THE PRINCIPLES OF THE STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF WORDS IN MODERN ENGLISH

Sobirov Ravshanbek Xasanovich
Alfraganus University

Annotation: *The structural analysis of words in Modern English focuses on understanding the internal composition of words, with an emphasis on how smaller linguistic units (morphemes) combine to form larger units (words). This process is a cornerstone of linguistic analysis and allows us to explore both the structure and meaning of words. In English, word structure can be complex, incorporating multiple morphemes through processes such as derivation, inflection, and compounding. This article discusses the key principles of structural analysis in English, provides a literature review on the topic, and examines its application to modern linguistic theory.*

Keywords: *Morpheme, Free Morphemes, Bound Morphemes, Derivation, Inflection, Compounding, Conversion, Allomorph, Phonology, Syntax.*

Annotatsiya. *Zamonaviy ingliz tilidagi so'zlarning strukturaviy tahlili so'zlarning ichki tarkibini tushunishga qaratilgan bo'lib, kichikroq lingvistik birliklar (morfemalar) qanday qilib kattaroq birliklarni (so'zlarni) hosil qilishiga urg'u beradi. Bu jarayon lingvistik tahlilning asosi bo'lib, so'zlarning tuzilishini ham, ma'nosini ham o'rganish imkonini beradi. Ingliz tilida so'z tuzilishi murakkab bo'lishi mumkin, ular hosila, fleksiya va birikma kabi jarayonlar orqali bir nechta morfemalarni o'z ichiga oladi. Ushbu maqolada ingliz tilidagi strukturaviy tahlilning asosiy tamoyillari muhokama qilinadi, mavzu bo'yicha adabiyotlar ko'rib chiqiladi va uning zamonaviy tilshunoslik nazariyasiga qo'llanilishi ko'rib chiqiladi.*

Kalit so'zlar: *Morfema, erkin morfemalar, bog'langan morfemalar, hosila, fleksiya, birikma, konversiya, allomorf, fonologiya, sintaksis.*

There are two levels of approach to the study of word- structure: the level of morphemic analysis and the level of derivational or word-formation analysis.

Word is the principal and basic unit of the language system, the largest on the morphologic and the smallest on the syntactic plane of linguistic analysis.

It has been universally acknowledged that a great many words have a composite nature and are made up of morphemes, the basic units on the morphemic level, which are defined as the smallest indivisible two-facet language units.

The term *morpheme* is derived from Greek *morphe* "form"+ **-eme**. The Greek suffix *-eme* has been adopted by linguistic to denote the smallest unit or the minimum *distinctive feature*[1].

---

[1] Arnold I. V. The English Word. M.,"Высшаяшкола"., 1986, p.77

The morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit of the language. Morphemes occur in speech only as constituent parts of words, not independently, although a word may consist of a single morpheme. Even a cursory examination of the morphemic structure of English words reveals that they are composed of morphemes of different types: root-morphemes and affixational morphemes. Words that consist of a root and an affix are called derived words or derivatives and are produced by the process of word building known as affixation (or derivation).

The root-morpheme is the lexical nucleus of the word; it has a very general and abstract lexical meaning common to a set of semantically related words constituting one word-cluster, e.g. *(to) teach, teacher, teaching.* Besides the lexical meaning root-morphemes possess all other types of meaning proper to morphemes except the part-of-speech meaning which is not found in roots.

Non-root morphemes include inflectional affixes or inflections and derivational affixes. Inflections carry only grammatical meaning and are thus relevant only for the formation of word-forms. Derivational affixes are relevant for building various types of words. They are lexically always dependent on the root which they modify. They possess the same types of meaning as found in roots, but unlike root-morphemes most of them have the part-of-speech meaning which makes them structurally the important part of the word as they condition the lexico-grammatical class the word belongs to. Due to this component of their meaning the derivational affixes are classified into affixes building different parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs.

Roots and derivational affixes are generally easily distinguished and the difference between them is clearly felt as, e.g., in the words *helpless, handy, blackness, Londoner, refill,* etc.: the root-morphemes *help-, hand-, black-, London- fill-*, are understood as the lexical centers of the words, and *-less, -y, -ness, -er, re-*are felt as morphemes dependent on these roots.

Distinction is also made of free and bound morphemes.Free morphemes coincide with word-forms of independently functioning words. It is obvious that free morphemes can be found only among roots, so the morpheme *boy-* in the word *boy* is a free morpheme; in the word *undesirable* there is only one free morpheme *desire-*; the word *pen-holder* has two free morphemes *pen-* and *hold-*. It follows that *bound morphemes* are those that do not coincide with separate word- forms, consequently all derivational morphemes, such as *-ness, -able, -er* are bound. Root-morphemes may be both free and bound. The morphemes *theor-* in the words *theory, theoretical,* or *horr-* in the words *horror,horrible, horrify; Angl-* in *Anglo-Saxon; Afr-* in *Afro-Asian* are all bound roots as there are no identical word-forms.

It should also be noted that morphemes may have different phonemic shapes. In the word-cluster *please, pleasing, pleasure, pleasant* the phonemic shapes of the word stand in complementary distribution or in alternation with each other. All the

representations of the given morpheme, that manifest alternation are called *allomorphs*/or morphemic variants/ of that morpheme.

The combining form *allo-* from Greek *allos* "other" is used in linguistic terminology to denote elements of a group whose members together constitute a structural unit of the language (allophones, allomorphs). Thus, for example, **-***ion/ -tion/ -sion/ -ation* are the positional variants of the same suffix, they do not differ in meaning or function but show a slight difference in sound form depending on the final phoneme of the preceding stem. They are considered as variants of one and the same morpheme and called its *allomorphs.*

Allomorph is defined as a positional variant of a morpheme occurring in a specific environment and so characterized by complementary description.

Complementary distribution is said to take place, when two linguistic variants cannot appear in the same environment.

Different morphemes are characterized by *contrastive distribution*, i.e. if they occur in the same environment they signal different meanings. The suffixes *-able* and *-ed*, for instance, are different morphemes, not allomorphs, because adjectives in *-able* mean "capable of beings".

Allomorphs will also occur among prefixes. Their form then depends on the initials of the stem with which they will assimilate. Two or more sound forms of a stem existing under conditions of complementary distribution may also be regarded as allomorphs, as, for instance, in long *a*: length *n*.

The morphological analysis of word- structure on the morphemic level aims at splitting the word into its constituent morphemes - the basic units at this level of analysis - and at determining their number and types. The four types (root words, derived words, compound, shortening) represent the main structural types of Modern English words, and conversion, derivation and composition the most productive ways of word building.

According to the number of morphemes words can be classified into *monomorphic* and *polymorphic. Monomorphic* or *root-words* consist of only one root-morpheme, e.g. *big, cat, take, speak,* etc. All polymorphic word fall into two subgroups: *derived words* and *compound words* - according to the number of root-morphemes they have. Derived words are composed of one root-morpheme and one or more derivational morphemes, e.g. *accept*able, out*do*, dis*agree*able, etc. Compound words are those which contain at least two root-morphemes, the number of derivational morphemes being insignificant. There can be both root- and derivational morphemes in compounds as in *green-grocer, time-server*, or only root-morphemes as in *cut-throat, black-shirt*, *timetable,* etc.

These structural types are not of equal importance. The clue to the correct understanding of their comparative value lies in a careful consideration of: 1) the importance of each type in the existing word stock, and 2) their frequency value in

actual speech. Frequency is by far the most important factor. Thus it is the root-words that constitute the foundation and the backbone of the vocabulary and that are of paramount importance in speech. It should also be mentioned that root words are characterized by a high degree of collocability and a complex variety of meanings in contrast with words of other structural types whose semantic structures are much poorer. Root- words also serve as parent forms for all types of derived and compound words.

In most cases the morphemic structure of words is transparent enough and individual morphemes clearly stand out within the word. The segmentation of words is generally carried out according to the method of *Immediate*and*Ultimate Constituents.* This method is based on the binary principle, i.e. each stage of the procedure involves two components the word immediately breaks into. At each stage these two components are referred to as the Immediate Constituents. Each Immediate Constituent at the next stage of analysis is in turn broken into smaller meaningful elements. The analysis is completed when we arrive at constituents incapable of further division, i.e. morphemes. These are referred to Ultimate Constituents.

A synchronic morphological analysis is most effectively accomplished by the procedure known as the analysis into Immediate Constituents. ICs are the two meaningful parts forming a large linguistic unity.

The method is based on the fact that a word characterized by morphological divisibility is involved in certain structural correlations. To sum up: as we break the word we obtain at any level only ICs one of which is the stem of the given word. All the time the analysis is based on the patterns characteristic of the English vocabulary. As a pattern showing the interdependence of all the constituents segregated at various stages, we obtain the following formula:

un+ { [(*intent-* + *-ion*) + *-al*] + *-ly*}

Breaking a word into its Immediate Constituents we observe in each cut the structural order of the constituents.

A diagram presenting the four cuts described looks as follows:

1*. un- / intentionally*

2*. un- / intentional / - ly*

3*. un- / intention / - al / - ly*

4. un- / intent / - ion / - al / - ly

A similar analysis on the word-formation level showing not only the morphemic constituents of the word but also the structural pattern on which it is built.

The analysis of word-structure at the morphemic level must proceed to the stage of Ultimate Constituents. For example, the noun friendliness is first segmented into the ICs: [frendlə-] recurring in the adjectives *friendly*-looking and friendly and [-nəs] found in a countless number of nouns, such as *unhappiness, blackness, sameness,*etc. the IC [-nəs] is at the same time an UC of the word, as it cannot be broken into any

smaller elements possessing both sound-form and meaning. Any further division of –*ness*would give individual speech-sounds which denote nothing by themselves. The IC [frendlə-] is next broken into the ICs [-lə] and [frend-] which are both UCs of the word.

Morphemic analysis under the method of Ultimate Constituents may be carried out on the basis of two principles: the so-called *root-principle* and *affix principle.*

According to the affix principle the splitting of the word into its constituent morphemes is based on the identification of the affix within a set of words, e.g. the identification of the suffix –*er* leads to the segmentation of words *singer, teacher, swimmer* into the derivational morpheme –*er* and the roots *teach- , sing-, swimm-.*

According to the root-principle, the segmentation of the word is based on the identification of the root-morpheme in a word-cluster, for example the identification of the root-morpheme *agree-* in the words *agreeable, agreement, disagree.*As a rule, the application of these principles is sufficient for the morphemic segmentation of words.

However, the morphemic structure of words in a number of cases defies such analysis, as it is not always as transparent and simple as in the cases mentioned above. Sometimes not only the segmentation of words into morphemes, but the recognition of certain sound-clusters as morphemes become doubtful which naturally affects the classification of words. In words like *retain, detain, contain* or *receive, deceive, conceive, perceive* the sound-clusters [rə-], [də-] seem to be singled quite easily, on the other hand, they undoubtedly have nothing in common with the phonetically identical prefixes *re-, de-*as found in words *re-write, re-organize, de-organize, de-code.* Moreover, neither the sound-cluster [rə-] or [də-], nor the [-teən] or [-sə:v] possess any lexical or functional meaning of their own. Yet, these sound-clusters are felt as having a certain meaning because [rə-] distinguishes *retain* from *detain* and [-teən] distinguishes *retain* from *receive.*It follows that all these sound-clusters have a differential and a certain distributional meaning as their order arrangement point to the affixed status of *re-, de-, con-, per-* and makes one understand –*tain* and –*ceive* as roots. The differential and distributional meanings seem to give sufficient ground to recognize these sound-clusters as morphemes, but as they lack lexical meaning of their own, they are set apart from all other types of morphemes and are known in linguistic literature as pseudo- morphemes. Pseudo-morphemes of the same kind are also encountered in words like *rusty-fusty*.

Thus, we see that the morphological structures of English words represent a complex system of interrelated and distinguishable patterns which are the result of a dynamic process of development.

REFERENCES:

1. Aronoff, M., & Fudeman, K. (2011). *What is Morphology?* Wiley-Blackwell.

2. Spencer, A. (1991). *Morphological Theory*. Blackwell.

3. Matthews, P. H. (2014). *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

4. Booij, G. (2012). *The Grammar of Words: An Introduction to Linguistic Morphology* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

5. Katamba, F. (1993). *Morphology*. Macmillan.