

**Appreciating Linguistics: A typological approach**  
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**Lecture - 10**  
**Simple Compound and Complex Words**

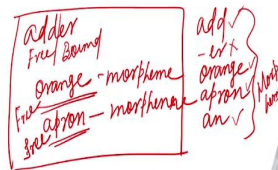
We were talking about the logical relation between a word and a morpheme.

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### Understanding Morphology

- Words: Simple and complex
- The basic part of a complex word- that is, the different building blocks that make it up- are called morphemes.
- Morphemes are the minimal units of word building in a language.
- Cannot be broken down any further into recognizable or meaningful parts.

- e.g. a nadder -> an adder ✓  
a norange -> an orange ✓  
a napron -> an apron ✓



Look at the work that has been done here. We considered words like an adder, an orange, an apron. We identified these many morphemes present here: add, er, orange, apron and an. And out of these, only -er is not a word and rest of the four are words. My question for you was to identify the logical relation between a word and a morpheme. Could you think about it a bit? How would you draw the correlation between a word and a morpheme?

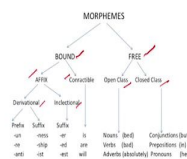
Look at add. Add is a word, it is also morpheme; orange is also a word and a morpheme; apron a word and a morpheme; an a word and a morpheme, only -er which is a bound morpheme, is a morpheme, but not a word. That means, the derivation could be or the logical relation that we can draw is any word can be a morpheme, but any morpheme cannot always be a word.

It is not always that the morphemes can be considered as words, but if you look at any simple word, it can be considered as a morpheme. So, all words are morphemes, but not all morphemes are words.

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## Understanding Morphology

- Morphemes: Free and Bound
- Free morpheme can stand alone whereas a bound morpheme is dependent.
- Classification of English morphemes:



*Who are → We're } contractible  
They have → They've } contractible*



That is the general conclusion or the general derivation that we should understand when we do the analysis of these words on the basis of the free morphemes and bound morphemes that they have. So, here is a; here is a more systematic division of English morphemes. I told you I am primarily focusing on English, but you can always refer to your own language and do a similar kind of analysis.

So, here it is written morphemes are free morphemes and bound morphemes; free morphemes cannot stand alone, where as, a bound morphemes is dependent. I have already discussed that. Look at the picture. This is the classification of English morphemes. This is bound, this is free. And a bound morpheme would have two different categories: one would be the affix, the other one would be the contractible forms.

So, both the contractible forms and the affixes are bound morphemes and the free morphemes can be classified into two types: open class words and closed class words. I did discuss a bit about open class and closed class words in my previous class. And then affixes would be of two types: derivational and inflectional.

And what are the derivational affixes? They could be either prefixes or suffixes. The prefixes are un-, re-, anti-, and the suffixes are -ness, -ship and -ist. When it is an inflectional affix, generally that is known as a suffix. So, the suffixes here are -er, -ed and -est. These are generally known as inflectional suffixes.

We were talking about derivational and inflectional. Both prefixes and suffixes can be derivational ones. Here we have a list of prefixes which are also derivational morphemes: un-, re- and anti-, and we have suffixes -ness, -ship and -ist. As far as inflectional affixes are concerned, they are generally suffixes. You do not really see prefixes, in the inflectional form; in most of the cases, they are considered to be suffixes.

So, we have -er, we have -ed and we have -est, so these are the inflectional ones. And the other form of bound morpheme is the contractible form. Contractible form would be is, are, and will. Instead of saying he is we can simply say he's with an apostrophe s. Similarly, we can write we are or we can simply write we're. You can write they have, but if you want to write it in a contracted form, then it is going to be they've. So, these 're, 've these are the contractible forms. These are also bound morphemes.

If you go to the free morpheme section, we have open class words and closed class words. In the open class words, we have nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs as I have discussed. The list is not exhaustive; the list is basically symbolic or you can consider it as a tentative thing.

So, the nouns like bed. When it is a noun like bed, you can always add new nouns to the lexicon, you can always add new verbs to the lexicon, you can always add new adverbs and adjectives to the lexicon, you can delete some of them. If you remember in a couple of classes earlier, I was talking about add, delete, or alter, or change. So, if you can add some words in the lexicon, if you can delete some words from the lexicon, if you can change the meaning; you can either narrow them or you can broaden them, then these kind of words are considered as open class words.

And as far as the closed class words are concerned, generally we have conjunctions, prepositions and pronouns. Conjunctions like and, but; all prepositions like in, over, under; and then you have pronouns like he, she, it; so, this list is limited. These are the ones which

are known as free morphemes. That is how the entire discussion of morphemes can be compiled together.

Let us discuss it again. For your kind information, I would ask a lot of questions in the exams. You will also have to do a lot of exercises which would cover a significant amount of course content from the morphology section. So please be attentive and be careful.

When it is a morpheme, we have free morpheme and bound morpheme. The free morphemes are either open class words like nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs. And it could also be closed class words like prepositions, conjunctions and pronouns.

When we go to the bound morphemes, they can either be affixes or they can be contractible forms. In the category of affixes, we will have inflectional affixes and derivational affixes. When it is inflectional, these are only suffixes. And what are the inflectional affixes here? Er, ed and est. When we are going to the derivational affixes, they can either be a prefix or they can be a suffix. So, in this case, we can have un-, re- and anti-. These are considered to be the derivational suffixes.

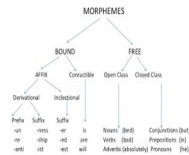
When you go to the contractible forms, we have is, are, will, have, and I have already given you some examples here. Now let us try some kind of analysis related to the derivational and inflectional; or for that matter, let us try to figure out if we have some kind of work that we can do together to identify the free and the bound morphemes.

We will begin it with a very complex word and I will come back to complexity in a while. Why I would call it a complex word? From a layperson's perspective, if there are many morphemes found in a word, you can call it complex. But then it depends on the nature of the morpheme whether you are going to call it a complex word or you are going to call it a compound word, that is a different story altogether. So, for the moment, we will work on some complex words which will have multiple morphemes; it will have prefixes, it will have suffixes also.

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## Understanding Morphology

- Morphemes: Free and Bound
- Free morpheme can stand alone whereas a bound morpheme is dependent.
- Classification of English morphemes:



Reconstruction ← (re-) Prefix  
Construct (FM)  
-ion (Suffix)  
Rationalization  
Rational -ive -ion  
Free morphemes (FM)  
S S



I am giving you a word, let us say, reconstruction. In this case, we will find out what are the morphemes that we see in the sentence. So, here is a complex word called reconstruction. We will try to break it into morphemes. Then I will give you another complex word, let us say, rationalization.

Do not be scared with the number of letters that the words have. We need complex words to analyze, so that we can actually show what is a free morpheme and what is a bound morpheme; so that, when we go to the morphological typology, you should be very clear what exactly I look forward to, from you, to understand.

So, let us try reconstruction. Try to recall what was the definition of a morpheme. Morpheme is a minimal, meaningful and distinctive unit. We have to find out what are the minimal units here. My suggestion would be there is a morpheme called re-, then we will have construct. So, one is re- and then the other one is construct, then the third one is ion. So, these are the three morphemes that I see in the first word.

Now, let us go to the second one. The second one could be rational, then it could be rationalize, then it could be ion. So, when it is a suffix, we put a hyphen before that; when it is a prefix we have put a hyphen after that.

So, in this word, you can see rationalization has three morphemes and reconstruction also has three morphemes, but here, re- is a prefix and -ion is a suffix. Why? Because the prefixes occur before the root word and the suffixes occur after the root word. Now, you tell me what is the root word in rationalization? The root word is rational. So, what will -ize be? -ize is obviously a suffix because it occurs after the root word or the main word and -ion is also a suffix. So, all these prefixes and suffixes that you encounter, these are bound morphemes. Remember they cannot be free morphemes because they are always dependent on the root word to get the complete meaning and all the main words are basically free morphemes.

These are free morphemes, so I will write it as FM and this one I will write it as FM 2. Remember if a word will have one free morpheme and many bound morphemes or suffixes and prefixes, for that matter contractible forms, would be known as complex words. We will go to the simple compound and complex difference in the next class in more detail, but as of now, just remember how to identify the free morpheme from the bound morpheme.

The bound morpheme here is re- which is a prefix, -ion which is a suffix in reconstruction and -ize which is a suffix and -ion which is another suffix in rationalizations. So, these are the bound morphemes and what are the free morphemes? Construct and rational, these are the free morphemes. Through the assignment you should encounter more such examples.

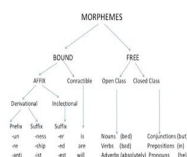
I will just quickly tell you what do we mean or what do we understand when I say simple, compound and complex words. Now remember we have to revisit the definition of words. Instead of saying it is just the combination of letters, why can't we say it is the combination of morphemes?

If the word has only one morpheme, it is a free morpheme and that is a simple word. If the word has many morphemes, one free and others are bound, it will be a complex word and when it is a compound word, there are many morphemes and all of them are free.

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## Understanding Morphology

- Morphemes: Free and Bound
- Free morpheme can stand alone whereas a bound morpheme is dependent.
- Classification of English morphemes:



*Simple* → 1 morpheme (FM)  
*Complex* → more than 1 morpheme (FM + BM)  
*Compound* → (FM + FM)  
*tree, construction, landlord*  
*Simple    Complex    Compound*



Words are of three types: simple, complex and compound. And I just said we have to deal with this now not in connection with the letters, but in connection with the morphemes. So, if it is a simple word, it will have 1 morpheme and that will be a free morpheme FM. Remember the notation. And when it is a complex word, it will have more than 1 morpheme; it could be 2 3 4 depending on the number. The formula is going to be one free morpheme plus at least one bound morpheme, the number could be more. It would mandatorily need one free morpheme and a few more or one more bound morpheme.

When it is a compound word, it will have both the free morphemes. This is also more than 1 morpheme, then only you call it compound. But, this more than 1 morpheme will have at least 2 FMs. I will give you an example. So, tree. The examples that we have already discussed. Then we have construction. Then we have a word like landlord. This is a simple word, this is a complex word and this is a compound word.

In the next class we will analyze why and I hope you got the idea the way I have mentioned the rules. Basically a tree is a word which has only 1 morpheme. Since it has only one morphemes, it is a free morpheme and it is a simple word. In construction, there are two morphemes: construct plus -ion. So, construct is the root word which is a free morpheme and -ion is the bound morpheme. This will be FM plus BM, so it will be a complex word.

With compound word, land plus lord. Land is also a free morpheme. Why? It can stand alone independently. Lord can also stand alone independently. Lord also does not depend on

anything else to be considered as meaningful, completely meaningful. So, that is why both land and lord are free morphemes. Because of the two free morphemes available with this, we would call it a compound word. That is how we are going to understand morphology and its relation with the words. So simple, compound and complex, free and then the bound morpheme.

Under the category of bound morphemes, there are different things and under the category of free morphemes also there are different things, which are shown in the picture or in the diagram given here. With this, I finished the discussion on morphology and straight away I will go to morphological typology in my next lecture. See you soon.

Thank you.

Keywords: free and bound morpheme, inflectional and derivational morpheme, affix, contractible form, simple word, compound word, complex word