

## English Past Tense

### **Traditional Characterization: A Rule Plus Exceptions**

1. General Rule: verb + /-ed/
2. Memorized Exceptions: sing → sang, bring → brought, ...
3. Blocking Principle: more specific (2) blocks (1).

### **Acquisition**

1. Children initially memorize forms.
2. Children learn and overapply rule.
3. Children learn exceptions that block the rule.