

What do you do when you don't find a word in the dictionary?

- (1) *unkindly*
- (2) *nonrefundable*
- (3) *denationalization*
- (4) *talking*
- (5) *overgeneralization*

Classification Of Morphemes Free and Bound Morphemes

- A morpheme that can appear as a word by itself is called **free**.
Examples: *house* (*house-s*), *walk* (*walk-ed*), *of*, *the*, *or*
- A morpheme that only appears as part of a larger word is called **bound**.
Examples: *-s* (*dog-s*), *-ly* (*quick-ly*), *-ed* (*walk-ed*)

Studying the structure of words: Morphology

- **Morphology** is the study of the structure of words.
- A word consists of one or more **morphemes**, the smallest units that bear meaning or have a grammatical function:
sing-er-s, *home-work*, *moon-light*, *un-kind-ly*, *talk-s*, *ten-th*,
flipp-ed, *de-nation-al-iz-ation*

The **order of morphemes** matters:

talk-ed ≠ **ed-talk*,
re-write ≠ **write-re*,
un-kind-ly ≠ **kind-un-ly*

Classification Of Morphemes Roots and Affixes

- The nucleus of a word that affixes attach to is called **the root**.
 - In English, roots generally are free morphemes, but this is not necessarily so (e.g., in Lithuanian: *Billas Clintonas*)
 - Some words (compounds) contain more than one root: *home-work*.
- **Affixes** are always bound morphemes:
 - (6) a. **prefixes**: *un-happy*, *re-write*, *pre-view*
 - b. **suffixes**: *writ-ing*, *quick-ly*, *neighbor-hood*
 - c. **infixes** (very rare in English): *abso-bloody-lutely*

Cranberry Morphemes

In the word *cranberry*, is *cran* an affix?

No, it is a bound root, a so-called **cranberry morpheme**.

Cranberry morphemes are morphemes that occur only as bound roots and that have no constant associated meaning.

- *cranberry, boysenberry*
- *permit, commit, submit*
- *receive, perceive, conceive*

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Allomorphs

Allomorphs – morphemes having the same function but different form. Unlike the synonyms they usually cannot be replaced one by the other.

- indefinite article: *an orange – a building*
- opposite: *un-happy – in-comprehensive – im-possible – ir-rational*

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Classification Of Morphemes Content and Function Morphemes

Morphemes (bound or free) can be either **content** or **function** morphemes.

- **Content** morphemes carry some semantic content as opposed to performing a grammatical function. For example *car, -able, -un*.
- **Function** morphemes act solely to provide grammatical information and syntactic agreement. *and, plural -s*
- Note that these are not simply different names for the **derivational/inflectional** distinction – D/I morphemes are all **bound**, while **content/function** morphemes may be **free** as well (e.g, prepositions are free function morphemes)

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Pitfalls Of Identifying Morphemes

- morphemes \neq syllables.
 - **monomorphemic**: *rigamarole, syllable, rutabaga*
 - **polymorphemic**: *cats, likes, its, cried*
- The sounds associated with a morpheme are not unique – other morphemes may share them
 - (7) a. *cats* \neq *cat's*, *likes* (*Paul likes tea.*) \neq *likes* (... and *dislikes*),
 - b. *(care)-ful* \neq *full*, *(care)-less* \neq *less*
- Don't be fooled by spelling obscuring the phonetic representations of morphemes
 - (8) a. *writ-er*, *edit-or*, *li-ar*
 - b. *ed-ible*, *wash-able*

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