

Chapter 2: Morphology

2.1 Directions for Solving Problems

Just as in phonology we are interested in the variant forms of phonemes (the *allophones*) and the distribution of those variants in different environments, in morphology we are interested in the variant forms of morphemes (the *allomorphs*) and the distribution of those variants in different environments. Those environments might be phonological or morphological; in other words, they might be determined by neighboring sounds (regardless of the morphemes those sounds are in) or by neighboring morphemes. Your task in most of these exercises is to identify the morphemes, their allomorphs, and the distribution of those allomorphs. You may assume that language data is provided in phonemic notation.

In terms of notation, morphemes are presented in curly braces. They may be written in phonemic form (with or without slashes) or orthographic form. For example, { *wide* } { wajd } { /wajd/ } are all acceptable representations of the same English morpheme. Allomorphs are usually written phonemically, but may be written orthographically if confusion will not result. Thus we can say that { *wide* } has two allomorphs, /wajd/ (as in *wide*, *widen*) and /wid/ (as in *width*).

2.1.1 How to do Morphological Analysis

Separate (or *segment*) the words into meaningful units. Look for complementary distribution that allows you to assign different units to a single morpheme. For example, /tʃajld/ occurs in the word *child* and /tʃɪld-/ occurs in the word *children*. We can identify these two forms as allomorphs of a single morpheme { *child* }, the latter occurring before /rɛn/. In turn, /rɛn/ can be identified as an allomorph of { plural -s } that occurs after the root { *child* }.

Sometimes our morphological analysis involved identifying the *morphological classes* into which a set of words can be divided. The members of a morphological class all have a particular morphological behavior in common. For example, we might place in one morphological class all English nouns that take the plural allomorph /-s/, and place in a second morphological class all English nouns that take the plural allomorph /-z/. The nouns *book*, *hat*, *polyp* would belong to the first class, and the nouns *bug*, *braid*, *crab* to the second. As a second example, we might try to identify the morphological classes of English verbs according to their behavior when inflected for the past tense. We might put in the first class all those verbs that have no distinct allomorph when inflecting for the past tense, and in the second class those that have a distinct allomorph involving a changed vowel. In the first class we would place *talk* (cf. *talked*), *live* (cf. *lived*), and *chew* (cf. *chewed*). We could call this class the *regular verbs*. In the second class we would place *sing* (cf. *sang*), *dive* (cf. *dove*), and *stick* (cf. *stuck*).

As the two examples above show, we can identify morphological classes of a set of words or morphemes by two different kinds of morphological behavior. One is the alternation patterns found in the allomorphs of the words or morphemes themselves (as in the English

verbs and their past tense forms). The second is according to which allomorphs of other morphemes attach to them (as in the English nouns and their plural forms).

2.1.2 Example: English Nominal Derivatives in *-th*

There is a set of adjectives in English to which the suffix [θ] (spelled *th*) can be added, deriving a noun meaning ‘state of (adj.)’. The same nominalizing suffix can also be added to some verbs. For example:

<u>Adjective/Verb</u>		<u>Derived Noun</u>	
1.	<i>broad</i> /bɹɑd/	<i>breadth</i> /bɹædθ/	
2.	<i>dear</i> /diɑ/	<i>dearth</i> /dɑθ/	
3.	<i>deep</i> /di:p/	<i>depth</i> /dɛpθ/	
4.	<i>gird</i> (verb) /gɹɪd/	<i>girth</i> /gɹθ/	
5.	<i>high</i> /haj/	<i>height</i> /hajtθ/ ¹	
6.	<i>long</i> /lɔŋ/	<i>length</i> /lɛŋθ/	
7.	<i>true</i> /tɹu/	<i>truth</i> /tɹuθ/	
8.	<i>steal</i> (verb) /stil/	<i>stealth</i> /stɛlθ/	
9.	<i>warm</i> /wɔɹm/	<i>warmth</i> /wɔɹmθ/	
10.	<i>wide</i> /wajd/	<i>width</i> /widθ/	

1. Perform a morphological analysis of this data: identify all of the morphemes, and describe the shape and distribution of their allomorphs.

Solution 1: The noun-deriving suffix { *-th* } has the single allomorph /θ/, which occurs unconditionally. Most of the adjective and verb roots have different allomorphs that occur before { *-th* }.

Solution 2: The noun-deriving suffix { *-th* } has two allomorphs: /tθ/ occurs after { *high* }, and /θ/ occurs elsewhere. Most of the adjective and verb roots have different allomorphs that occur before { *-th* }.

The allomorphs of the roots are listed below. Allomorphs of { *high* } will be described differently depending on whether we apply solution 1 or solution 2.

<u>Morpheme</u>	<u>Allomorph In Isolation</u>	<u>Allomorph Before { <i>-th</i> }</u>
1. { <i>broad</i> }	/bɹɑd/	/bɹæd-/
2. { <i>dear</i> }	/diɑ/	/dɑ-/
3. { <i>deep</i> }	/di:p/	/dɛp-/
4. { <i>gird</i> }	/gɹɪd/	/gɹ-/
5. { <i>high</i> }	/haj/	(1) /hajt-/ (2) /haj-/

¹ Some speakers use the form /hajt/.

6. { <i>long</i> }	/lɔŋ/	/lɛŋ-/
7. { <i>true</i> }	/tɹu/	/tɹu-/
8. { <i>steal</i> }	/stɪl/	/stɛl-/
9. { <i>warm</i> }	/wɔɹm/	/wɔɹm-/
10. { <i>wide</i> }	/wajd/	/wɪd-/

2.2 Morphology Exercises

Terminology

When doing the exercises in this section, it will be helpful to have a basic understanding of some of the more common terms referring to various grammatical categories. Look up and briefly define the following terms. You may use any reference that is available, but be sure you are providing a definition appropriate to the field of linguistics.

infinitive	_____

imperative	_____

causative	_____

hortative	_____

transitive	_____

intransitive	_____

gerund	_____

2.2.1 Indonesian Numeral Classifiers

2.2.2 Ainu Causative Verb Formation

1. Where is Ainu spoken, and to what language family does it belong?

The following data are from the Shizunai dialect of Ainu. Analyze the morphology of

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SEATTLE

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