

4 Study Guide

Morphology: What's in a Word?

Terminology

You should be able to simply define or explain the following terms and concepts.

Accusative	Isolating/analytic
Affix	Lexeme
Agglutinating	Lexicalization
Allomorph	Lexically conditioned allomorphy
Case	Morpheme
Circumfix	Morphology
Compounds	Nominative
Degree of fusion	Phonologically conditioned allomorphy
Degree of synthesis	Polysynthetic
Derivational	Prefix
Free/bound	Root
Fusional	Suffix
Infix	Word
Inflectional	

Skills

On completion of this chapter, you should be able to perform the following tasks:

- Discuss how can you tell what counts as a word in a language.
- Break words in English or other languages into composite morphemes.
- Identify whether a morpheme is free/bound, its type (if an affix), and whether it is derivational or inflectional.
- Understand the difference between a highly productive and a less productive morphological process, and give examples of each.
- List allomorphs of a morpheme and their environments.
- Make simple statements about distribution of allomorphs.
- Make simple statements about the phonological processes that give rise to allomorphs.
- State the morphological type of a language.

Study Guide: Morphology

Hints for Conducting Morphological Analysis

- Isolate and compare forms that are partially similar in form and meaning.
- Basic Assumption: constancy of form means constancy of meaning.
- Look for correspondences between sound and meaning, see how they line up.

Remember

- If a single phonetic form has two distinct meanings, it must be analyzed as two morphemes.
Example: English *-er* in *rider* versus *colder*.
- If one meaning is associated with different phonetic forms, these different forms all represent the same morpheme, and are allomorphs.
- Different languages have different morphological categories.