

Classification of morphemes

① Free morphemes and Bound morphemes:

Free morphemes are those root words which are used without affixes (suffix and prefix). These are the root words left after all affixes are removed from it. On the other hand, bound morphemes are those affixes which are always used in the company of free-morphemes. A free morpheme is a precondition for the use of a bound morpheme. All the prefixes and suffixes are bound morphemes, and the word to which they are attached, is free morpheme (the root word). For example, in the word 'unmerciful', 'un' and 'ful' are bound morphemes, and 'mercy' is free morpheme. These bound morphemes [un] and [ful] can not be used without 'mercy', that may stay alone.

(2) Lexical and Functional Morphemes:

Lexical morphemes are those free morphemes which are open to affixation, i.e. affixes can be added to them as per the requirement. These are content words which give the main idea in a sentence. Such morphemes are nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc. that contain the central meaning in a sentence. The words like, boy, play, good, clever, etc. are lexical morphemes as all of these words primarily add

to the meaning of a sentence and they can be affixed as well.

On the other hand, functional morphemes are those which are not open to affixation, i.e. affixes can not be added to them. They are usually required to fulfil grammatical functions in sentences. Such morphemes are auxiliary verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, etc. The words like *and*, *about*, *is*, etc. are functional morphemes as all of these basically serve grammatical purpose in sentences. The differences between lexical and functional morphemes can be summarised as under:

Lexical morphemes	Functional morphemes
I. They are open to affixation, and so, belong to open class of words.	They are close to affixation, and so, belong to closed class of words.
II. They are phonologically independent.	They are phonologically dependent.
III. They are usually stressed.	They are usually unstressed.
IV. They are content words.	They are form words.
V. They are usually polysyllabic.	They are usually monosyllabic.
VI. They don't have grammatical features usually.	They have potential grammatical features.