

Inflectional Paradigms

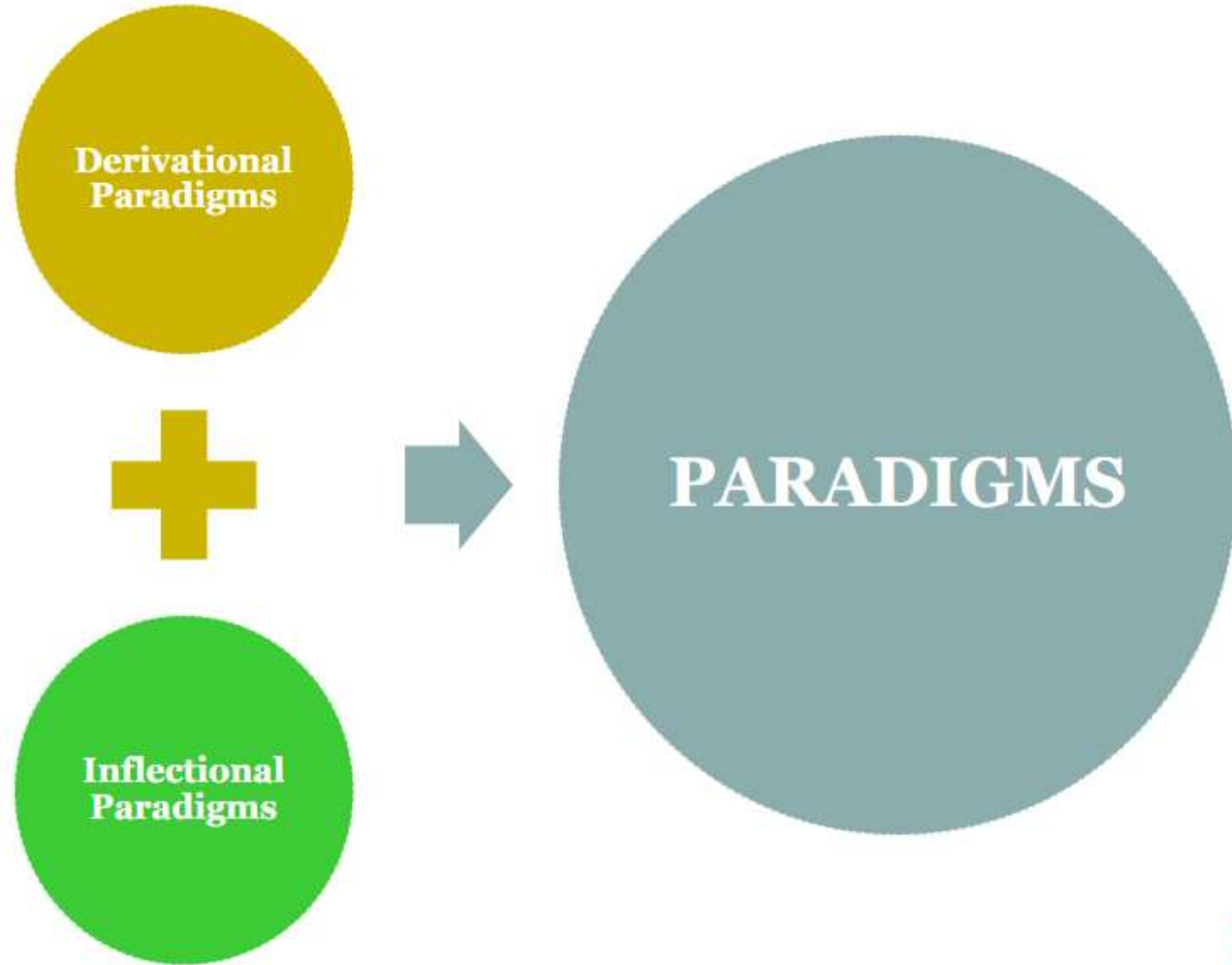
Dr. Basima Othman

What is a paradigm?

A **paradigm** is a set of related words having the same base but different affixes like in the bases **head** and **walk**:

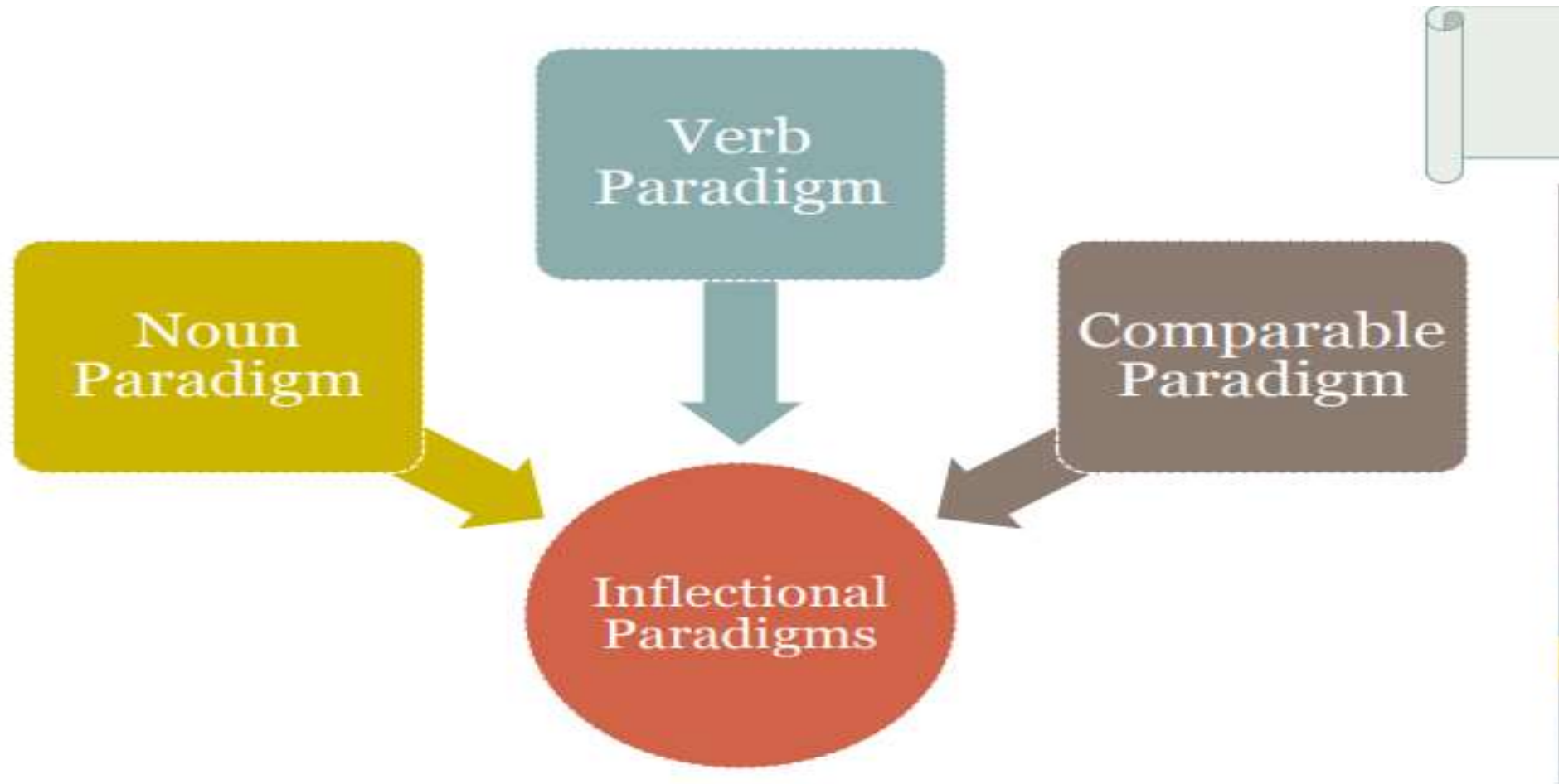
- **ahead, behead, header, headlong, headship, heady, subhead**
- **walks, walking, walked**

Types of Paradigms



Types of a paradigm

- A derivational paradigm is a set of words having the same base to which different derivational affixes are added, like: **nature, natural, naturally, unnatural, naturalist, naturalistic, naturalistically, naturalize, naturalization**
- An inflectional paradigm is a set of words having the same base to which different inflectional suffixes are added, like:
brighten, brightens, brightening, brightened, brightened
great, greater, greatest



Inflectional Paradigms

A. The Noun Paradigm

FORMS	STEM	PLURAL	POSSESSIVE	PLURAL POSSESSIVE
<i>Inflectional Suffixes</i>		{-s pl}	{-s ps}	{-s pl ps}
MODELS	doctor	doctor s	doctor' s	Doctors' s
	mother	mother s	mother ' s	mothers' s

B. The Verb Paradigm

FORMS	STEM	PRESENT THIRD-PERSON SINGULAR	PRESENT PARTICIPLE	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE
<i>Inflectional Suffixes</i>		{-s 3d}	{-ING vb}	{-D pt}	{-D pp}
MODELS	show	<i>shows</i>	<i>showing</i>	<i>showed</i>	<i>showed</i>
	ring	<i>rings</i>	<i>ringing</i>	<i>rang</i>	<i>rung</i>
	cut	<i>cuts</i>	<i>cutting</i>	<i>cut</i>	<i>cut</i>

C. Comparable Paradigm

Forms	Stem	Comparative	Superlative
Inflectional Suffixes		{-ER cp}	{-EST sp}
MODELS	sweet	sweeter	sweetest
	soon	sooner	soonest

The eight types of English inflection

Word Class	Inflectional Category	Affix Used to Express Category
Nouns	Number	-s: book/books
	Possessive	-'s, -': the cat's tail, Charles' toe
Verbs	3rd Person Singular Present	-s: It rains
	Past Tense	-ed: paint/painted
	Perfect Aspect	-ed: (has painted) (past participle)
	Progressive Aspect	-ing: fall/falling, 'I'm falling' (present participle)
Adjectives	Comparative	-er: tall/taller
	Superlative	-est: tall/tallest

The eight types of English inflection

I Inflectional suffixes used with nouns:

1. Possessive nouns:

- **Singular:** father's letter, boy's pen
- **Plural:** boys' books, children's toys

2. Plural nouns:

bags, wishes, ladies

The eight types of inflection

II Inflectional suffixes used with verbs:

3. The third person singular: plays**s**, gets**s**, wants**s**, watches**es**
4. The past tense – **ed**: loved**ed**, wanted**ed**, studied**ed**
5. The past participle – **ed**: has washed**ed**, had wanted**ed**
6. The present participle – **ing**: coming**ing**, shooting**ing**, stopping**ing**

The eight types of inflection

III Inflectional suffixes used with adjectives and adverbs

7. Comparative form – **er**:

nic**er**, bigg**er**, easi**er**, hard**er**

8. Superlative form – **est**:

nic**est**, bigg**est**, easi**est**, hard**est**, near**est**

The Noun Paradigm

SINGULAR	PLURAL	POSSESSIVE	PLURAL POSSESSIVE
stone	stones	stone's	stones'
ox	oxen	ox's	oxen's
man	men	man's	men's

Noun plurals

1. For most singular nouns, add the suffix –s:

book-books, girl-girls, google-googles

2. For nouns ending with s, x, z, sh, or ch, add es:

gas-gases, wax-waxes, dish-dishes

3. For nouns ending with a consonant and y, change the y to i and add -es. For nouns ending with a vowel and y, add -s only:

sky-skies, army-armies

boy-boys, alley-alleys

Noun plurals

4. For some nouns ending with f or fe, add -s. For others, change the f to v and add -es;

- chief-chiefs, belief-beliefs, roof-roofs, reef-reefs, gulf-gulfs, safe-safes, proof-proofs
- loaf-loaves, life-lives, knife-knives, hoof-hooves, thief-thieves

5. For nouns ending with o, add s or es:

- cello-cellos, piano-pianos, radio-radios, zoo-zoos
- potato-potatoes, tomato-tomatoes, mango-mangoes

Noun plurals

6. Some nouns have zero suffixal plural

deer, sheep, swine, antelope, bass, pike, carp, perch, pickerel, quail, grouse, moose, bear, salmon, tuna, trout, Chinese

7. Some nouns have only plural forms

earnings, media, premises, proceeds, quarters, scissors, trousers, goods, grounds, thanks, dues, jeans, savings

Noun plurals

8. Some nouns that end with *-s* look like plural but are considered as singular.

economics, news, mathematics, mumps, lens, summons

9. Some nouns that can be singular or plural (depending upon how they are used and they are called collective nouns)

tribe, team, faculty, family, corps, headquarters, gross, means, ethics, data, species, series, class, group, staff, company, committee, board, public, police, oats, pliers, suds, measles

Irregular Plurality

10. Some nouns have irregular plural forms.

ox-oxen, child-children, brother-brethren

foot-feet, tooth-teeth, goose-geese

mouse-mice, louse-lice

man-men, woman-women

die-dice

person, people

Irregular Plurality

-is	-es
analysis	analyses
arsis	arses
basis	bases
crisis	crises
diagnosis	diagnoses
ellipsis	ellipses
emphasis	emphases
hypothesis	hypotheses
neurosis	neuroses
parenthesis	parentheses
synopsis	synopses
thesis	theses

Irregular Plurality

-um	-a
bacterium	bacteria
curriculum	curricula
datum	data
labium	labia
medium	media
millennium	millennia
ovum	ova
stratum	strata
-on	-a
criterion	criteria
phenomenon	phenomena

Some nouns have different plural forms with different meanings

Singular	Plural
brother	brothers (by birth), brethren (of a society)
die	dies (for coining or stamping), dice (for play)
fish	fishes (separate fish), fish (collective)
index	indexes (in books), indices (in algebra)
penny	pennies (separate coins), pence (sum of money)
staff	staves (poles), staffs (bodies of assistants)

Tests for differentiating singular from plural nouns

- To differentiate singular from plural forms, there are 3 useful tests:

1. Pronoun substitution:

- a noun is singular if it can take he/him, she/her, it, this, or that
- a noun is plural if it can take they/them, these or those

Examples:

The beach was covered with white **sand**. (= it)

Have you studied **phonetics** ? (= it)

Where did you hang my **trousers** ? (= them)

Tests for differentiating singular from plural nouns

2. **The noun may be signaled by a modifier such as several, many, or by a pronoun reference like his, her, its, their**

Examples:

We saw many fish swimming under the bridge.

In returning to the fold, the sheep changed its direction.

In returning to the fold the sheep changed their direction.

Tests for differentiating singular from plural nouns

3. When a noun functions as a subject of a verb, its number is sometimes shown by the form of the verb

Examples:

Measles is a contagious disease.

The fish swims in the pond.

Contrast these with

The goods are on the way.

The fish swim in the pond.

Collective Nouns

Some nouns called collective nouns can be either singular or plural in meaning depending on the context like: **tribe, team, faculty, family, corps, headquarters, gross, means, ethics, data, species, series, class, group, staff, company, committee, board, public, police, oats, pliers, suds, measles**, as in:

- **Singular:** **The family** (the unit) is sitting at the dinner table.
- **Plural:** **The family** (the individuals) have gathered from many parts of the country .
- **Singular:** **Ethics** (a philosophic discipline) is a challenging subject.
- **Plural:** His **ethics** (beliefs and actions) are beyond reproach.

Allomorphs in Noun Plurals

1. **Regular** plurals include the three allomorphs of {-s pl} like: hats/-s/, fads /-z/, and kisses /-iz/.

2. **Irregular** plurals have several small groups:
 - a. -en plurals e.g. oxen, children, brethren

 - b. -∅ (zero) suffixal plurals like: deer /di_ə/ (pl.) = / di_ə/ + / ∅/

Allomorphs in Noun Plurals

c. **Replacive allomorphs**, like in goose-geese

geese /gi:s/ = /gu:s/ + /u:>i:/

d. **Morphophonemic changes**: Changes in the phonemic forms of the bases as they appear in plurals, like:

knife > **knives** /**naiv**z/ = /naif/ + /f > v/ + /-z/

mouth > **mouths** /**mauð**z/ = /mauθ/ + /θ > ð/ + /-z/

house > **houses** / **hauz**iz / = /haus/ + /s > z/ + /-iz/

Allomorphs in Noun Plurals

- Some nouns ending in /-f/ do **not** make a morphophonemic change, such as **chief-chiefs, belief-beliefs, roof-roofs, reef-reefs, gulf-gulfs, safe-safes, proof-proofs**
- Others may have **two** forms of the plural, the plural forms of the word **youth** can be: /yʊθs/ or /yʊðz/

Do the following exercises:

11.1

11.5

11.2

11.6

11.3

11.7

11.4

11.8

Next

- **Noun Possessive**
- **The Verb Paradigm**
- **The Comparable Paradigm**