Morphology and Syntax

Engl 423

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What do we mean by GRAMMAR?

The term GRAMMAR refers to the system and patterns of the language as well as their description.

In other words, the word GRAMMAR tells us about:
- The word ordering and sentence structure → syntax
- The structure of meaningful units of a word → morphology
- And how sounds are produced and formed → phonology

So, GRAMMAR = structure
Levels of Grammar

Designed by Dr. Kechagias
What do we mean by morphology?

The study of the internal structure of words.

E.G.

Writeable, Comfortable, Unimportant

We name the smallest meaningful unit in the word “morpheme”
How can we determine the morphemes?

1- A word or a part of a word that has a meaning
   e.g. unimportant = not important
   So, un = not

2- It cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts without changing other morphemes’ meaning or leaving other meaningless parts.
   e.g. impossible = not possible
   So, im = not
   Possible = capable of happening ➔ cannot be divided into poss and ible because poss has NO meaning.

3- It can be found in different words with similar meanings
   e.g. unimportant, uncomfortable, unreasonable ➔ un = not
e. g. darken, cheapen, brighten, soften ➔ en = make
Kinds of Morphemes

Morphemes

Free
- Can be alone with a meaning
  - Write, comfort

Bound
- Cannot be alone
  - Un, im, en
Another classifications of morphemes

- Most of the bases are free morphemes but some are bound, such as –sent in consent, dissent, and assent.
- The prefixes in English are about 75 prefix, and their meanings usually are similar to those of prepositions and adverbials.
- One word might have up to three or four suffixes, whereas prefixes are commonly single except the prefix un.
What is the difference between the inflectional and derivational suffixes?

1- Inflectional suffixes do not change the parts of speech.
   e.g. walk – walks ➔ both are verbs./ girl – girls ➔ both are nouns/ big – bigger ➔ both are adjectives.

2- Inflectional suffixes come last in a word.
   e.g. talked, writing, smaller

3- Inflectional suffixes go with any given part of speech.
   e.g. changed (v), boys (n), happiest (adj)

4- We do not have more than one inflectional suffix in a word, except for {s pl ps}.
   e.g. writes, cat’s, smarter
## Inflectional suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inflectional suffix</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- {-S pl}</td>
<td>Dogs, bushes</td>
<td>Noun plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- {-S sg ps}</td>
<td>Boy’s</td>
<td>Noun singular possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- {-S pl ps}</td>
<td>Boys’, men’s</td>
<td>Noun plural possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- {-S 3d}</td>
<td>Runs, catches</td>
<td>Present third-person singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- {-ING vb}</td>
<td>Discussing</td>
<td>Present participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- {-D pt}</td>
<td>Chewed</td>
<td>Past tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- {-D pp}</td>
<td>Chewed, eaten</td>
<td>Past participle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- {-ER cp}</td>
<td>Bolder, sooner, nearer</td>
<td>Comparative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- {-EST sp}</td>
<td>Boldest, soonest, nearest</td>
<td>Superlative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We call the words to which these suffixes are attached *stems*. The stem includes the base and all the derivational affixes.
Derivational suffixes

The derivational suffixes have bigger number in English than the inflectional suffixes. They have some noticeable characteristics:

1- They are arbitrary, which means there is no rule to govern the way we combine the word with the suffix.

   e.g. To change the two verbs (achieve and fail) into nouns, we add *ment* to the first (achievement) and *ure* to the second (failure)

2- Sometimes, the derivational suffixes change the part of the speech of the words they are combined to.

   e.g. act (n) → active (adj) → activate (v).

3- The derivational suffixes do not necessarily close off the word, i.e. we can add more than one derivational suffix and/or an inflectional suffix.

   e.g. norm → normal → normalize → normalizer → normalizers
Suffixal homophones

N
• Attached to verbs to form nouns

Cp
• Used to compare between two things, people, or places

{−ER}

Rp
• Used to convey the meaning of repetition
Suffixal homophones

**Nm**
- It can be found in meetings, weddings, readings, writings.

**Vb**
- Used to express the present participle

**Aj**
- Used to convey adjectives, such as an interesting book

{ING}
SUFFIXAL HOMOPHONES

- **Pp**
  - Used to express past participle

- **Aj**
  - Used to convey adjectives
Immediate constituents

- A word of one morpheme, like *sleep*, has only one unitary part.

- A word with two morphemes, like *sleepless*, has two unitary parts and is presented like:

  sleep less

- Words with three or four morphemes, would not have three or four unitary parts, instead, it will have two parts divided into smaller parts. For example the word *gentlemanly*
For example the word *gentlemanly*

- Immediate constituents

- For example the word *gentlemanly*

  - For example the word *gentlemanly*

  - Gentleman
    - Ly
    - OR
    - Gentle
      - Manly

  - WHY?! Because the meaning of *gentle* and *manly* is not close to the meaning of *gentlemanly*, whereas the meaning of *gentleman* and the suffix *ly* is closer to the whole meaning of the word *gentlemanly*.

  - As a result, the division will be like:

    - Gentle
      - Man
      - Ly
Immediate constituents

Another example: *ungentlemanly*

![Diagram](image)

**WHY?!** Because the word *ungentleman* has no meaning in English, whereas *un* and *gentlemanly* both have meanings which are close to the meaning of the whole word.

As a result, the division will be like:

![Diagram](image)
How to do a word diagram

1. If a word ends in an inflectional suffix, the first cut is between this suffix and the rest of the words. So:

```
  pre  test  ed  inflectional suffix
```

2. One of the immediate constituents (IC) should be, if possible, a free form.

```
en  large  ment
FREE FORM
  in  support  able
FREE FORM
```

3. The meaning of the ICs should be related to the meaning of the word.

```
re  start  NOT
rest  art
```
This is all for today

Your homework
Exercise 8-6 p. 90
Exercise 8-8 p.93
Exercise 8-11 p.96

SEE YOU NEXT WEEK 😊