



# MORPHOLOGY





# What is Morphology?

- Morphology is the scientific study of word formation.
  - Minimal meaningful / grammatical unit of a word.
  - The study of patterns of word formation.
  - How words are originated, grammatical forms, on what basis the word class is formed etc.
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# Words and Morphemes

- Word (SIL): A word is a unit which is constituent at the phrase level and above.
  - This is being the minimal possible unit of a reply.
  - It has regular stress pattern, being the smallest constituent that can be moved within a sentence without making the sentence ungrammatical.
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# Morpheme

- Minimal, meaningful unit of a word or in the grammar of a language.
- Not further divisible or analyzable into smaller forms.
- The units of 'lowest' rank out of which words, the units of next highest rank are composed.
- If we try to break up a morpheme, it loses its identity and it left with meaningless noises.

# Morpheme

- Semantically different from other phonemically similar or identical linguistic forms. Eg. *Speaker, deer, faster*
- A sound sequence is not always regarded as a morpheme. Eg: man—\*woman, unnatural, unfaithful, \*under, \*sun
- It could be also termed as an abstract unit of meaning.
- A synonym for *morpheme* is *glosseme*



# Examples:

- Unladylike
- Un+ lady+ like
- Encouragement
- En+ courage+ ment
- Disillusionment
- Dis+ illusion+ ment
- Anti-naxalism
- Anti+ naxal+ ism

# What is morph then?

- A morph is the phonetic realization of a morpheme. The real form of the morpheme, the actual utterance of the morpheme.
- A formal unit with a physical shape.
- This is similar to the concept called 'phone' in phonology



# Allomorph

- Allomorph is phonologically distinct variants of the same morpheme.
- Different realization, manifestation of the same morpheme.
- They vary in shape or pronunciation according to their condition of use.
- They are a class of morphs which are semantically identical.
- They are derived from phonological and morphophonemic rules.

# Examples of Allomorph

- English plural morpheme [s]
- Phonologically conditioned-
- [-s] with morphs ending in /p, t, k/, etc. i.e. with voiceless sounds such as *cats, thanks* etc.
- [-z] with morphs ending in /b, d, g, v, l/ etc. i.e. with voiced morphs such as *dogs (dogz), rims (rimz)* etc..
- [-iz] with morphs ending in /z, ʃ, tʃ/ etc. i.e. with sibilants, affricates, fricatives such as *buses, boxes, horses, classes* etc.

# Morpheme types:

- Free morpheme: A free morpheme is a word that can occur by itself. It can stand alone. However, we can add other morphemes in it. E.g. *boy, man, establish, measure* etc are free morphemes.
- Bound morpheme: It is a grammatical unit that never occurs by itself, but is always attached to some other morphemes such as [s] in *cats*, [ness] in *kindness*, [ize] in *visualize* etc.

# Affixation

an affix is a bound morpheme that is joined before, after or within a root or stem.

- Types of affixes
- Prefix: this is added before the root or stem of the word. E.g. unpredictable, unresponsive, revitalize, etc.
- Suffix: a suffix is an affix that is attached to the end of a root or stem. E.g. the plural formatives, -s, -en, -ing, -d, -er, -est, and -less, -ment, -ion, etc.

# Affix types

- Infix: An infix is an affix that is inserted within a root or stem. It is added in the base form of a word to create a new word or intensify meaning. E.g.
- In Philippines (Tagalog)
  - *buli* root, 'buy'
  - *-um-* infix, 'agentive'
  - *Bumili* 'bought'
- In Indonesian:
  - *Cerlang* 'luminous', *cemerlang* 'brilliant'

# Affix types

- Circumfixes: Consists of two parts- a prefix and a suffix that together create a new word. The prefix and suffix are not considered as separate. E.g. In Dutch *berg* 'mountain' □ *ge-berg-te* 'mountain chain'.
- Simulfix: A simulfix is a change or replacement of vowels or consonants (usually vowels) which changes the meaning of a word: E.g. *eat* □ *ate*, *tooth* □ *teeth* etc.

# Root, Stem, Base

- Root: A root is the irreducible core of a word, with absolutely nothing else attached to it. E.g. *jump- jumps, jumping, jumped*. Here, *jump* is the root.
- Stem: the stem is that part of a word that exists before the addition of any inflectional morpheme. E.g. *worker* □ *workers*, *shift* □ *shifted*

# Root, Stem, Base

- Base: Base is any unit of a word where any kind of affixes can be added. It could be both inflectional or derivational. E.g. *boy* □ *boys*, *boy* □ *boyish*, *boy* □ *boyhood*
- The bottom-line: All roots are bases, bases are called stem in context of inflectional morphology

# Inflectional & Derivational

- Inflectional morpheme: Inflectional word formation is word formation that expresses grammatical distinctions. They perform certain grammatical functions like:
  - number (singular vs plural), E.g. cat-cats, child-children etc.
  - tense (present vs past) E.g. walk-walks-walking, walked
  - person (first, second, third) E.g. 3<sup>rd</sup> PSG

# Inflectional - - □

- Case (subject, object, possessive) E.g. mother's child, mothers' children etc.
- It doesn't result in the creation of new lexeme or words.
- It changes the grammatical form of lexemes to fit into different grammatical context.
- Inflectional is more relevant to syntax
- Inflectional morphemes don't change meaning and word class.

# Inflectional - - □

- Inflectional morphemes are very productive in nature.
- Inflectional morphemes are limited in number.
- Inflectional morphemes usually block further affixation of a suffix. Eg *agree + ed* \*[-s]

# Derivational Morphemes

- In derivation a new word is formed by adding an affix to the root or stem
- Derivational morphemes form new words either:
  - a) by changing the meaning of the base to which they are attached. E.g. kind □ unkind (adjectives), obey □ disobey (verbs)
  - b) by changing the word-class that a base belongs to. E.g. kind □ kindly, simple → simply

# Derivation of Nouns

- Verb □ Noun

    speak □ speaker

    swim □ swimming

    read □ reader/ reading

- Adjective □ Noun

    kind □ kindness

    good □ goodness

    black □ blackness

- Noun □ Noun

    mother □ motherhood

    sense □ non-sense

# Derivation of Nouns

- Apart from these process we can also add suffixes such as *-hood (status)*, *-ship (state or condition)*, *-ness (quality, state or condition)*, *-ity (state or condition)*, *-ment (result or product of doing the action)*, *-al (act of smthg)*, *-er (agentive)*, in the words like *brotherhood*, *friendship*, *wildness*, *sincerity*, *government*, *refusal*, *walker* etc.

# Derivation of Adjective

- Noun → Adjective  
master → masterly  
brother → brotherly
- Verb → adjective  
read → readable  
love → loveable
- Adjective to adjective  
common → uncommon  
possible → impossible

# Derivation of Adjective

- We also have some suffixes which are used to form adjective such as *-less (without), -ful (having), -ic (pertaining to), -al (pertaining to or of the kind)* in the words like, *powerless, colorless, powerful, democratic, medicinal, etc.*
- There are also some prefixes which are used to derive adjective: *-in (inaccuracy), -im (improper) etc.*

# Derivation of Verbs

- Noun □ Verb  
analysis □ analyze  
slave □ enslave
- Adjective □ verb  
rich □ enrich  
legal □ legalize
- Verb □ verb  
continue □ discontinue  
pack □ unpack



# Derivation of Verbs

- Prefixes used for deriving verbs
    - re (revisit), en (encage)
  - Suffixes used for deriving verbs
    - ize (nationalize, sympathize),
    - fy (codify, modify)
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# Word Formation Processes

- Conversion: In some languages it is possible to form new lexeme merely by shifting the word category without adding any affixes. In English: *table* □ *to table*

*chair* □ *to chair*

*to click* □ *a click*

In Dutch: *hamer* (*hammer*) □ *hamer-en* (*to hammer*)

*winkel* (*shop*) □ *winkel-en* (*to shop*)

# Word Formation Processes

- **Coinage:** In this process, a complete new word is added. The root is normally the new word. Later on other affixation can be added. E.g. *xerox*, *sim*, *googling*, *yahoo*, *smsing*
- Sometimes, these lexicons also get the status of common noun like *surf* (for all detergent), *colgate* (for all toothpaste)
- Googling (searching), seascape (like landscape, cheeseburger (like hamburger)
- In Assamese: সম্ভাৱান্তিক, পৰিবেশ্য কলা, সমসাজ, ভ্ৰাম্যভাষ, জালপঞ্জী ইত্যাদি।

# Word Formation Processes

- Back Formation: Here, the direction of derivation is inverted.
- The less complex word is derived from the more complex word by omitting something.

E.g. *to sculpt* □ *sculptor*

*babysit* □ *babysitter*

*terminate* □ *terminator*

দা □ দাদা, বা □ বাইদেউ

# Word Formation Processes

- Blending: This is the combination of the first or complete part of one word and second part of another.
- Examples:
  - stagflation: stagnation+ inflation
  - fantabulous: fantastic + fabulous
  - happenstance: happening + instance
  - splog: spam + blog
  - blodgebrity: blog + celebrity
  - youngistan: young + hindustan

# Word Formation Processes

- Acronym and Initialism: When the first letters of words are taken to create a new word alike, it is called acronym. When it is not like a word, it is known as abbreviation or initialism. E.g. *AASU, NASA, AIDS*
- Sometimes more than one letter is taken to make acronym. E.g. RADAR (Radio detecting and ranging), MODEM (Modulator and demodulator) etc.



# Word Formation Processes

- Reverse Acronym: the creator starts with as words, then put different words to represent all the letters. E.g.
- HOPE– Health Opportunity for People Everywhere
- PUSH– People United to Serve Humanity

# Word Formation Processes

- Clipping: It is a means of creating new words by shortening already existing words- usually a single syllable. This is usually done to save time and space. E.g.
- Quiz □ inquisitive
- prof □ professor
- Bus □ omnibus
- Flu □ influenza
- Info □ information

# Word Formation Processes

- Eponym: These are new words based on proper nouns/ names. They all involve some degree of change in the meaning of the word.
- E.g. *boycott, nicotine, sandwich, hamburger, Jean, atlas, nemesis (greek god), platonic, panic (greek god), assassin etc.*
- ধোদৰ আলি, কলিয়া ভোমোৰা ইত্যাদি ।

# Word Formation Processes

- Reduplication: In this process all or part of the base is repeated as prefix or suffix.
- Examples: *willy-nilly, hodge-podge, hanky-panky, so-so etc.*
- Full reduplication: good-good, small-small, big-big, লাহে-লাহে, ধীর্বে-ধীর্বে
- Partial reduplication: zig-zag, মাছ-তাছ, যিহকে-তিহকে

# Word Formation Processes

- Compounding: When two words or at least two root morphemes are joined together, the derived word results a compounding.
- Example: *tea + pot* □ *teapot*, *week + end* □ *weekend*, *greenhouse*, *windmill*, *kindhearted*
- Types: Right-headed: greenhouse is a kind of house, skyblue is a kind of blue.
- French and Vietnamese have left headed compounding.

# Word Formation Processes

- In Synthetic Compound, the head lexeme is derived from a verb such as *hand-washing*, *user-driven*, *home-made* etc.
- In Attributive compounds, the non-head works as a modifier like *snail-mail*, *windmill*.
- In Endocentric the referent of the compound is always same as the referent of its head.  
Windmill, blackbird
- In Exocentric the derived word has an external reference. Pickpocket.

# Portmanteau / Zero / Null

- Portmanteau: When a single morpheme represents simultaneously two or more grammatical functions is called portmanteau morpheme. Examples:
- In French [-s] in the word *prends* (to take) represents first or second person, singular and present tense
- In English [-s] is added to denote singular, present, 3<sup>rd</sup> P, and also plural.
- Hindi 'hu' –be verb, 1PS and Present.

# Portmanteau / Zero / Null

- Zero/ Null: A zero morpheme doesn't have explicit phonetic form.
- In English, the plural morpheme of the words *two sheep, two furniture, two equipment* have no overt morpheme.
- Null morpheme is also present in English verb. Eg. Run □ run □ run, cut □ cut □ cut

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- END OF THEORETICAL PART. LETS HAVE SOME ASSAMESE EXAMPLES

# Assamese Inflectional

- Inflectional morphemes are usually known as *Bivakti* (বিভক্তি) in Assamese.
- Nominal inflection: ৰাম+এ= ৰামে, মানুহজন+এ=মানুহজনে
- As instrumental case: কুঠাৰেৰে, দাৰে
- Other inflectionals: বেৰত, হাতত, মানুহৰ
- Verbal inflection: *kha, kha-le, kha-isil, kha-ise, kha-bo, kha-iso, kha-ba*

# Assamese Derivational

- Assamese has good number of derivational morphemes.
- Suffixes added to verbs (Krit Pratyay)

*ak- as in likh + ak = likhak*

*gan+ ak = ganak*

*an – as in ga + an = gayan*

*ana- as in baj+ ana = bajana*

*khund + ana = khundan*

*ani- as in nas + ani = nasani*

*randh+ ani = randhani*

# Assamese Derivational

- *Ania* – as in *bhag* + *ania* = *bhagania*  
*bila* + *ania* = *bilania*  
*aniar* as in *dekh* + *aniar* = *dekhaniar*
- Suffixes added to Nouns and Adjectives (tadhiti Pratyay)  
*kheti* + *ak* = *khetiak*  
*xahai* + *ak* = *xahayak*  
*ban* + *ani* = *banani*  
*dhan* + *ani* = *dhanani*

# Assamese Derivational

- Prefixal derivational (Upaxarga)
- *a-* as in *abisar, ajgyan, aparipati*
- *Aa* – as in *aamaran, aamitru*
- *Ao*– as in *aopurani, aohat*
- *Ana-* as in *anatar, anabristi,*
- *Ni-* as in *nirax, nilaz, nimat*
- *Xu*– as in *xunam, xukhabar*
- *Ku-* as in *kukhyat, kusakra etc.*