Morphology

Yule (pp. 72-79), FRH (pp. 33-43)

- Our lexicon or our mental dictionary includes all the information about all the words we know. We know the parts of speech, the pronunciation, the meaning, the use of words and word formation rules. We easily distinguish homophones, words that sound the same but have different meanings (meet vs meat, bare vs bear and خوار vs خار).

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What is morphology?

Morphology (the study of forms): The study of the internal structure of words and of the rules by which they are formed ⇨ Words have their rule-governed internal structures.
Every word consists of one or more **morphemes**. A morpheme is the smallest unit of meaning in the language; that is, every morpheme reveals a sound-meaning relationship and cannot be further analyzed.

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- We also distinguish words that have different sounds but the same meaning (synonyms) (attempt and try, سعی و کوشش).
- Our linguistic knowledge helps us group words in a chain of speech and understand the meaning.

- ما بہ کار می کنیم. [ما بہ اکار می کنیم.] ما بہ کارا می کنیم.

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Morphemes

Guess what the square stands for.

☐

- De☐able
- Unde☐able
- De☐ability

How many morphemes?
talk, talks, talker
– undesirability
– tourists

The decomposition of words into morphemes illustrates one of the fundamental properties of human language – **discreteness.** (FRH p. 39)
sounds ⇨ morphemes ⇨ words ⇨ phrases & sentences ⇨ texts
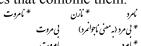
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In a chain of speech, words are not separated from each other as we would see them on a printed page. It is only our knowledge of language that helps us separate combinations of sounds into meaningful units. What would seem a word in one language may be expressed in a sentence in another. Consider Turkish /gedæʤaɣɪdɪm/, meaning "I was supposed to go, but I didn't."
It is better to study units of meaning and basic forms (morphology).

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Free and Bound Morphemes

We know the morphemes of our language and the rules that combine them.

- نامرد   * نازن   * نامروت
- * بی مرد (به معنی ناجوانمرد)   بی مروت
- * نامرو   بامروت

- We know whether the morphemes can stand by themselves as single words or not.
– undesirable   repeat
– rewritable   deceive   Bound and free stems

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