

AAE103

L3 : Noun Inflections

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Types of Noun

- count : *book, egg, cat, house, ...*
- noncount : *milk, rice, peace, happiness, ...*

non count nouns are sometimes not logical:

- *furniture, lighting, research* are noncount
- these tend to be count in Singapore

Changes in meaning

- Noncount often refer to the material.

This is made of stone.

He threw a stone.

I ate egg.

I ate an egg.

Variable nouns

- In British English (but not American), some noncount nouns can be used as plurals

Chelsea are winning the League.

The government are trying to fix this.

Count Nouns

- singular count nouns must have a determiner
- many plural nouns must also have a determiner
 - * I have book.
 - * Cat is outside.
 - * I broke legs

Determiners

- articles : *a, an, the*
- demonstratives : *this, that, these, those*
- possessive pronouns : *my, his, her, our ...*

Only one determiner allowed

- * I like this your book.
- * The my article is finished.

Sometimes a pre- determiner is allowed:

- I read all her books.
- I like both these shirts.

Partitives

- *piece, item, ...*
- used to count noncount nouns

- an item of information
- a piece of research

Partitives + count nouns

- used to refer to part of the item

- a piece of apple* = one slice
- a piece of furniture* = (maybe one leg?)

Practice : Identify the error

- * I wrote a piece of article.
- * I like these furnitures.
- * I bought newspaper.
- * I have read that your book.
- * Those researches are fascinating.

Inflections on Count Nouns

- plural : *books, cats, chairs ...*
- possessive : *David's, my uncle's ...*

Possessives occur with:

- people :
 - David's hair
 - my mother's birthday
- times :
 - next week's class
 - Thursday's meeting
- * the house's roof

/s/ or /z/ ?

cats
dogs
goats
lambs
ducks
fans
sheds

/ɪz/ after sibilants

- sibilants = /s, z, ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ/
- SgE has /əz/

buses /'bʌsɪz/
mazes /'meɪzɪz/
fishes /'fɪʃɪz/
catches /'kætʃɪz/
bridges /'brɪdʒɪz/

summary: -s suffix occurrence

- occurs on nouns as
 - plural : *books, tables, horses*
 - possessive : *my aunt's, David's, my niece's*
 - contraction of *is* : *she's*
- occurs on verbs as
 - 3rd person singular present :
she wants, he goes, Fred loses

pronunciation of -s suffix

- /s/ after non-sibilant voiceless sound
- /z/ after non-sibilant voiced sound
- /ɪz/ after sibilant
 - cats /kæts/
 - dogs /dɒgz/
 - horses /'hɔːsɪz/
- note: vowels are voiced
 - cows /kaʊz/

only affects -s as a suffix

- final 's' is often not a suffix

class /klaːs/
mess /mes/
this /ðɪs/

Reading

- pronunciation of –s: SoE 140-141
- inflections on nouns: GoE 11
- count/noncount nouns: GoE 56-57
- partitives: GoE 57
- determiners: GoE 80