

Derivational and Inflectional Morphemes

Bound morphemes are of two kinds in English language - derivational and inflectional. Derivational bound morphemes are realized through prefixes as well as suffixes, whereas inflectional bound morphemes are realized through suffixes only. Inflectional morphemes are those which are used to fulfill the grammatical requirements. It is seen that nouns or verbs take different forms depending on person, number, tense, etc. in sentences. For example, 'Satona goes to college', 'He talked to me', 'Two boys came'. In all of these sentences, morphemes [es], [ed], and [s] work as present tense suffix [goes], past tense suffix (talked) and plural suffix (boys), respectively. These are three kinds of inflections used in English.

(a) Nominal inflections (affixed with nouns) -

They are used as plural markers in words like cats, dogs, mangoes, etc. and as possessive markers (genitive) in words with apostrophe, such as cat's, Room's, etc.

(b) Verbal inflections (affixed with verbs) -

They are used as present tense marker in words like goes, plays, etc., as past tense marker in words as worked, danced, etc. as present participle marker in words like going, walking, etc. and as past participle marker in words like taken, given, etc.

(c) Adjectival inflections (affixed with adjectives)

They are used as comparative and superlative degree markers in words like greater, sweeter, greatest, sweetest, etc.

Altogether there are eight forms of inflections found in English which are represented by: -s, -'s (nominal), -s, -ed, -ing, -en (verbal), -er, -est (adjectival).

All of these inflectional suffixes basically serve the grammatical function in sentences. Inflectional suffixes are always used in the final position of a word. The grammatical class (parts of speech) of a word does not change after an inflectional suffix is added to it. Therefore, it is always class maintaining.

→ x → x →