

## Chapter Four: Morphology

**Morpheme** → the smallest meaningful unit of the language

### 1. CLASSIFICATION BASED ON FORM

**Free morpheme** → a single morpheme which can stand by itself

- **Lexical words** → refer to concepts like objects, actions, attributes and ideas that we think of
- **Function words** → show grammatical relations between other words of a sentence

**Bound morpheme** → a morpheme that cannot stand alone

- **Inflectional morphemes** → mark properties such as tense, number, gender, case and so forth
  - Nouns → plural morpheme *-s* and possessive morpheme *'s*
  - Verbs → past morpheme *-ed*, progressive morpheme *-ing*, past participle morpheme *-en*, and third person singular *-s*
  - Adjectives → comparative morpheme *-er* and superlative morpheme *-est*
- **Derivational morphemes** → are added to form a new word
- **Root** → a morpheme which remains when all affixes are stripped – free/bound

Add an affix to the root → **stem**: system (root) + *-atic* (affix) = systematic (stem)

- **Clitic** → a kind of contraction, e.g. *'ve*, *'m*.

### 2. CLASSIFICATION BASED ON MEANING

**Lexical free vs. Grammatical free**

Lexical free morphemes	Grammatical free morphemes
a) Their presence is directly determined by what we are talking about.	a) Their presence is obligated by the grammar of the language.
b) Concreteness	b) Abstractness
c) Infrequency	c) Frequency
d) Open-set membership	d) Closed-set membership
e) They almost always carry stress.	e) They typically lack stressed syllable.

**Lexical bound vs. Grammatical bound**

Lexical bound morphemes	Grammatical bound morphemes
a) Function change	a) No function change
b) Non-productivity	b) Productivity
c) Suffixability	c) Non-suffixability
d) Irregular meaning	d) Regular meaning

### 3. MORE ON INFLECTION

**Person** → most often subject-verb agreement / valuable in languages with free word order

**Number** → property of nouns / singular-dual-plural

**Gender** → meaning ‘kind’ or ‘sort’ / which adjectives, determiners, etc. are associated with a particular noun / masculine-feminine-neuter, e.g., *amico* (‘friend, masc.’) vs. *amiga* (‘friend, fem.’)

**Case** → a grammatical category that distinguishes the roles played by the various nouns

In the shopping center, John gave Mary the salesperson’s card number.

# the giver *John* is the subject of *gave* (the **nominative** case)

# the *card number* is the direct object (the **accusative** case)

# the recipient *Mary* is the indirect object (the **dative** case)

# *salesperson* and *card number* (the **genitive** case)

**Tense** → locates an event or state relative to the moment of speaking / past-present-future

**Aspect** → encodes a different kind of temporal characteristic, such as whether an action is (or was) completed, ongoing, repeated (iterative), or habitual:

(1) John was painting the kitchen → imperfective

(2) John painted the kitchen → perfective

**Mood** → expresses **modality** – aspects of meaning having to do with possibilities, a speaker’s belief, opinion, or attitude about the content of an utterance / words like *can*, *must*, or *should*

# the **indicative**, used for making declarative assertions,

# the **interrogative**, used for asking questions,

# the **imperative**, used for giving commands,

# the **subjunctive**, used to express desire or hope,

# the **conditional**, used to express what one would or should do,

# the **evidentiality**, used to indicate a degree of certainty or doubt about a proposition / *venire* ‘to come’

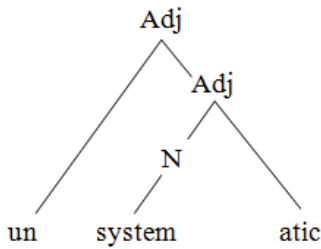
Spero	che	<i>venga</i>	presto	domani
hope	that	come.3SG.PRES.SUBJUNCT	early	tomorrow

I hope that he/she comes early tomorrow.

<i>Vieni</i>	a	casa	presto
come.2SG.IMPER	to	home	soon

Come home soon.

#### 4. HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE OF WORDS

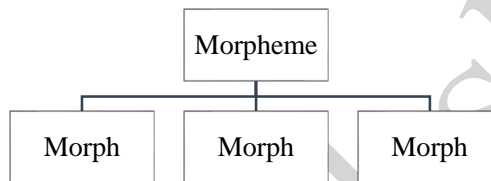


#### 5. MORPHEME, MORPH, ALLOMORPHS

# **Morpheme** → a mental representations

# **Morph** → when morphemes are pronounced

# **Allomorphs** → all versions of one morpheme



#### 6. EXTRA POINTS

# **affix**

- **Infixes** → morphemes that are inserted into other morphemes:

*Adjective*

fikas ‘strong’

*Verb*

fumikas ‘to be strong’

- **Circumfixes** → morphemes that are attached to a base morpheme both initially and finally;

*discontinuous morphemes:*

*Affirmative*

Palli ‘it is hot’

*Negative*

ik- + pall + -o ‘it isn’t hot’

# **monomorphemic word** consists of a single free morpheme such as *pill*

# teachers = teach + -er (derivational) + -s (inflectional)

# **cranberry morpheme** → compounds whose first element is clearly a bound morpheme which occurs nowhere outside these compounds

# **suppletive form** → an inflected morpheme in which the regular rules do not apply

# **lexical gap**

Ali Derakhshesh