

MORPHOLOGY

Morphology is the study of forms. It has been used to describe that type of investigation which analyses all those basic elements which are used in a language. What we have been describing as elements in the form of a linguistic message are known as morphemes.

Morphemes

Morpheme is the minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function.

Ex. Tourists contains 3 morphemes. Tour + ist +s

Free and Bound Morphemes

Free Morphemes can stand by themselves as single words. Ex Tour, open , stay ...

Bound Morphemes can not normally stand alone but they are typically attached to another form. Affixes are bound morphemes. Ex. re- , -ist , -ed , -s ...

- When free morphemes are used with bound morphemes , the basic word – form involved is technically known as the ” stem ” . Ex. un dress ed un=> Prefix (bound) , dress => stem (free) , ed=> suffix (bound)

Lexical and Functional Morphemes

- **Free morphemes fall into two categories :**

Lexical morphemes are the ordinary nouns adjectives and verbs which we think of the words which carry the content of messages we convey.

They are called open class of words, since we can add new lexical morphemes to the language easily .

Functional morphemes are the functional words in the language such

as conjunctions, prepositions, articles and pronouns. They are called close class of words, since we almost never add new functional morphemes to the language.

Ex. and, but, on, near, above => functional morphemes

Sad, long, look => lexical morphemes

Derivational and Inflectional Morphemes

Bound Morphemes can also be divided into two types.

Derivational morphemes are used to make new words in the language and are often used to make words of a different grammatical category from the stem .

Ex. good => adjective good + ness => noun

Care => noun care + less => adjective

Inflectional morphemes are not used to produce new words in the English language, but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. Plural markers, possessive markers, tense markers, comparative and superlative markers are inflectional morphemes.

Ex. Tim's two sisters : Tim's 's => inflectional , sisters s => inflectional

Derivational Versus Inflectional

- An inflectional morpheme never changes the grammatical category of a word.

Ex. old => adj. , Older => adj.

- A derivational morpheme can change the grammatical category of a

word.

Ex. teach => verb , teacher => noun

Some morphemes look the same but this does not mean that they do the same kind of word.

Ex. teacher => suffix + inflectional

Younger => suffix + derivational

Whenever there is a derivational suffix and inflectional suffix attached to the same word , they always appear in that order.

Ex. teach + er + s => stem + derivational + inflectional

Morphological Description

The girl's wildness shocked the teachers.

The (functional) , girl (lexical) , 's (inflectional) , wild (lexical) ,
ness (

derivational) , shock (lexical) , -ed (inflectional) , the (functional) ,

teach (lexical) , -er (derivational) –s (inflectional) .

* CATEGORIES OF MORPHEMES : FREE (a- Lexical b- Functional)
and

BOUND (a- Derivational b- Inflectional)

Problems in Morphological Description

1- The inflectional morpheme –s is added to “ cat “ and we get the plural “ cats “ . What is the inflectional morpheme which makes sheep the plural of sheep ?

Ex. went past tense of go.

Legal => Is it the same morpheme as in “ international “ .

Solution : A full description of English morphology will have to take account of both historical influences and the effect of borrowed elements.

Ex. Law => borrowed into old English from old Norse

Legal => borrowed from the Latin form of “ legal is “ (of the law)

Morphs and Allomorphs

Morphs : The actual forms used to realize morphemes.

Ex. cats => consists of two morphemes

An inflectional morpheme (-s)

A lexical morpheme (cat)

Allomorphs : The actual forms of the morphs which result from the single morpheme “ plural “ turn out to be different. They are all allomorphs of the one morpheme.

Ex. sheep (s) => sheep (p)

Sheep (zero morpheme)

- zero morpheme is one allomorph of plural.

Reduplication : Repetition device as a means of inflectional marking.