches the alveolar ridge;
- **Palato-alveolars/postalveolars:** blade of the tongue touches the area between the alveolar ridge and the hard palate;
- **Palatals:** blade of the tongue touches the hard palate;
- **Velars:** back of the tongue touches the soft palate/velum;
- **Glottals:** the air passes through the vocal chords and it is narrowed



# Manner of articulation

- **Plosives** (or **stops**): Complete closure in the mouth. The air is blocked for a while and then released with a plosion = [p, t, k, b, d, g];
- **Fricatives**: Non-complete closure. The obstruction provokes a friction = [f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h];
- **Affricates**: Combination of plosives and fricatives – initial complete closure and then a release that moves backwards = [tʃ as in chair, dʒ as in John];
- **Approximants**: the tongue doesn't touch anywhere, it approaches the roof of the mouth but there's no obstruction:
  - 1. **Liquids** [l, ɹ]
  - 2. **Glides** or **semi-vowels** [w, j]
  - [l] = lateral approximant
  - [r, w, j] = central approximant
- **Nasals**: Complete closure in the mouth but the air goes through the nose = [m, n, ŋ];

# The consonant table

21 graphemes vs. 24 consonant sounds

		Place of Articulation									Consonants										
		Bilabial		Labio-dental		Inter-dental		Alveolar		Alveo-palatal	Palatal	Velar		Glottal							
Manner of Articulation	Stop	p	b					t	d			k	g	ʔ	p	pen	/pen/	s	so	/səʊ/	
	Fricative			f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ				h	b	bad	/bæd/	z	zoo	/zu:/
	Affricate									tʃ	dʒ				t	tea	/ti:/	ʃ	shoe	/ʃu:/	
	Nasal		m						n					ŋ	d	did	/dɪd/	ʒ	vision	/ˈvɪʒn/	
	Lateral								l						k	cat	/kæt/	h	hat	/hæt/	
	Glide	ɹ	w						r					j	g	got	/gɒt/	m	man	/mæn/	
																tʃ	chain	/tʃeɪn/	n	no	/nəʊ/
															dʒ	jam	/dʒæm/	ŋ	sing	/sɪŋ/	
															f	fall	/fɔ:l/	l	leg	/leg/	
															v	van	/væn/	r	red	/red/	
															θ	thin	/θɪn/	j	yes	/jes/	
															ð	this	/ðɪs/	w	wet	/wet/	
		State of the Glottis																			
		Voiceless						Voiced													

# The vowel chart

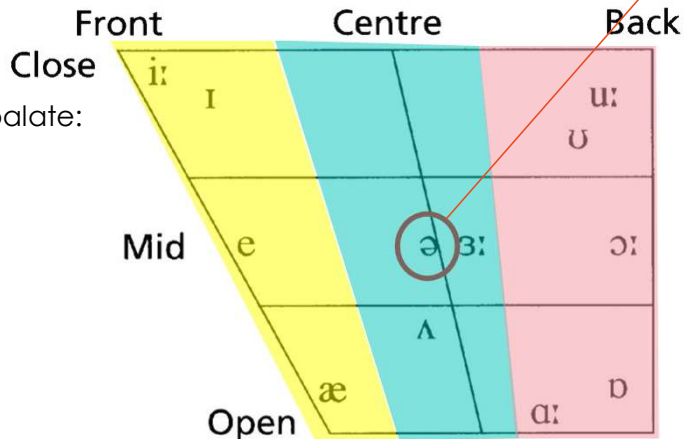
<https://www.tolearnenglish.com/exercises/exercise-english-2/exercise-english-20336.php>

<https://agendaweb.org/phonetic-intermediate>

5 graphemes (a, e, i, o, u, + 2 semi-vowels: w, y) vs. 20 vowel sounds (12 monophthongs [7 short and 5 long] + 8 diphthongs)

**Shwa** is the most widespread sound in the English language. Some linguists call it **'neutral vowel'** or **'reduced vowel'**.

**Vowel quadrilateral (by D. Jones)**



1. (Tongue) height – distance between the tongue and the palate:

- Close,
- In the middle,
- Open

2. Frontness – which part of the tongue is raised highest?

- front,
- centre,
- Back

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72M770xTvaU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1HZPx8DuDw>

# Have a go with transcriptions!



- əʊʃi'ɑ:nɪə = Oceania
- ə'nʌðə = another
- 'strɔ:bəri dʒæm = strawberry jam
- fəʊn = phone
- 'ki:bɔ:d = keyboard

# Phonology: Let's start with allophones

- **Phoneme:** Minimal distinctive unit in the sound system of a language, an abstract category. Distinctive = they allow speakers to distinguish between words (ex. [lʊk vs bʊk]). We use slashes with phonemes //;
- **Phone:** physical realisation of a phoneme. We use square brackets with phones [];
- **Allophone:** a phone which is one of the possible realisations of a phoneme. Phonemes distinguish words, allophones don't. If we replace an allophone with another, we don't change the meaning of a word. So, only two different phonemes can help distinguish a **minimal pair** (words which differ only for one sound, but their meaning changes). If two words are a minimal pair, their distinguishing sound is a phoneme, not an allophone.
- Characteristics of allophones:
  1. In complementary distribution, if they cannot replace one another because of the phonological context – one allophone can occur only when the other cannot: e.g. devoiced [ɹ̥] after voiceless consonants, as in [pɹ̥n] and voiced [ɹ] sound in any other position. They're allophones of the phoneme /ɹ/. Allophones in complementary distribution allow phoneticians to predict their distribution, so they are useful for phonological rules;
  2. In free variation, if they can replace one another. E.g. released [p] and unreleased [p̚] can both occur in word-final contexts: it depends on the speaker's choice;
  3. The phonetic context determines which allophone of a phoneme appears in a word. E.g. released [p] can occur in any phonetic context ([pen, ə'pɪə, stɒp]), while unreleased [p̚] can occur only in word-final position [stɒp̚]. Another example is **neutralisation**: a contrast between two phonemes is neutralised. This mainly happens through **final devoicing**: final voiced phonemes become voiceless, so the difference between them and their voiced corresponding phoneme is neutralised. E.g. buck [bʌk] and bug [bʌg], sometimes both pronounced [bʌk].



# Allophones

- Voiceless plosives:

1. Aspirated [p<sup>h</sup>, t<sup>h</sup>, k<sup>h</sup>] in word-initial position, before stressed vowel sounds: e.g. [p<sup>h</sup>en, t<sup>h</sup>en, k<sup>h</sup>en] – free variation (with released voiceless plosives)
2. Released [p, t, k] between [s] and a vowel, between two vowel sounds, or in word-initial position: e.g. [skaɪ] or [ɪ'tɜ:nəl]
3. Any allophone (aspirated, released and unreleased [p<sup>̚</sup>, t<sup>̚</sup>, k<sup>̚</sup>]) in word-final position in free variation: e.g. [that<sup>h</sup>, that, or that<sup>̚</sup>]
4. In American English /t/ and /d/ are realised as voiced alveolar flap [ɾ] (t/d flapping) between two vowels: e.g. [weɪɾə]

- /l/ has 3 allophones:

1. [ɫ] (devoiced) after word-initial voiceless consonants: e.g. [sɫəg]
2. [ɫ] in word-final position: e.g. [bɪɫ]. Dark 'L', similar to a [ʊ] sound
3. [l] clear 'L' in any other position. Dark and clear 'L' are in complementary distribution.

- /r/ has 2 allophones:

1. devoiced [ɹ] after voiceless consonants, as in [pɹɪn]
2. voiced [r] sound in any other position

NB: In non-rhotic accents, /r/ is sometimes not pronounced (Next slide)

# Rhoticity: rhotic vs. non-rhotic accents

- Distinction coined by Wells;
- Rhotic (r-pronouncing/r-full) accents: /r/ sound is pronounced whenever is ortographically present;
- Non-rhotic (non-r-pronouncing/r-less) accents: /r/ is pronounced only in two positions:

1. Syllable-initial;
2. Intervocally;

Rhotic accents	Non-rhotic accents
CanEng	AfEng
IndEng	AusEng
IrEng	EngEng
South-western EngEng	NZEng
ScotEng	SAfEng
Northern USEng (apart from New England and NYC)	Southern USEng
	WEng
	WInEng in the Caribbean

# The syllable

- In phonology, a syllable is made up of three main constituents:
  1. Centre (called **nucleus**): it is produced with no air flow obstruction, so it is generally a vowel sound (monophthong or diphthong). There are syllables realised by one single vowel sound (e.g. *l*, *a*, etc.) or, more rarely, by a consonant (e.g. *Sssh!*, *mmm...*, etc.). In this latter case the consonant is called syllabic consonant. There are at least 3 syllabic consonants in English (indicated in phonology with a short vertical line under the consonant: [̩]): 1) [l̩] as in <table> [teɪb̩]; 2) [n̩] as in <horizon> [həˈraɪz̩n̩]; 3) [r̩] as in <particular> [pɑːtɪkjələr̩];
  2. **Onset**: the consonant(s) that precede(s) the nucleus (ex. Cat);
  3. **Coda**: the consonant(s) that follow(s) the nucleus (ex. Cat).

# Syllabification

- It's useful for polysyllabic words
- **Maximal Onset Principle:** The onset has the maximum number of consonants possible before the nucleus. Consonants can be attached to the coda only if the sequence of consonant sounds does not respect the sonority sequencing principle;
- **Sonority Sequencing Principle:** sounds are classified according to a sonority scale from plosives (the least audible) to vowels (the most audible).

Stops > affricates > fricatives > nasals > /l/ > /r/ > semi-vowels /w, j/ > vowels

According to the SSP, the sounds before the nucleus must rise in sonority, sounds following the nucleus must fall in sonority.

E.g. Publishing = 'pʌ | blɪ | ʃɪŋ WHY?

Reaching = 'ri: | tʃɪŋ | WHY?

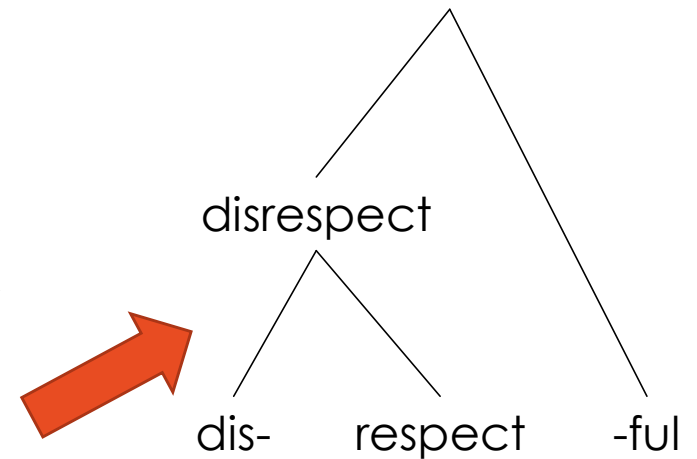
# Morphology



- Study of the structure of words and the relationships among them;
- **Morpheme**: minimal meaningful unit of morphology. It's abstract because it concerns meaning. Its concrete form is called **morph**. E.g. the morph [kæt] is a morpheme corresponding to the meaning 'A small domesticated carnivorous mammal with soft fur, a short snout, and retractable claws. It is widely kept as a pet or for catching mice, and many breeds have been developed' (*OED*).
- Words may be **monomorphemic** or **simplex words** (only one morpheme, e.g. Read) or **polymorphemic** or **complex words** (2+ morphemes, e.g. dis|respect|ful). In polymorphemic words there is a morpheme which carries the main meaning of the word and it is called **stem** or **base** (e.g. in 'disrespectful', the morpheme 'respect' is the stem). Monomorphemic bases are called **roots**;
- According to the way morphemes connect with each other, there are two kinds of morphemes: **free** (which can stand on their own as words, e.g. respect) and **bound** (which have no full meaning alone, e.g. -ment). Words deriving from the merge between free and bound morphemes are called **derivatives** (e.g. supernatural derives from super+natural).
- Bound morphemes are generally called **affixes**. Before the stem: **prefixes**; after the stem: **suffixes**. In English there are no **infixes** (bound morphemes in the middle of words, a part from words which generally denote negative attitudes by speakers/writers, e.g. abso-fucking-lutely, but see also ham-holy-burger).

# Morphological analysis

- Tree diagram = representation of how morphemes attach to each other
- We have to identify 1) the different morphemes of a word and also 2) the order in which they have combined
- How to establish the order in which the affixes are attached to the stem (e.g. dis | respect | ful)?
  1. Semantic argument = the meaning of the word suggests the order of formation. E.g. Disrespectful = full of non respect → respect > non respect (disrespect) > full of non respect (disrespectful)
  2. Formal argument = affixes are attached only to certain word classes. In the example of disrespectful, this argument doesn't work, because the affixes dis- and -ful can be both attached to nouns (respect), so the order of formation is given only by the semantic argument in this case.



# Allomorphs

- An allomorph is one of the possible realisations (in pronunciation) of a morpheme. The same meaning is expressed by more than one form.
- Indefinite article 'a' has 3 allomorphs: 1) [ə] before consonant sounds (e.g. a rabbit), 2) [ən] before vowel sounds (e.g. an elephant), 3) [eɪ] when it's stressed. These allomorphs are due to phonological conditioning
- The plural has 8 allomorphs (3 regular and 5 irregular): 1) [s] after voiceless consonants (e.g. [kæts]), 2) [z] after voiced consonants (e.g. [dɒgz]), 3) [ɪz] after sibilant sounds [s, z, ʃ, tʃ, dʒ] (e.g. [kɪsɪz]), 4) [u:] → [i:] (e.g. [tu:θ] → [ti:θ]), 5) [aʊ] → [aɪ] (e.g. [maʊs] → [maɪs]), 6) zero form (e.g. sheep), 7) suffix [ən] (e.g. ox=[ɒks] → oxen=[ɒksən]), 8) [aɪ] → [ɪ]+[jən] (e.g. [tʃaɪld] → ['tʃɪldrən]). Allomorphs 4-8 depend on the kind of word they are attached = lexical conditioning
- When a suffix alters the pronunciation of the stem (thus creating an allomorph) is called morphological conditioning (e.g. agile ['ædʒaɪl] → agility [ə'dʒɪlɪti])

# Branches of morphology

- **Inflectional** morphology: suffixes (more precisely inflections) that encode grammatical information are attached to a lexeme and create a different word-form of the same lexeme. In English there are only 6/7 regular inflections: 1) –s for the plural and 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, 2) 's for the Saxon genitive, 3) –ed for the past tense and past participle, 4) –ing for the present participle and gerund, 5) –er for the comparative and 6) –est for the superlative. Inflections are consistent: their meaning and function is always the same
- **Derivational** morphology: affixes create new lexemes. Derivational affixes aren't consistent and can be attached to a restricted number of word classes and lexemes (e.g. the suffix -ness can't be attached to all the adjectives to form nouns. Ugly+ness= ugliness, but beautiful+ness doesn't exist). Moreover, derivational affixes can change the word-class, inflections can't.



# How to form new words in English

- **Affixation** (derivational and inflectional morphology): prefixation or suffixation. Some suffixes that change the word-class of a lexeme are classified following the grammatical category they create: nominal, adjectival, adverbial suffixes. Others are classified according to their meaning: agentive (-er in *influencer*, *boomer*), instrumental (-er in *mixer*), diminutive (-ette, -let, or -kins as in *daddykins*), gender-making (-ess in *actress*) suffixes. Prefixes can be negative (dis-, un-, non-), augmentative (super-, ultra-), etc. Some affixes can create more new words than others. This is due to their **productivity**. Some words can't be formed by affixation if there's already another word that denotes the same concept (e.g. cow+let doesn't exist because there's already calf to denote a little cow): **blocking**.
- **Compounding**: combining two or more words (e.g. Facebook). Compounds can be spelt as a single word, with the hyphen or as two words. They are generally stressed on the left-hand element (or **modifier**). The right-hand element gives the meaning and the word-class (so it is called the **head** of the compound). Most compounds are nominal, adjectival and verbal. NN compounding is the most productive in English (e.g. ice-cream), while VV is the rarest.
- **Conversion**: changing the word-class without changing the form (e.g. 'millennial' as an adj. → noun)
- **Shortening**
  1. Truncation = deleting a part of the name: e.g. Will for William
  2. Clipping = deleting part of a word: e.g. my fav for my favo(u)rite
  3. Blend = deleting part of two words (or just one of the two) to form another one: e.g. Instagram from 'Instant camera'+ 'telegram'
  4. Abbreviations = initialisms (pronounced letter by letter as in the UK, the USA, FBI, UN, etc.) or acronyms (pronounced as single words as in NATO, NASA, POTUS, FLOTUS, etc.)

# Syntax

- Structure of the sentence
- Phrase (=sintagma): syntactic constituents
- How to test constituents?
  1. Pronominalisation: if a string of words can be replaced by a pronoun (even a wh-pronoun), it is a phrase (E.g. John comes from Yorkshire. John = he, from Yorkshire = there)
  2. Movement: if a string of words can be moved to other positions, it is a phrase (e.g. John comes from Yorkshire = From Yorkshire John comes [OK], not \*Yorkshire John comes from → 'from Yorkshire' is a phrase, 'Yorkshire' alone is not)
  3. Coordination test: if two expressions can be coordinated by 'and' they are phrases (E.g. 'from AND Yorkshire' are not separable because this phrase doesn't make sense)
  4. Sentence-fragment test: if a string of words can be replaced by a question to be answered, it is a phrase (=analisi logica. E.g. John comes from Yorkshire. Who comes from Yorkshire? John. → John is a phrase)

# The structure of phrases (1)

- Head: most important element (i.e. word-class, syntactic category, part of speech or lexical category) that gives the name to the phrase. The other elements are its projections. According to the head, phrases can be:
  1. Noun phrases (NPs)
  2. Prepositional phrases (PPs)
  3. Adjective phrases (APs)
  4. Verb phrases (VPs)
  5. Adverb phrases (ADVPs)
- Elements can be classified according to 3 criteria:
  1. Semantic classification (nouns = things or people, verbs = actions or events, adjectives = properties or qualities, prepositions = relations, adverbs, conjunctions, demonstratives, possessives, articles – these latter three known as determiners)
  2. Morphological classification (according to certain affixes. E.g. the suffix –ed indicates a past tense, a past participle)
  3. Syntactic classification (certain word classes have certain position within a sentence. E.g. adjectives usually come before the noun they refer to)

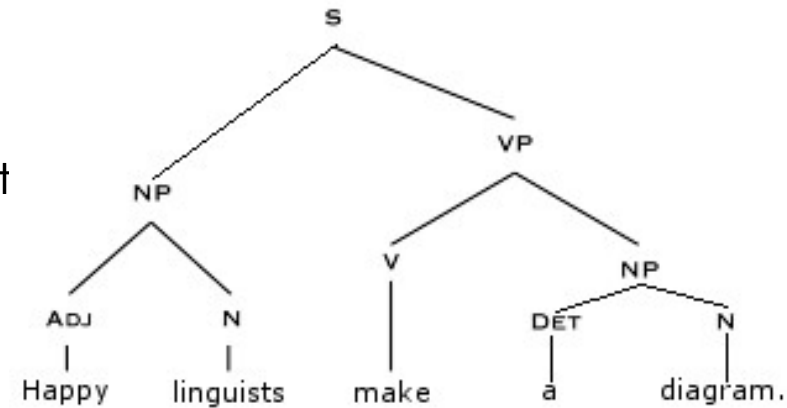
# The structure of the phrases (2)

## ○ Phrase structure rules:

1. S (sentence) = NP VP – e.g. Bob sings
2. NP = (D) (AP) N (PP) – e.g. The beautiful landscape of the Mid-West
3. PP = P NP – e.g. of the Mid-West
4. VP = V (NP) (PP) (ADVP)– e.g. sing a song for me
5. AP = (ADV) A – e.g. incredibly smart
6. ADVP = (ADV) ADV – e.g. more slowly

## ○ Within this structure there can be other sentences, known as subordinate clauses

1. **Phrase** (=sintagma) = the smallest syntactic unit (head+projections)
2. **Clause** (= proposizione) = minimal syntactic unit made up of subject+VP. They can be matrix/main or subordinate clauses
3. **Sentence** (=frase) = largest syntactic unit (one or more clauses)



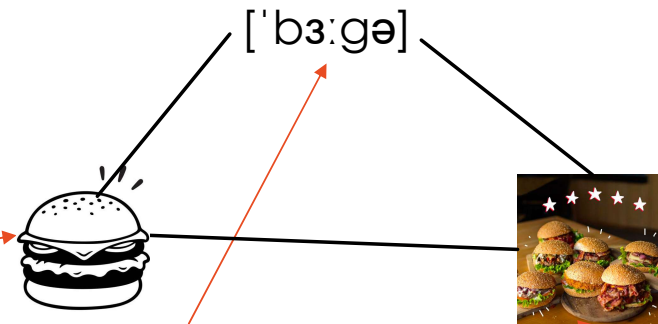
# Functions of constituents

- **Predicate:** verb
- **Subject:** Subject-verb agreement (sharing the same person and number). Its position is fixed: before the verb phrase. Subjects in English are obligatory. Case distinction between subject and object is only visible with pronouns (I – me, etc.)
- **Object:** The object-verb agreement doesn't exist in English (e.g. She has three dogs). The object occurs immediately after the verb. Verbs that need an object are transitive, otherwise they are intransitive. Sometimes transitive verbs can do without the object (e.g. She ate [what?] and went away. Object understood or covert).

NB: Transitive verbs can have the passive, but in English there are also **ditransitive** verbs (e.g. give, show, etc.) which have two objects: direct (DO=someone/something that undergoes the action/event described by the verb) and indirect (IO=goal, recipient or beneficiary of the action described). E.g. Camilla gave me (=IO) a piece of cake (=DO). → I (=S) was given a piece of cake (=DO) by Camilla. → A piece of cake (=S) was given to me (=complement)

- **Adverbial (or adjunct):** they provide info about the circumstances of the action described by the predicate, the subject and the object(s). They are modifiers and can be of time, location, manner, cause, purpose, etc. They aren't obligatory, so they can be eliminated without the sentence losing its meaning. Adverbial is not adverb! Adverb = word class, adverbial = sentence function that can often correspond to an adverb.
- (Other) **complements:** general term to refer to constituents strictly connected (semantically and syntactically) with heads of phrases. E.g. The book of French (of French=complement). A particular case is the **predicative** complement, with such verbs as 'be, seem, become, appear, etc.' that behaves like objects but they aren't even because they can't be passivized. E.g. George seems a policeman in that suit. 'A policeman' seems like a direct object, but it can't be passivized (The sentence 'a policeman is seemed by George in that suit' can't exist in English)

# Semantics



- It studies the structure of meaning
- Meaning = relation between a linguistic expression (**signifier**) and a mental category (**signified**) that helps classify objects/concepts (**referent**)
- The set of potential referents a word can have is called **denotation** (e.g. burger). Associations between a word and a concept related to world knowledge instead of semantic relation are called **connotations** (e.g. 'blue' in the sentence "I'm blue" is not referred to the colour – denotation – but it's negatively connotated and associated with sadness). In other words: the denotation of a word or expression is its direct meaning. Its connotation consists of the ideas or meanings associated with it or suggested by it.
- Any linguistic element which requires a specific context to be associated with a referent is a deictic – i.e., pointing devices that point to objects inserted in a situational context (e.g. which are the deictic elements in the sentence "Can you pass me the bag over there?")

# Compositional meaning

- It's the meaning that sentences, clauses and phrases (but also polymorphemic words) have, consisting of the combination of different concepts expressed by the constituents
- Sentences have a semantic meaning (compositional, deriving from the meaning of each constituent) and a pragmatic meaning (deriving from its communicative purpose)

# Meaning organization and relation

- Meaning is organized in our mind as mental lexicon that allows us to speak and understand a language;
  - Different words are organized in networks known as lexical fields;
  - Relations among words within the mental lexicon can be:
1. **Hyper(o)nymy/hyponymy: Hypernym** = word whose meaning is superordinate to another (e.g. 'social media' is hypernym of 'Instagram'); **hyponym** = a word whose meaning is subordinate to another in the sense that a hyponym is one of the possible forms of a hypernym (e.g. 'Instagram' is hyponym of 'social media', i.e., Instagram is a kind of social media); **co-hyponym** = two or more words that share the same hypernym (e.g. 'Instagram' and 'Tik Tok' are co-hyponym of the hypernym 'social media'). Hypernymy and hyponymy are sense relations = semantic relation between words that share important aspects of their meaning;
  2. **Opposites = complementaries** if there are no possible in-between words (e.g. alive vs dead), **antonyms** if there's a scale of possibilities between two extremes (e.g. hot and cold). Antonyms are gradable (e.g. very hot, extremely cold, hotter, the coldest, etc.), complementaries are not (e.g. \*very alive, extremely dead). **Converses** are opposites involved in the same context and one implies necessarily the existence of the other (e.g. buy vs sell = If someone buys something it means that somebody else must have sold it). Converses can be used interchangeably to express the same situation (e.g. I bought a pair of gloves at H&M. = H&M sold me a pair of gloves);
  3. **Polysemy** = one lexeme has more than one meaning (e.g. READ means both the act of reading something and studying a subject at university. Ex. I read gossip every day vs I read English at Sapienza University of Rome)
  4. **Homonymy** = two different lexemes but identical form, either phonologically or orthographically (e.g. the colour 'red' and the past simple/participle 'read')
  5. **Synonymy** = two different lexemes with the same meaning but different form (e.g. shy and timid)



# Meaning in context: Corpora

- Big collections of electronic data (machine-readable texts) to be analysed through specific software
- Corpora are used to create dictionaries, e.g. OED
- British English = BNC (British National Corpus) – ca. 100,000,000 words
- American English = COCA (Corpus Of Contemporary American) – ca. 1,000,000,000 words
- Helsinki Corpus (CoRD) = Diachronic corpus of English - 1,572,800 words at the moment