

CHAPTER 6: MORPHOLOGY



■ **Morphology:**

(The study of all those basic “elements” used in language)

Study of the structure of words in a language.

■ **Morpheme:**

- the minimal information carrying unit (or, in other words)
- The smallest meaningful part of a word (or, in other words)
- Morpheme is the minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function.

■ **Example:** “Tourists”

(contains 3 morphemes. Tour + ist +s)



- **Free and Bound Morphemes:**

- Free Morphemes: can stand by themselves as single words.

- **Examples:** Tour, open , stay ...

- Bound Morphemes: cannot normally stand alone - they are typically attached to another form.

- **Examples:** Affixes (prefixes, suffixes, and affixes) are bound morphemes. Ex. re- , -ist , -ed , -s ...

- When free morphemes are used with bound morphemes , the basic word – form involved is technically known as the ” stem ”

- **Example:** *undressed*

- un=> Prefix (bound)

- dress => stem (free)

- ed=> suffix (bound)



- Free morphemes fall into two categories:
- **Lexical morphemes**: ordinary nouns adjectives and verbs which we think of the words which carry the content of messages we convey. They are called open class of words, since we can add new lexical morphemes to the language easily.
 - Examples:
- **Functional morphemes**: the functional words in the language such as conjunctions, prepositions, articles and pronouns. They are called closed class of words, since we almost never add new functional morphemes to the language.
 - Examples:



- Bound Morphemes can also be divided into two types:
- **Derivational morphemes**; are used to make new words in the language and are often used to make words of a different grammatical category from the stem .
 - **Example:**
 - good => adjective good + ness => noun
 - Care => noun care + less => adjective
- **Inflectional morphemes**: are not used to produce new words in the English language, but rather to indicate aspects of the grammatical function of a word. Plural markers, possessive markers, tense markers, comparative and superlative markers are inflectional morphemes.
 - **Example:**
 - Tim's two sisters : Tim's 's => inflectional , sisters s => inflectional



- Derivational vs Inflectional
- An inflectional morpheme never changes the grammatical category of a word.
 - **Example:** old => adj. , Older => adj. (both are adjectives)
- A derivational morpheme can change the grammatical category of a word.
 - **Example:**
 - teach => verb teacher => noun
- Some morphemes look the same but this does not mean that they do the same kind of word:
 - **Example:**
 - teacher**r** => suffix + derivational
 - Younger**r** => suffix + inflectional

