Morphology-L-4
PKD

> Morphology is one of the branches of Linguistics in which we study about the **structure of words.**

In order to understand the given definition of 'morphology' the first thing we should ask is:
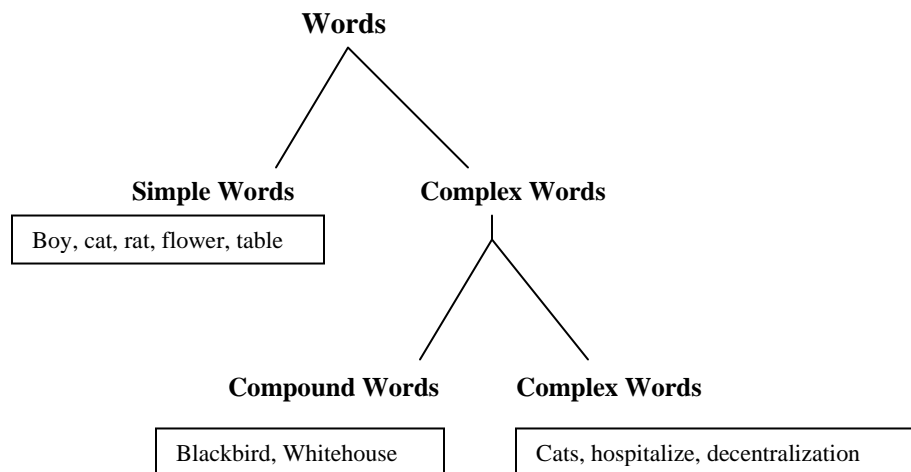
What is the *structure of a word*?
>   Or
What do we mean by the term *structure of words*?

> Structure of words could be roughly explained as the **internal arrangement** of different units/ parts in a given word.

One could also ask:

What is the **internal arrangement** of different units in a word?

In order to understand the internal arrangement of words, we should first understand that there are different kinds of words. For example:
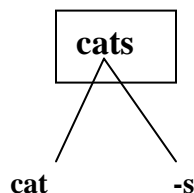
Words

Simple Words   **Complex Words**

Boy, cat, rat, flower, table

Compound Words   **Complex Words**

Blackbird, Whitehouse		Cats, hospitalize, decentralization

We drew the above diagram so that we can proceed further to understand what we mean by the **internal arrangement** of words.

If we talk about the *internal arrangement* of units/parts in a word, the words which come under the category of **simple words** such as 'boy', 'cat' etc. cannot be the eligible candidate for such analysis. We are suggesting this because if we try to break the simple words into different units, we would land up dividing the simple words into **syllables** (don't worry about the term, we will soon explain it) or sounds rather than into any meaningful unit.

Let us now consider the words that come under the category of '**complex words**':
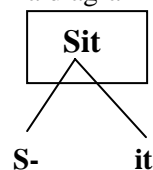
We will look at the *internal arrangement* of a complex word;   'cat'

We say that 'cats' is a complex word because we can divide this word into two parts (as given in the diagram). A word 'cat' means an animal and the unit '-s' attached to this word makes it plural which (i.e. 'cats') then indicates more than one cat. In this way, a unit '-s' has a meaning of its own.

cats

cat   -s

Based on this discussion, let's say that **sit** is also a complex word. A unit '**s-**' is added to a word '**it**' and we get a word 'sit' which could mean 'someone sits'.

We could represent the word '**sit**' in a diagram like this:

Sit

S-   it

There will be problems if we think that a unit 's-' is added to another unit 'it' and we get 'sit'.

First, there is no relationship between 'it' and 'sit'. It's not the case that there is only a difference in meaning but they also refer to two different 'things', while in 'cat' and 'cats', the addition of a unit '-s' to 'cat' definitely changes the meaning i.e. it makes the word to mean more than one in number but they don't refer to two different 'things'.

Second, in an instance like 'cat' and 'cats', there is some kind of regularity in the pattern. By regularity, we mean that there are many more words like 'cat' such as 'rat', 'mat', 'fan', 'table', 'chair' etc. to which we can attach the unit '-s' and get the plural form of the existing word. This generalization is totally absent in case of adding 's-' to 'it'. Let's say, we have words like 'on', 'pin', 'kit' etc. and if we put the unit 's-' before these words we get 'son', 'spin' and 'skit'. Let's see the following tables to understand the notion of generalization more clearly:

on→ s-on = son
pin→ s-pin= spin
kit→ s-kit= skit

As we see, there is no relationship between the word to which we add 's-' and the word we get after the addition. So, it not only changes the meaning of the word, but also the existing and the resulted words refer to two different things. The unit 's-' in these instances cannot have a meaning of its own. It is a different sound but not a morpheme.
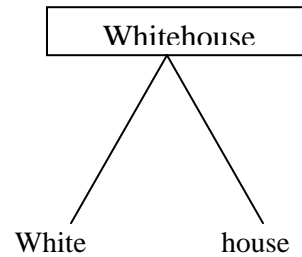
Vs

cat→cat-s=   cats
rat→rat-s=   rats
mat→mat-s= mats
fan→fan-s=   fans
dog→dog-s= dogs
pen→pen-s=   pens

Unlike previous instance, the addition of '-s' to the existing words in these examples gives us a regular pattern. We get the plural form of the existing words. It changes the meaning of the words in a sense that they mean more than one of such object, but the existing words and the resulted words don't refer to two different objects. So, in this instance, the unit '-s' is not only a different sound but also has a meaning of its own and thus a separate morpheme.

If this is understood to everyone, we can now proceed further to explain the internal structure of the **Compound words**:

We examine the internal arrangement of a compound word;   'Whitehouse'

As we see that in a compound word such as 'Whitehouse', there are two different words which have been put together. There are no intricacies involved here as far the form of compound word is concerned. If we have to put a dividing line in order to see the internal arrangement of the compound word, we can easily do that because there are two independent words. Both these words have their own meaning and when they are clubbed together we get a new word and it gives a different meaning.

```
        Whitehouse
         /      \
        /        \
     White       house
```

\-

Now let us analyze the following words on the basis of the above explanation of words:

agree	report	conceive
degree	reopen	perceive
pedigree	remove	deceive
decree	remote	receive
tree	relate	
agreed	relax	
agreement		
disagree		