

MORPHOLOGY

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Morphology

- **What is morphology?**
- is the study of the structure of words; the component of the grammar that includes the rules of word formation.
- **Morpheme**
- the smallest unit of linguistic meaning or function that cannot be dissected into smaller units
 1. One morpheme words: boy, desire
 2. Two morpheme words: boyish, desirable
 3. Three morpheme words: boyishness, desirability

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- A **base** morpheme, also known as a root or a stem, is the fundamental unit of meaning in a word.
- It is the part of the word that carries the core semantic content and cannot be further divided into smaller units of meaning without losing its meaning.
- Base morphemes serve as the foundation of word formation and are combined with affixes (prefixes and suffixes) and other morphemes to create new words.
- For example, the word "unhappiness" is made up of the base morpheme "happy" and the prefix "un-", which gives it the opposite meaning.
- Similarly, the word "happily" is made up of the base morpheme "happy" and the suffix "-ly," which changes the word's grammatical function.

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- Some morphemes like boy, desire, gentle, and man may constitute words by themselves. These are free morphemes.
- Free morphemes are either *lexical* (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs)
- OR
- *functional* (prepositions, conjunctions, articles, pronouns, and so on).
- A free morpheme is also called a root, which is the element that remains when all bound morphemes are detached from the word.

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- Other morphemes like -ish, -ness, -ly, pre-, trans-, and un- are never words by themselves but are always parts of words.
- These are *bound morphemes*.
- Bound morphemes in the English language are either *prefixes* or *suffixes*.
- A prefix is a bound morpheme that attaches to the beginning of a word, for example: reopen, redo, rewrite.
- A suffix is a bound morpheme that attaches to the end of the word, for example: sleeping, systematic, voiceless.

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- Bound morphemes are subcategorized into *derivational* and *inflectional* morphemes.
- A derivational morpheme is defined as a morpheme added to a free morpheme to form a new word, possibly, but not necessarily, resulting in a change in syntactic category,
- for example, adding the suffix *-ify* to an adjective like *simple* to form the verb *simplify*.
- The following is a list of derivational morphemes that change the grammatical class of the free morpheme:

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Noun to Adjective

boy + -ish
virtu + -ous
Elizabeth + -an
pictur + -esque
affection + -ate
health + -ful
alcohol + -ic

Verb to Noun

acquitt + -al
clear + -ance
accus + -ation
sing + -er
conform + -ist
predict + -ion

Adjective to Adverb

exact + -ly

Noun to Verb

moral + -ize
vaccin + -ate
hast + -en

Adjective to Noun

tall + -ness
specific + -ity
feudal + -ism
free + -dom

Verb to Adjective

read + -able
creat + -ive
migrat + -ory
run(n) + -y

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- Some derivational morphemes do not change the grammatical class of the free morpheme, for instance:

Noun to Noun

friend + -ship
human + -ity
king + -dom
New Jersey + -ite
vicar + -age
Paul + -ine
America + -n
humanit + -arian
mono- + theism
dis- + advantage
ex- + wife
auto- + biography

Verb to Verb

un- + do
re- + cover
dis- + believe
auto- + destruct

Adjective to Adjective

pink + -ish
red + -like
a- + moral
il- + legal
in- + accurate
un- + happy
semi- + annual
dis- + agreeable
sub- + minimal

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- An *inflectional suffix* is a bound grammatical morpheme that is affixed to a word according to rules of syntax, e.g., third-person singular verbal suffix -s.
- Consequently, an inflectional suffix cannot change the grammatical category of the morpheme to which it is attached.
- The following is the list of inflectional morphemes that exist in the English language:

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English Inflectional Morphemes

-s	third-person singular present
-ed	past tense
-ing	progressive
-en	past participle
-s	plural
-'s	possessive
-er	comparative
-est	superlative

Examples

She wait-s at home.
She wait-ed at home.
She is eat-ing the donut.
Mary has eat-en the donuts.
She ate the donut-s.
Disa's hair is short.
Disa has short-er hair than Karin.
Disa has the short-est hair.

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- To distinguish inflectional morphemes from derivational morphemes, the following is a list of the major differences:

Inflectional	Derivational
Grammatical function	Lexical function
No word class change	May cause word class change
Small or no meaning change	Some meaning change
Often required by rules of grammar	Never required by rules of grammar
Follow derivational morphemes in a word	Precede inflectional morphemes in a word
Productive	Some productive, many nonproductive

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- **Morphemes and Allomorphs:**
- A morpheme is not always represented by the same morph; it may be represented by different morphs in different environments.
- At the end of a word like boys the plural morpheme, for example, is realized as /z/, at the end of words like cats, it is realised as /s/ and at the end of words like buses it is realised as /ɪz/.
- Similarly, at the end of a verb like stopped, the past tense morpheme is realised as /t/, at the end of a verb like bombed it is realised as /d/, but at the end of a verb like wanted it is realised as /ɪd/.

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- **Morphemes and Allomorphs:**
- In other words, /s/, /z/, and /iz/ are the three alternative realizations of the plural morpheme of the plural in English. Similarly, /t/, /d/ and /id/ are the three alternative realizations of the past tense morpheme.
- Such alternative realizations of a morpheme are known as allomorphs.
- To summarize, allomorphs are the alternative realizations of a morpheme.

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- **Suffixal homophones:**
- are words that have the same pronunciation and spelling, but different meanings, due to the addition of a different suffix.
- In other words, they are words that are identical except for their suffixes.
- For example, the words "careful" and "careless" are suffixal homophones. They are spelled and pronounced the same way up to the point of the final suffix.
- "Careful" has the suffix "-ful," which means "full of," while "careless" has the suffix "-less," which means "without."

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- Thus, "careful" means "full of care or caution," while "careless" means "without care or caution."
- Another example of suffixal homophones are "fearful" and "fearless."
- They are pronounced and spelled the same way up to the point of the final suffix. "Fearful" has the suffix "-ful," which means "full of," while "fearless" has the suffix "-less," which means "without."
- Thus, "fearful" means "full of fear," while "fearless" means "without fear."