BASIC COMMUNICATION SKILLS

For

Students of Science and Humanities

Field of experience   Field of experience

SENDER | ENCODER → SIGNAL → DECODER | RECEIVER

NOISE

FEEDBACK
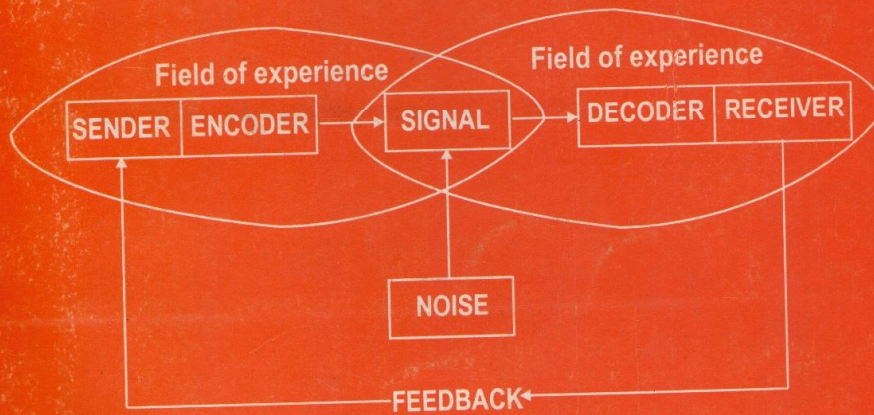
Schramm's model of communication

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Chapter One

WORD STRUCTURE IN ENGLISH
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INTRODUCTION

Of all the creatures in the entire creation, man is the most superior and unique. It could be said that the uniqueness of man is premised on his wisdom. But this is not so because some animals or insects have been found to be wiser – a case in point is the ant. Animals share different biological functions such as movement, respiration, nutrition, reproduction, growth, death, etc. with man. And they even excel in these functions than man. What then makes man unique? What is the most significant part of your being which makes you different from animals? It is the faculty of language – chiefly used for communication.

Language is that complex human-specific system of communication. Animals too can communicate with members of their species, but they do not have language. Their systems of communication are fixed and rigid. For instance, an ape gibbers, an ass brays, a bee hums, a bird chirps/sings, a cat purrs/meows, a dog barks, a donkey brays, an elephant trumpets, a frog croaks, a goat bleats, a horse neighs, a hyena screams, a lion roars, a mouse squeaks, an owl hoots and we can go on and on. But a human being talks, and he can even imitate all other creatures by braying, humming, singing, croaking, barking, grunting, etc. A parrot or a mynah may 'talk' in a fashion, but it is not possible to discuss a subject with a talking bird. Man is thus the only creature that uses language intentionally and habitually. This is why it has been an object of fascination and subject of serious enquiry for more than two hundred years (Crystal, 1997:400).

Language has four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The degree of one's proficiency in these skills determines one's achievement in education. Language is shared and structured, it is meaningful and conventional, it is dynamic and systematic, it is complex and creative; and indeed languages are unique and similar. As a result of these characteristics, language is studied from various levels. Levels of language description are phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (Tomori, 1977:21; Adedimeji and Alabi, 2003:29). And as 'the word' is central to the study of language, at almost all levels, this chapter discusses word structure. It describes the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships in language, explains morphemes and their types with appropriate examples of how they function in words and it highlights aspects of meanings in word structure.

PARADIGMATIC AND SYNTAGMATIC RELATIONS

As language is a patterned activity, there are two types of relations holding within it. These are paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships which hold on vertical and horizontal axes respectively.

A paradigm constitutes the choices available to fill a linguistic slot. Paradigmatic relations thus concern the available options or choices that might be changed without violating grammatical or lexical patterns. The paradigms of a word are thus choices that can be made in place of the word. Let us consider the following table:

S	V	O
Olu	bought	an orange
Abu	killed	a goat
That laboratory assistant	diluted	the chemicals
The principal himself	performed	the osmosis experiment

Table 1: Paradigms of elements within a sentence structure

All choices made, 'S' (subject), 'V' (verb) and 'O' (object) are paradigms. Such items are said to be on the vertical axis or axis of choice. Paradigms could be phonemic, morphemic, lexical, phrasal, clausal or sentential as long as they share same linguistic or grammatical features.

Also, there is a horizontal relationship between words and expressions. This structural bond that links morphemes, words, etc. is referred to as syntagmatic relations, which hold on the horizontal axis or axis of chain. The rule of syntagm, in "disorderliness", compels 'dis' to come before 'order', 'order' to come before 'ly' and 'ly' before 'ness' hence, dis + order + li + ness. This bond or arrangement cannot be altered without breaching the syntagmatic relations. The same chain makes "my favourite car" to exhibit syntagmatic relationship, which is lost when it is reversed as 'car favourite my' – an ungrammatical construction. So, the dimensional sequence that spoken and written bits of language follow is the syntagmatic relationship holding between/ among them. That is why syntax studies word combination processes or how linguistic units are arranged in a horizontal chain-like axis. The syntagmatic relationships holding between the following are marked thus:

Inter + continent + al (word syntagm)

The + handsome + Nigerian + footballer (phrasal syntagm)

Must + have + been + immunized (phrasal syntagm)

Some + microbes + attack + man's + immune + status (sentence syntagm)

Exercise 1
1. In your own words, define language.
2. The most important distinguishing factor between human beings and animals is language. Why do you (dis)agree?

WORDS: THE BUILDING BLOCKS

If we compare language to a magnificent building, the blocks with which it is constructed are words. In other words, 'words' are the component parts of language (Pryse, 1984:1). *The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1976) defines word as a sound or a group of sounds that forms an independent unit of language. It goes further to define it as a representation of those sounds "as letters or symbols, usually with a space on either side". Word is essentially a unit of meaning: every word must give a sense prompted by general/ conventional or specific/contextual determinism.

In the past, just as atom was considered the most minimal element of matter before the light of knowledge made it known that an atom consists of neutrons and electrons (which are still divisible), it was construed that word was the smallest unit of language. But this is

not so as a word is made up of one or more morphemes. A morpheme is defined as the smallest unit of speech that has semantic or grammatical meaning. Put differently, it is the smallest meaningful unit of grammatical analysis.

For example, 'electromagnetic' is a word. It is however made up of three parts: electro+magnet+ic. Each of these parts exhibits a particular meaning. These meaning-bearing parts are the component morphemes of 'electromagnetic'. An English word is made up of one or more morphemes. The following words are made up of one, two, three, four and five morphemes respectively: 'iron', 'gas+eous', 'uni+cell+ular', 'ab+norm+al+ity', 'dis+en+tangle+ment+s'. Other examples are 'liquid', 'carbon+monoxide', 'circu+lat+ion', 'electro+cut+ion+s', 'inter+nation+al+ iz+ation'.

Based on the preceding discussion, three types of words can be identified. These are different from word classes, which are eight in number. The typology is based on the morphemic composition of words and the types are simple, complex and compound words. It would be observed that some morphemes can stand on their own while others cannot in the given examples. Those that can stand on their own are called free morphemes while those that cannot are referred to as bound morphemes. A word that is made up of a single/free morpheme, like 'gold', 'liquid', 'tube', is a simple word. Complex words are made up of a free morpheme and one or more bound morphemes (such as 'nutrition+al', 'ecto+parasite+s', 'de+cod+ifi+cation') while compound words are made up of two or more free morphemes, with or without bound morphemes. Compound words include 'ring+worm', 'amino+acid+lysine', 'leit+motif', 'coup+de+tat', etc.

Exercise 2
1. All morphemes are words but not all words are morphemes (True or False. If false, re-cast the expression).
2. Differentiate between word types and word classes.

MORPHEMES: IN A WORLD OF THEIR OWN

In section 3.0 above, we briefly defined what the morpheme is. In this section, we shall shed more light on the issues concerning it as well as its various types.

The Morpheme

A morpheme is the smallest meaning-bearing element in language. It operates within a word. By saying it is the smallest meaningful linguistic unit, it is meant that it may be as small as a single letter, and a morpheme can also be made of eight or more letters. For instance, when you take a look at the English alphabet, you will observe that some of these letters are morphemes or 'meaningful' while others are just letters. This is the alphabet:

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z

Table 2: Identifiable morphemes in the English alphabet

In the alphabet above, thirteen possible morphemes, underlined, have been identified. Some of these are familiar while others are not; some linguists may even consider three of them controversial. You can even extend the list of morphemes by thinking of how other letters can function as morphemes. We shall only give examples to illustrate how they function.

<u>a</u> boy, <u>a</u>moral, mania<u>c</u>, love<u>d</u>, m<u>e</u>n, I, radi<u>i</u>, stole<u>n</u>, <u>o</u> Lord, driver, students, dreamt, <u>u</u>-turn, <u>v</u>-neck, <u>x</u>-ray, honesty.

Free and Bound Morphemes

As previously discussed, a free morpheme is that morpheme that can stand by itself. Examples are: a, go, air, burn, power, engine and element. None of their component elements/letters can be removed without altering or even 'destroying' their meanings. Bound morphemes on the other hand, are morphemes that cannot stand alone. They are rather added or affixed to other morphemes to make words. A combination of one or more bound morphemes and a free morpheme gives us a complex word, as you know. Bound morphemes are also called affixes – and they are of three types: prefix, infix and suffix.

Morphemes can be broadly divided into free and bound morphemes. A free morpheme can serve as a root or a stem. Free morphemes are also either full or empty morphemes. Bound morphemes, on the other hand, are otherwise known as affixes (which are three: prefixes, infixes and suffixes). Bound morphemes/affixes can be divided into inflectional and derivational morphemes as well as genuine/true and pseudo morphemes. Inflectional morphemes can be replacive, additive or zero in usage while derivational morphemes are used additively and replacively. All these constitute the various types of morphemes in the structure of words.

Roots and Stems

The root of a word is said to be the very core of the word, without any addition whatsoever. It is the nucleus of the string of letters that forms the word. Without the root, other parts/morphemes in a word would just be 'hanging'. In a word like 'engineering', 'engine' is the root, the nucleus, the heart or the core. Other morphemes are appendages. The root remains when all affixes are removed. It is also referred to as the base form or simply the base.

The stem of a word, on the other hand, is the part of a word to which the inflectional morpheme is structurally added. It is the part of the word that usually remains when all inflectional morphemes have been removed. In our example, engineering, engineer is the stem. Engine is the root but it is at the same time the stem of engineer, which serves as the stem for engineering. A root can thus be a stem and a stem can also be a root (Tomori, 1977:32). In the word, 'hostesses', host is the root as well as the stem because the affixes {ess} and {es} meaning feminity and plurality are inflectional morphemes. But in 'solidification', the stem is 'solidify' while the root is 'solid' (notice that 'solid' itself is the stem of 'solidify').

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Affixes: Prefix, Infix and Suffix

Bound morphemes are called affixes because they are somehow 'fixed' to the roots or stems so as to form new words of higher complexity. Thus, affixes are morphemes that usually precede or follow a root/base form. There are three types of affixes. These are prefixes, infixes and suffixes (or postfixes). A prefix is the bound morpheme that comes before the base form or root. Examples are {de-} in 'desalt', {ante-} in 'antenatal' and {super-} in supercomputer. An infix is the bound morpheme that is inserted within the root or stem. Infixation, the process of using infixes in words, is not very common in English language. It is realized replacively as in words like 'men', 'feet', 'geese', etc. A suffix is the bound morpheme that comes after the root or stem, such as 'electronic', 'physician', 'heating'.

Inflectional and Derivational Morphemes/Affixes

The same way we talk of word types, word segments, we talk of word classes. There are eight classes of words in English and they are traditionally known as parts of speech. When a morpheme/affix does not change the class of a word (i.e. its part of speech), such is known as inflectional morpheme. Inflectional morphemes always come last in the structure of words. They are used to indicate gender (e.g. 'waitress', 'mistress'), plurality ('kilometers', 'capsules') tense ('walked', 'awoken') possession ('doctor's', 'nurses'), comparison ('smaller', 'stronger'), etc.

Inflected word classes in English

Nouns are inflected in two ways: the possessive case and plurality as previously exemplified. Among pronouns, personal pronouns (I, we you, he, she, it, they) are also inflected, largely as objective case (me, us, you, him, her, it, them, respectively), epithetic possessive (my, our, your, his, her, its, their, respectively) and predicative possessive (mine, ours, yours, his, hers, its, theirs, respectively). The relative pronoun 'who' is also inflected 'who(m)' in the objective case as it becomes 'whose' in both of the possessive forms. The objective forms of the demonstrative pronouns, the third of the pronouns that take inflections, are indicated by zero morphemes. In other words, *'this'*, *'that'*, *'these'*, *'those'* are only morphologically marked implicitly at their objective case. Inflectional morphemes, in essence, are morphemes that perform grammatical function in a word without altering the class that the word belongs to.

Verbs have five inflections: infinitive/present tense ('apply', 'synchronize'), third person singular ('applies', 'synchronizes'), present participial/progressive form ('applying', 'synchronizing'), past tense ('applied', 'synchronized') and past participial/perfective form (applied, synchronized). Adjectives are inflected in the formation of comparative and superlative degrees. Examples are 'stronger', 'strongest', 'taller', 'tallest', etc. Where there are irregular forms, suppletion, the morphological process of replacing a word completely with another word, is adopted such as in (good) 'better', 'best', (bad) 'worse', worst'. Adverbs are also inflected in comparative and superlative degrees, like adjectives; for example 'fast', 'faster', 'fastest' (i.e. it cures fast, it cures faster) 'far', 'farther/further',

'farthest/furthest'). In all, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives are inflected in English.

Derived word classes in English

Derivational morphemes are those that change word classes. As the name suggests, a new word class is 'derived' from an old one when a derivational morpheme/affix (always a suffix) is 'fixed' to a word. Words like 'gas', 'infect' and 'solid', change their classes from being noun, verb and adjective respectively to adjective (gaseous), noun (infection) and verb (solidify) through the addition of derivational morphemes.

There are four word classes in which derivation is applicable. These are nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives, otherwise known as content words or full morphemes, rather than the grammatical words (pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and interjection) or empty morphemes. The following table summarizes them (also see Tomori, 1977:35).

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs
Derived from verbs	–ate (used to derive verbs from some nouns,) salivate, liquidate	*Derived from nouns*	–ly (the most used, to derive adverbs from adjectives) slowly, quickly
–age, wreckage, stoppage	–ise/ize (used to derive verbs from some nouns and adjectives) mechanize, legalize	–y, thirsty, misty	a– (used to adverbs from certain nouns verbs and adjectives) ahead, astray, adrift
–ance, repentance, avoidance	–fy (used to derive verbs from some nouns and adjectives) intensify, electrify	–al, hormonal, medicinal	–wise(from certain nouns) clockwise, eastwards
–er/or/ar, healer, inhaler	–en (used to derive verbs from adjectives) straighten, lengthen	–ful, harmful, lawful	–where (from certain determiners) somewhere, anywhere, etc.
–ment, judgment, experiment	en–, em– (used to derive verbs from certain nouns, verbs and adjectives) encourage, embitter, enforce	–less, saltless, heartless	
–ster, trickster		–ar, muscular, cellular	

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−tion, oxidation, application		−ary, legendary, medullary	
−ing, mixing, reading		−ic, vitriolic, atomic	
Derived from adjectives −ce, significance, distance		−ish, boyish, selfish	
−cy, sufficiency, efficiency		−en, deepen, lengthen	
−ity, solubility, technicality		−ed, tagged, bagged	
−ness, solidness, happiness		−ly, fatherly, orderly	
−hood, falsehood		*Derived from verbs* −able, admirable, detachable	
−ry, respiratory, greenery		−ous, desirous, infectious	
Derived from other nouns −dom, chiefdom, kingdom		−ent, excellent, abhorrent	
−er, farmer, mariner		−ive, active, submissive	
−ess, mistress, poetess		−ed, wanted, roasted	
−hood, brotherhood, neighbourhood		−ing, modulating, surprising	
−ian, politician, physician			
ism, cultism, terrorism			
−ist, journalist, pharmacist			
−ship, kingship, courtship			
−ster, gangster, youngster			
Dimunitives −let, piglet, leaflet			
−ock, hillock, bittock			

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–ling, duckling, gosling			
–ette, sachet, locket			
–ry, studentry, citizenry			

Table 3: Derivations in Nouns, Verbs, Adverbs and Adjectives

Full and Empty, Additive, Replacive and Zero Morphemes

Full morphemes are (the roots of the) content words while empty morphemes are (the roots of the) grammatical words. In other words, any noun, verb, adverb or adjective is a full morpheme while every pronoun, preposition, conjunction and interjection is an empty morpheme. Additive morphemes are added to words either as prefixes or as suffixes ('germinat<u>ing</u>', 'electrif<u>ied</u>') while replacive morphemes are used to substitute sounds (i.e. 'goose/g<u>ee</u>se', 'foot/f<u>ee</u>t'). In suppletion, rather than partial substitution in replacive morpheme, the whole word is changed ('go, *went, gone*', 'good *better best*'). Zero morphemes on their own part, are morphemes that are not explicitly marked. For example, in 'the sheep are grazing', the plural morpheme in sheep is a zero morpheme while the past tense of 'cast', 'hit' are also morphologically marked by zero morphemes.

True and Pseudo Morphemes

It is also possible to differentiate true/genuine morphemes from pseudo morphemes. A true morpheme is that which is meaningful and constant in meaning. A pseudo morpheme, as the name suggests, is a false morpheme in the sense that it looks like a morpheme, when it is not. Free morphemes include 'a', 'go', 'air', 'burn', 'power', 'engine', 'machine', 'emphasis', 'intellect' and 'anticipate'. This shows that a free morpheme can be a single letter or can even be made up of ten or more letters. Pseudo morphemes are the first syllables of the following words, which if considered at all as morphemes are pseudo morphemes:

receive   concept
conceive   conduct
receipt   concern
repair   reward

They are pseudo morphemes because the remaining parts have no meanings when the first parts are removed. What, for example are the meanings of 'ceive', 'cept', 'cern', etc? The ones that are meaningful have their meanings within totally different semantic fields: e.g. 'pair', 'duct' and 'ward'.

Morphemic Analysis

The foregoing discussion has shown that morphemes, like bricks, are of various kinds and hues. They also perform various functions. What is essential to note is that they constitute the structure of words in English. The knowledge of roots, stems and affixes equips one with the required skills for morphemic analysis. The affixes must be related to the root meanings in order not to confuse words or analyse morphemes wrongly. Let us

illustrate the likely confusion that a student may face in describing morphemes with the story of Professor Agboru and his classes.

Professor Agboru was a Professor of Linguistics at the University of Niagara. He put the following notice on the faculty notice board one day:

"Professor Agboru will not be able to meet his classes this evening. He has a chronic backache".

A mischievous student of the Professor deleted the 'c' from the word 'classes' and it remained 'lasses'. Since it was a co-educational context, the alteration generated appreciative laughs and pranks (like *na wa for Prof o! No wonder!*). But as Professors are unbeatable, Agboru made a wry smile when he saw the joke played on him and thus deleted the first letter of 'lasses'. Who were the 'asses' (fools)? The Professor had the last laugh as the joke bounced back against the students who wanted to tarnish his good name.

Morphologically, we wont say 'c' is a morpheme because 'lasses' is meaningful, or 'l' is a morpheme in 'lasses'. Rather, we observe that 'lasses' and 'asses' have different meanings or roots other than the sense evoked by 'classes'. Thus, the linguistic sequence 'classes' [which is 'rich' in the sense that all its parts are capable of generating meaning: (class, lass, ass, as , es, s)] contains two morphemes: {class} and {es}, or f + b. The root is 'class', the stem is also 'class' and the affix is 'es', an inflectional morpheme. Another word that exhibits a similar feature is *'themes'*, made up of two morphemes. All of *'theme'*, *'them'*, *'the'*, *'th'*, *'t'* and *'s'* are meaningful. Learning is fun!

Segmentability of morphemes involves the process of breaking words into their component morphemes in a systematic manner. It is a major aspect of morphemic analysis. The first thing to note is the root of a word after which the processes through which it becomes what it is, usually complex, becomes easily determinable. Consider the following examples in table 4:

	Words	Segmentation	Description (Basic)
(i)	insignificantly	in + significant + ly	(b + f + b)
(ii)	significations	sign + if(y) + (i) cation + s	(f + b + b + b)
(iii)	dislocation	dis + locat(e) + ion	(b + f + b)
(iv)	interconnectivity	inter + connect + iv(e) + ity	(b + f + b + b)
(v)	osteopathy	osteo + path + y	(b + f + b)
(vi)	technologically	techn(ic) + olog(y) + ical + ly	(f + b + b + b)
(vii)	aide de clamp	aide + de + camp	(f + f + f)
(viii)	commanders-in-chief	command + er + s + in + chief	(f + b + b + f + f)
(ix)	people	person + s	(f + b)
(ix)	betters	good + er + s	(f + b + b)

Table 4: Words and their morphemic analysis

Exercise 3

Identify the kinds of morphemes in the following words and segment them morphemically:

spherical	geothermal	inflammatory
chromatic	inorganic	dystrophic
molecules	programmed	powerfully
polymerization	computing	naturalists
gastrointestinal	cardiovascular	consciousness

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH WORD

Structurally, the English word is made up of an optional prefix, obligatory base form or root and one or more suffixes in that rigid syntagmatic order. The basic formula for this is (p) b (f) where *p* is 'prefix', *b* is 'base form' and *f* is 'postfix'. (Muir, 1972:17). But since we have not been adopting postfix in our discussion, we can as well say the structure is:

(p) b (s) with 's' meaning 'suffix'. The brackets indicate that their contents are optional. The arrow indicates the rigid order or sequence of the elements when they occur together in a word. Therefore, an English word may be any of the following:

b	=	space, synopsis, harangue
pb	=	empower, de-salt, unearth
bs	=	criminal, echoed, vandalism
pbs	=	uncertainty, independent, unscientific

Moreover, in English, there is usually, not always, one 'p' element, usually one 'b' element or one or more 's' elements. It is only in a compound structure that there are more than one 'b' elements. Thus, the formula above can be expanded or revised as thus to reflect the true structure of words:

$$(p^2) (p^1) b (s^1) (s^2) (s^3)$$

This means that a word may have two prefixes (as in 'pre + in+dependence') and three suffixes. The numbering indicates the primacy of the affixes. The proximity of the affix to the base determines its numbering/ primacy. In the given 'pre-independence', since we have 'in' prefix closer to the base 'depend' it is the p^1 while 'pre' is the p^2. We can thus analyze 'pre-independence' as thus:

pre + in + depend + ence = p^2 p^1 b s.

(Note that our morphemic segmentation of the example will be 'b + b + f + b' and the 'b' here means bound morpheme).

As earlier adumbrated, the base is usually one except in compound structures where the second base will be considered as *additional* root. As such, the various words in English can occur in any of the following seven forms:

	Prefix (p²)	Prefix (p¹)	Base	Infix	Suffix (s¹)	Ending (s²)	Addition (s³)
i			muscle				
ii		dis	connect				
iii			parasit(e)		ic		
iv			goose	-ee-			
v.			graph		ic	al	ly
vi.			structur(e)		al	ly	ness
vii.	dis	en	franchise				
viii.		mal	form		ation	s	
ix.			edit/in/chief		or	s	
x.			Soft/ware				
xi.	dis	em	bowel				
xii.	dis	em	power		ment		

Table 5: Elements within word structure

The examples above can still be analyzed as follows, where 'w' means word, 'sm', simple; 'cx', complex; 'cd', compound; 'p', prefix; 'i', infix; and 's', suffix.

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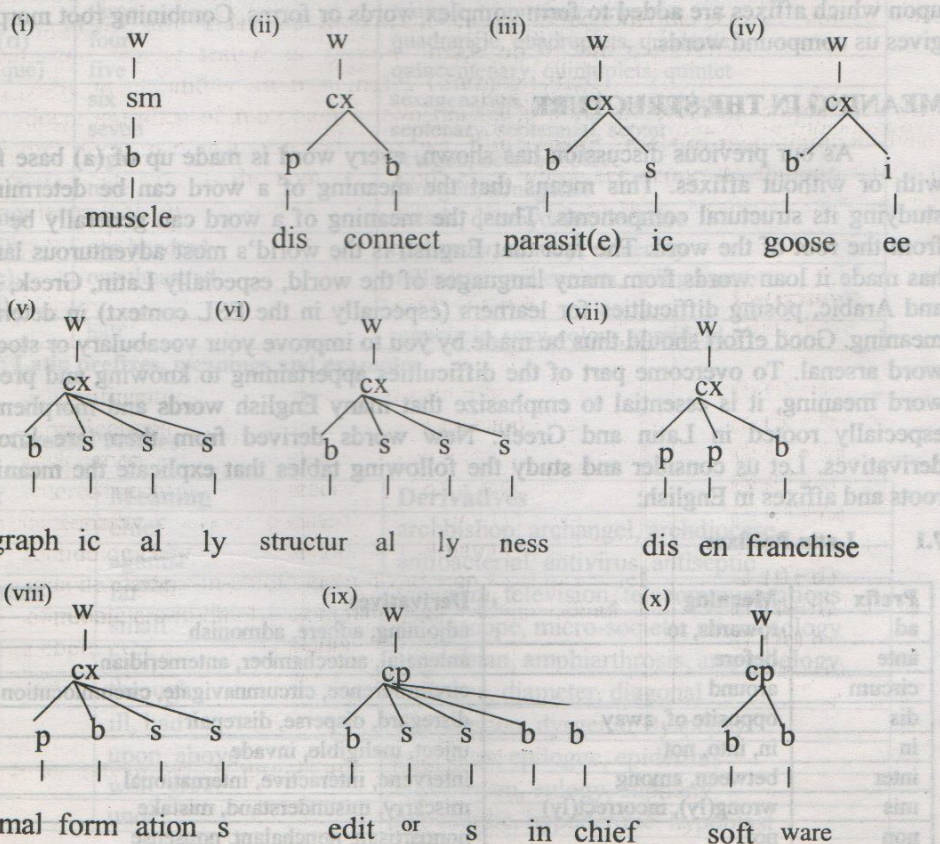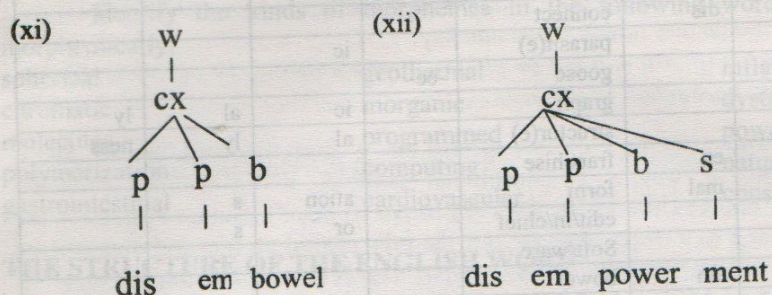
Fig. 1: Tree-diagram analyses of word structures

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that that word forms in English exhibit different structural patterns. The summary is that a word is a morpheme or combination of morphemes. It can be simple, complex or compound. The root always constitutes the base upon which affixes are added to form complex words or forms. Combining root morphemes gives us compound words.

MEANING IN THE STRUCTURE

As our previous discussion has shown, every word is made up of (a) base form(s) with or without affixes. This means that the meaning of a word can be determined by studying its structural components. Thus, the meaning of a word can generally be known from the root of the word. The fact that English is the world's most adventurous language has made it loan words from many languages of the world, especially Latin, Greek, French and Arabic, posing difficulties for learners (especially in the ESL context) in determining meaning. Good effort should thus be made by you to improve your vocabulary or stock your word arsenal. To overcome part of the difficulties appertaining to knowing and predicting word meaning, it is essential to emphasize that many English words and morphemes are especially rooted in Latin and Greek. New words derived from them are known as derivatives. Let us consider and study the following tables that explicate the meanings of roots and affixes in English:

7.1 Latin Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Derivatives
ad	towards, to	adjoining, adhere, admonish
ante	before	antenatal, antechamber, antemeridian
circum	around	circumference, circumnavigate, circumlocution
dis	opposite of, away	disregard, disperse, disrepair
in	in, into, not	inject, ineligible, invade
inter	between, among	intervene, interactive, international
mis	wrong(ly), incorrect(ly)	miscarry, misunderstand, mistake
non	not	nonpartisan, nonchalant, nonsense
post	after	postindependence, postmortem, postgraduate

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pre	before	premature, preliminary, prehistory
pro	in favour of, forward, in place of	pro-democracy, pronoun, prologue
re	again, back	repeat, renovate, remove
sub	under	submarine, subordinate, subtitle
trans	across	transmit, transport, trans-Atlantic
a, ab	away, from, away from	amoral, absurd, abnegate
bene	well, good	benediction, benevolence, benefactor
contra, counter	against, opposed to	contraband, counterpart, counterfeit
de	down from, away from, reverse the action	demean, deport, demobilize
ex	out, out, of, away from, formerly	exhume, exhale, ex-editor
intra	within	intravenous, intrapersonal, intradepartmental
per	through	persecute, pervade, persevere
uni	one	unicameral, unicellular, unilateral
du(o)	two	duplicate, duel, dual
tri	three	triangle, triumvirate, tripartite
quad(ri)	four	quadrangle, quadruplets, quadratic
quin(que)	five	quincentenary, quintuplets, quintet
sex	six	sexagenarian, sextuple, sextuplets
sept	seven	septenary, septennial, septet
octo	eight	octagon, octavo, octave
non(a)	nine	nonagon, nonagonal
dec(im)	ten	decade, decahydrate, decalitre
cent(i)	one hundred	centimeter, century, centenary
mill(e), mill(i)	one thousand	millimeter, millennium, milligramme
semi	half	semicircle, semi-colour, semifield

Table 6: Latin prefixes, meanings and examples

7.2 Greek Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Derivatives
arch	chief	archbishop, archangel, archdiocese
anti	against	antibacterial, antivirus, antiseptic
tele, gram	far	telegram, television, telecommunications
micro	small	microscope, micro-society, microbiology
amphi	both	amphibian, amphiarthrosis, amphibology
dia	through	dialogue, diameter, diagonal
dys	ill, bad	dysfunction, dysgenic, dyspepsy
epi	upon, above	epiglottis, epilogue, epidermis
eu	well, good	euphemism, eulogy, euphony
hypo	under	hypoacidic, hypodermic, hypoblast

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retro	backward	retrospect, retrograde, retrogress
se	away, apart	sever, segregate, separate
mono	one	monologue, monocotyledon, monopoly
bi	two	bilingual, bicep, bicycle
tri	three	triplicate, triplets, triad
tetra	four	tetragon, tetrahedron, tetrameter
penta	five	pentagon, pentameter, pentadactyl
hexa	six	hexagon, hexachord, hexameter
hepta	seven	heptagon, heptahedron, heptamerous
octa	eight	octagon, octameter, octapeptide
nona	nine	nonagon, nonagonal
deca	ten	decade, decahydrate, decalitre
hecto	one hundred	hectograph, hectogramme, hectometer
kilo	one hundred	kilometer, kilobyte, kilowatt
hemi/demi	half	hemisphere, demigod, hemicolectomy
hydro	water	hydrophobia, hydrofoil, hydro-electric
homo	same	homonyms, homogeneous, homogamous
hetero	different	heterogeneity, heterosexual, hetorologous

Table 7: Greek prefixes, meanings and derivatives

7.3   Some other Prefixes

Prefix	Meaning	Derivatives
a	on, not, up	afloat, aloud, arise
a, ab, abs	away, from	aside, absolve, abscond
ac, ad, ar	to	accept, adjudge, arrange
auto	self	automatic, automobile, autonomy
circum	(a)round	circumference, circumstance, circumspect
com, con	together	compete, conjunction, converge
dif, dis	apart, not	difference, dispute, disadvantage
fore	before	forecast, foresee, foreword
il, im, in, ir	not, in, on, against	illegal, import, insult, irregular
mal	ill, badly	maladjust, maltreat, maladministration
ob	against	objection, obstruct, obscene
pan	all	pan-African, pantomime, pandemic
per	through, by means of	perceive, pervade, percolate
poly	many	polygamy, polytechnic, polytheism
pseudo	false	pseudonym, pseudoscience, pseudojustice
syn, sym	with	symphony, sympathy, synthesis
super	above	superlative, supersonic, superhuman

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vice	in place of, instead	vice-chancellor, vicegerent, viceroy
mega	very large or great	magnate, megabite, megaphone, megabucks
multi	many	multilingualism, multifarious, multiply
neo	new	neophyte, neo-colonialism, neoclassicism
omni	all	omnipresent, omniscient, omnivore
proto	first	prototype, protocol, protomorphic
ultra-hyper	beyond, excessive(ly)	ultraviolet, hyperbole, hypertension

Table 8: More prefixes and their meanings and derivatives

7.4 Latin Roots

Root	Meaning	Derivatives
aqua	water	aquatic, aquaplane, aquarium
port	carry	portfolio, portage, portable
scribo, script	write	scribble, inscribe, inscription
specio	look	spectacle, inspector, specimen
vid(eo), vis	see	video, vision, vista
voc	call	voice, vocation, revoke
aud, audio	hear, listen to	audible, auditorium, audition
cap	take, hold	captain, captivate, caption
dico, dis(t)	tell, say, speak	verdict, dictate, edict
facio, fac	make, do	factory, manufacture, perfect
fid	faith, trust	fidelity, infidel
fract	break	fraction, fragment, fracture
mitto, miss	send	transmit, mission, missile
ped, pod, pes	foot	pedal, podium, pedestrian
ven(io) vent	come, coming	adventure, convention, intervention
acer, acr	sharp, bitter	acrimony, acrid, acrobat
amor	love	amorous, amour, amoretto
carn	flesh	carnal, reincarnation, carnivorous
cogn	know	recognition, incognito, cognizance
cred	believe	incredible, creed, credulous
crux, cruc	cross	crucifixion, cruciform, excruciating
duc, duct	lead	educate, conductor, produce
fort	strong	fortify, fortitude, fortress
frater, fratri	brother	fraternity, fratricide, fratricidal
gen	race, birth, kind	gene, indigene, genocide
man, manu	hand	manuscript, manufacture, manual
mute	change	transmute, mutiny, immutable
nihil	nothing	annihilate, nihilism, nihility
pac	peace	pacific, peaceful, pact

sequ, secut	follow	sequence, consecutive, consequence
sol	alone	solo, solitary, solitude
son	sound	resonant, sonorous, song
viv	live	vivace, revive, vivacious
alter	other	alternative, alternate, alterego
ambul	walk	ambulance, ambulatory, somnambulist
annu, enni	year	annual, perennial, millennium
corp, corpor	body	corporal, corporate, corpulent
culpa	blame	culprit, culpable
dues	god	deity, deify
equ	equal	equilibrium, equidistant, equity
laud	praise	laud, laudable, laudatory
mean	great	magnitude, magnify, magnanimous
morte	death	mortality, mortuary, post-mortem
oner, onus	burden	onerous, onus
pater, part	father	patrimony, paternal, patricide
placa, plac	please, appease	placate, implacable
string, strict	tighten	stringent, strident, stricture
ten	hold	tender, tenacity, tenet
tort	twist	contortionist, torture, distort
terra	earth	territory, terrestrial, terrain
vert, vers	turn	convert, reversion, vertigo
caput	head	capture, capital, decapitate
flag	flame, fire	flagellate, flagrant, conflagration
Flu, flux	flowing	influence, confluence, influx
gress	go	retrogress, progress, regress
jar, ject	throw	projector, reject, objection
locu, loqu	speak	locution, soliloquy, loquacious
nasc, nat	birth	native, nascent, renascence
pecc	fault	impeccable, peccadillo, peccant
pend, pens	hang	depend, pendant, suspend
plen, plet	fill	plentiful, plenary, depletion
preci	price	appreciate, depreciate, deprecate
prim	first, early	primeval, primitive, primordial
pung, punct	point, prick	punctuation, puncture, punctilious
quasi	as, seemingly (not actually)	quasi-judicial, quasi-scientific, quasi-official
sanct	holy, sacred	sacrosant, sacrament, sanctity
sen	old	senile, senior, senescent
somn	sleep	somnambulist, somnolent, somniferous
tact, tang	touch	intact, tactile, entangle

Table 9: Latin Roots, meanings and derivatives

7.5   Greek Roots

Root	Meaning	Derivatives
graph, gram	writing, record	telegram, telegraph, photograph
phone	sound	megaphone, ideophone, dictaphone
scope	sight	horoscope, microscope, periscope
bio	life	biology, biography, biochemist
geo	earth	geography, geology, geopolitics
meter	measure	thermometer, centimeter, kilometer
cardi	heart	cardiac, cardiology, cardinal
derm	skin	epidermis, dermatologist
path	feeling, disease	sympathy, pathology, empathy
phob	fear	claustrophobia, aquaphobia, aerophobic
psych	mind	psychosis, psychology, psychiatry
theo	god	theology, polytheism, atheist
aster	star	astronaut, astrology, asterisk
bibl	book	bibliography, bibliomania, bibliophile
caust, caut	burn	caustic, carburetor, cauterize
chromy	colour	chromium, chromophotography, chromophore
chron	time	mosocromatic, chronometer, synchrony, chronicle
dem	people	demography, democracy, demagogue
gam	marriage	monogamist, bigamy, polygamy
nym	name	acronym, synonym, anonymous
ortho	straight, right, correct	orthography, orthodoxy, orthodontist
soph	wise	sophistry, sophisticated, sophia
anthropo	man	anthropology, anthropoid, anthropomorphism
crypt	secret, hidden	cryptic, cryptogram, cryptography
gyn	woman	polygyny, gynaecology, gynarchy
morph	form	morpheme, polymorphous, anthropomorphic
perter, petri	rock	petrology, petrify, petrography
pyr	fire	pyre, pyromaniac, pyrotechnic
than	death	thanatopsis, euthanasia, thanatologist

Table 10: Greek Roots, meanings and derivatives

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7.6   Some Suffixes

Suffix	Meaning	Examples
-able, -ible	capable of being	laudable, applicable, visible
-ain	one connected	chaplain, republican, chieftain
-ance, -ence	state of	acceptance, importance, innocence
-ant, ian	one who	assistant, musician, politician
et, -ette	little	locket, kitchenette, cigarette
-er, -eer, -ier, r	one who	repeater, volunteer, carrier, lover
-ess	the female	goddess, mistress, poetess
-fy	to make	magnify, electrify, exemplify
-less	without	careless, goalless, godless
-crat, cracy	power, rule	democrat, autocracy, theocracy
-ly	like, time	womanly, annually, regularly
-ling	little	darling, worldling, seedling
-ment	state of being	enjoyment, entertainment, advancement
-ish	having the quality of	whitish, foolish, impish
-ory	a place for	observatory, laboratory, exploratory
-ous	full of	glorious, furious, gaseous
-hood	to do with	brotherhood, neighourhood, likelihood
-ology	study of	morphology, embryology, phrenology
-phile	love	bibliophile, anglophine, paedophile
-ward	direction, way	forward, backward, westward
-c, ic	having	kleptomaniac, Islamic, Karmic
-ed, -d	in the past	jumped, performed, loved
-ee	of a person	employee, addressee, devotee
-er, or, r	agent/performer of	buyer, sailor, driver
-s, -es, ies	plural	books, boxes, babies
-ist	who does	journalist, anarchist, activist
-ion	state of	correction, education, relocation
-wise	in the direction	anticlockwise, likewise, otherwise
-ness	having	goodness, happiness, consciousness

Table 11: Some suffixes and their examples

A very effective way of giving yourself sufficient word power is by disallowing every new word you come across to escape you. You endeavour to 'trap' it by checking how it is spelt, pronounced and used (to mean) in a good dictionary. It is recommended that you have your own hand-written 'dictionary' wherein you document new words (with their meanings and usage) you encounter. Your knowledge of word structure and morphology will also assist you to determine roots from which derivatives are made, making comprehension easy and fast for you. The assignment you have now is to check the meanings of all the unfamiliar words you have come across in this chapter in a standard dictionary.

Exercise 4

1. What are the meanings of the following affixes and roots:

circum-	nym
hecto-	caut
proto-	audio
-ling	manu
-less	hydro
-phile	theo

2. Analyze the following words and identify their roots and affixes:

anatomically	blood-sucking	meaningful
worthlessness	masterpiece	causative
evolutionary	interdependently	knowledgeable
longitudinal	linguistic	innumerable
dinosaurs	intellectualism	variations

CONCLUSION

Words heal, words save, words kill, words make, words mar. As Birk and Birk wrote in their *Understanding and Using English* many years ago, mere words can make and prevent wars, create understanding or inflame prejudice, form constitutions or destroy them, sell shoddy or superior product or ideas, justify man's worst actions or express his highest ideals (p.3). An English adage says "Words cut keener than knives" and to the Yoruba, "The word is an egg". Our world of today solely depends on words to fashion out reality. And all these point to the fact that as stakeholders in, and future leaders of a changing world, we all have to be word-wise. Thus, knowing the structure and meaning of words is really worth the trouble so that we can know well *how to do things with words*.

This chapter has discussed language and analyzed word as its basic unit. It highlights the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations that words exhibit and explicates on morphemes, the smallest linguistic unit, which operates within word. Various types of morphemes, free, bound, inflectional, derivational, full, empty, additive, replacive, zero, etc. are identified and explained. The structure of the word, prefix, base form and suffix, is established with copious examples while the meanings of more than two hundred morphemic elements within words are traced (to the Latin and Greek origins). It is foregrounded that meaning is the ultimate goal of language and to decode it, one has to

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improve on one's vocabulary and understand word structure, so that the superstructure of one's education will be built on a firm foundation.

ANSWERS TO EXERCISES

Exercise 1

2.   I agree. Language is the most important distinguishing factor between human beings and animals because animals share most other qualities/attributes, except language, with human beings.

Exercise 2

1.   False. All words are morphemes but not all morphemes are words.

Exercise 3

1.   Identification and segmentation of morphemes in the given words are as follows:

spher(e) + ical	$f + b$ (b = suffix, der.); sphere (root, stem)
chrom(e) + atic	$f + b$ (b = suffix, der.); chrome (root, stem)
molecule + s	$f + b$ (b = suffix, inf.); molecule (root, stem)
polymer + iz(e) + ation	$f + b^1 + b^2$ (b^1, b^2 = suffix, der.); polymer (root) polymerize (stem)
gastro + intestin(e) + al	$b + f + b^2$ (b^2 = suffix, der.); intestine (root) intestinal (stem)
geo + thema(e) + l	$b + f + b^2$ (b^2 = suffix, der.); thamae (root), thamal (stem)
in + organ + ic	$b + f + b^2$ (b^2 = suffix, der.); organ (root) organic (stem)
programme + d	$f + b$ (b = suffix, inf.); programme (root, stem)
comput (e) + ing	$f + b$ (b = suffix, inf/der.); compute (root, stem)
cardio+vasculum+s+ar	$b + f + b^2 + b^3$ (b^2, b^3 = suffixes, inf/der.) vasculum (root) vascular (stem)
in+flam(e)+matory	$b+f+b^2$ (b^2 = suffix, der.); flame (root), flammatory (stem)
dystroph(y)+ic	$f + b$ (b = suffix, der.); dystrophy (root, stem)

Exercise 4

1.   Morphemes and meanings

circum-	:	around	nym	:	name
hecto-	:	one hundred	caut	:	burn
proto-	:	first	manu	:	hand
-ling	:	little	hydro	:	water
-less	:	without	theo	:	god
-phile	:	love			

2.   Analysis of words with the identification of their roots and affixes

anatom(y)+ic+al+ly	$b+s^1+s^2+s^3$	:	anatomy(root), ic,al,ly (suffixes)
worth+less+ness	$b+s^1+s^2$	:	worth(root); less; ness (suffixes)
evolve+tion	$b+s$	:	evolve(root); tion (suffix)
longitud(e)+inal	$b+s$	:	longitude(root); nal (suffix)
blood+suck+ing	b^1+b^2+s	:	blood, suck (roots); ing (suffix)
inter-depend+ent+ly	$p+b+s^1+s^2$	:	depend(root); inter(prefix) –ent, -ly (suffixes)

linguist+ic	b+s	:	language (root) –ic (suffix)
intellect+ual+ism	b+s^1+s^2	:	intellect (root) nal, ism (suffixes)
know+ledge+able	b+s^1+s^2	:	know (root) ledge, able (suffixes)
in+numera(te)+ble	p+b+s	:	number (root) in (prefix) able (suffix)

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