

MORPHOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH NOUN

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Abstract

Word is the key element in morphology. Morphology is a study of internal construction of words. In language learning, noun is the important element. In this paper, the writer will present morphology of the English noun, it will also be described noun identification.

Key Words : Morphology, Noun

Abstrak

Kata adalah elemen pokok dalam morfologi. Sedangkan morfologi adalah ilmu yang mempelajari tentang pembentukan kata. Dalam belajar berbahasa unsur yang terpenting adalah kata benda (noun). Dalam makalah ini, penulis akan mempresentasikan tentang kata benda Bahasa Inggris (Morphology of the English Noun). Namun sebelumnya akan dipaparkan juga mengenai identifikasi kata benda.

Kata Kunci: Morphology, Noun

I. INTRODUCTION

Morphology often tends to be theoretical and it seems there is no benefit to study it. But as a knowledge, like syntactical analysis, morphology analysis may not stop after all of various forms between one meaning and the structure have been analyzed. Each of the analysis should be followed by a synthesis. After that, it will be felt the benefit of the analysis that have been presented.

The morphological analysis relates to the morphemes and words. Morphemes are the smallest meaningful unit of the structure of language whereas the biggest units are words. In the syntactical analysis, the words are as principle. Therefore, morphology needs to be related to the function of word. In this paper, the writer wants to analyze the morphology of the word, i.e. nouns. It is because that nouns are the most important things to be used in language learning.

II. THE DEFINITION OF MORPHOLOGY AND NOUN

The word morphology can be defined as a study of morphemes of a language and of how they are combined to make words or a study of the internal construction of words. Word is the key element of morphology, a symbol comprising mutually implied sound and meaning. The central purpose of morphology, therefore, is to map sound to meaning within the word and between words. Language varies widely in the degree to which words can be analyzed into word elements or morphemes. In English there are numerous examples, such as “replacement” which is composed of re-, “place” and -ment. Thus to learn morphology means to learn morphemes or smallest meaningful parts into which a word can be divided.

The word “noun” traditionally is defined as words that name person, places, or things. But there are numerous nouns that have no such reference such as goodness, home-run, fatherhood, and so on. According to Hornby (1989: 843), noun is a word (not a pronoun) which can function as the subject or object of a verb, or the object of a preposition. Therefore the morphology of the English nouns means a study of the smallest meaningful parts of words and how they are combined to make words which can function as the subject or object of a verb, or object of a preposition.

III. IDENTIFICATION OF A NOUN

To identify that a word is a noun, a verb, or an adjective, the word should be put on a sentence. There are some characteristics of nouns to enable us to identify:

A. Nouns are preceded by determiners.

When a noun is used in a sentence it may be marked by the word before it. Such words can be possessive adjective or personal pronouns (my, our, your, his, her, their, and its) and other determiners (that, this, these, those, a, an, the, some, any, many, much, few, etc.).

B. Nouns come before verbs and after transitive verbs.

If a noun is used in a subject of a sentence, it is usually placed before the verb. For example :

- A *cat* eats a slice of meat
- A *seed* grows in the rainy season.
- The *house* has three windows.

If a noun is functioned as an object of a verb, it usually comes after the verb.

For example :

- The man broke the *glass*
- He wrote a *letter*.
- A dog eats *bones*.

C. Nouns come after a preposition.

If a noun is used as an object of a preposition, it is preceded by the preposition. For example:

- The escaped prisoner is still at *large*.
- He is standing under the *tree*.
- The birds are flying in the *sky*.

IV. NOUN FORMATIONS

An English word can be changed into nouns through two ways i.e. by adding inflectional suffixes to the roots. A. Inflectional Forms

Inflectional forms are formed by using the inflectional suffixes, that are suffixes that are used to change the form of a word to show the grammatical function in a sentence without changing the part of speech.

1. Plural inflectional form

Inflectional without changing of form

- The plural has the same form as the singular
(sheep – sheep, deer- deer)
- The singular has the same form as the plural
(series-series, means-means)
- No plural is used for uncountable words

Example: information, advice

Inflection with changing of form

- The general rule for writing the plural of English nouns is to add *s* to the singular form

(boy – boys, apple – apples)

- Irregular plurals may take the form of:

1. An internal change

(man – men, foot – feet)

2. An *en* ending

(child – children, ox – oxen)

3. Many foreign words retain their foreign plurals in English

a. Singular *us* ending becomes plural *i* ending.
(stimulus – stimuli, radius – radii)

b. Singular *a* ending becomes plural *ae* ending
(larva – larvae, vertebra – vertebrae)

c. Singular *um* ending becomes plural *a* ending
(memorandum – memoranda, stratum – strata)
Some such words are used chiefly in the plural
(data, bacteria)

d. Singular *is* ending becomes plural *es* ending
(crisis – crises, parenthesis – parentheses)

e. Singular *on* ending becomes plural *a* ending
(criterion – criteria, phenomenon – phenomena)

f. Singular *ex* or *ix* ending becomes plural *ices* ending
(vortex – vortices, matrix – matrices)

g. Singular *eau* ending becomes plural *eaux* ending
(bureau – bureaux, plateau – plateaux)

2. Possessive inflectional form

- A singular noun is changed to possessive form by the addition of 's
(one boy's mother)

- A plural noun becomes possessive form by the addition of 's to the final
(two boys' mother)

- If an irregular plural noun does not already end in *s*, then 's is added for the possessive.

(the children's mother)

- With a group of words functioning as a unit, 's is placed after the last word in the group.
(every one else's opinion, his mother-in law's interference)

B. Derivational Suffixes

Suffixes that are used to change the form of word to show the grammatical function in a sentence with changing a part of speech.

The following suffixes are added to noun roots, adjective or verbs to form a noun.

1. Suffixes changing concrete nouns to abstract nouns
 - a. noun root + -hood (brotherhood, childhood)
 - b. noun root + -ism (heroism, despotism)
 - c. noun root + -ship (fellowship, statesmanship)
2. Suffixes changing nouns to other nouns
(capitalism – capitalist, communism – communist)
3. Suffixes changing adjectives to nouns
 - a. adjective + -th (warmth, strength)
 - b. adjective + -ness (happiness, usefulness)
 - c. adjective + -ant or -ent become -ance or -ence
(intelligent - intelligence, distant – distance)
 - d. adjective + ity (activity, sterility)
4. Suffixes changing verbs to nouns
 - a. verb + -al (survival, arrival)
 - b. verb + -ance or -ence (assistance, confidence)
 - c. verb + -ment (development, employment)
 - d. verb + -ing (fishing, dancing)
 - e. verb + -or or -eer (governor, elevator, auctioneer)

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, most English words have the same form but they have different function (part of speech) that often make students confused of how to apply them in writing or speaking. The English nouns derive from other part of speech that are made through adding suffixes; inflectional and derivational suffixes. To identify a noun, one should know its characteristics: it is preceded by a determiner, comes before a verb (as a subject) and after a transitive verbs (as an object), comes after a preposition (as an adverb of place).

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