MEGA INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Journal of Arts and Linguistics Studies
ISSN Print 2959-0957 ISSN Online 2959-0965
Volume 1 Issue 4 2023
Pages 1105-1120

Open Access

Teaching Vocabulary through Morphology in Pakistan: The Way Forward

Publication Details
Paper Received:
September 20, 2023
Paper Accepted:
December 18, 2023
Paper Published:
December 31, 2023

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Abstract
The present study investigates the effectiveness of instruction based on morphology for vocabulary acquisition. Morphology, a subfield of linguistics, studies the structure and formation of words in a language. It concentrates on the smallest units of meaning in words, which are commonly known as morphemes. Morphology explores how words are formed through morphemes and how affixation, compounding, and derivation processes keep modifying them. By exploring morphology, linguists learn more about the structure of languages and the intricate details of lexical meaning within the language in question by getting insight into the principles and conventions underlying word production. The english is used as a second language and a mode of instruction in Pakistani EFL/ESLcontext. Given the centrality of vocabulary in linguistic competence, the current research investigates how instruction utilizing morphological awareness in vocabulary development might strengthen individuals' lexical repertoire and understanding of English syntax. The findings reveal that exposure of students to morphology-based vocabulary instruction results in considerable development in their ability to comprehend and use new words. In contrast, conventional methods of rote instruction could not do their peers any better. Moreover, this study reveals that morphological instruction not only helps acquire vocabulary but also cultivates a deeper understanding of the syntax of the English language. The research presented here underlines precisely how morphological methods of instruction aid in vocabulary acquisition and recommends their incorporation in Pakistani English language programs. Furthermore, this study advocates further investigating adaptable and sustainable techniques for carrying out morphology-based instruction, considering Pakistan's manifold panorama.
Keywords: Morphology; linguistic; vocabulary; student; education; grammar.

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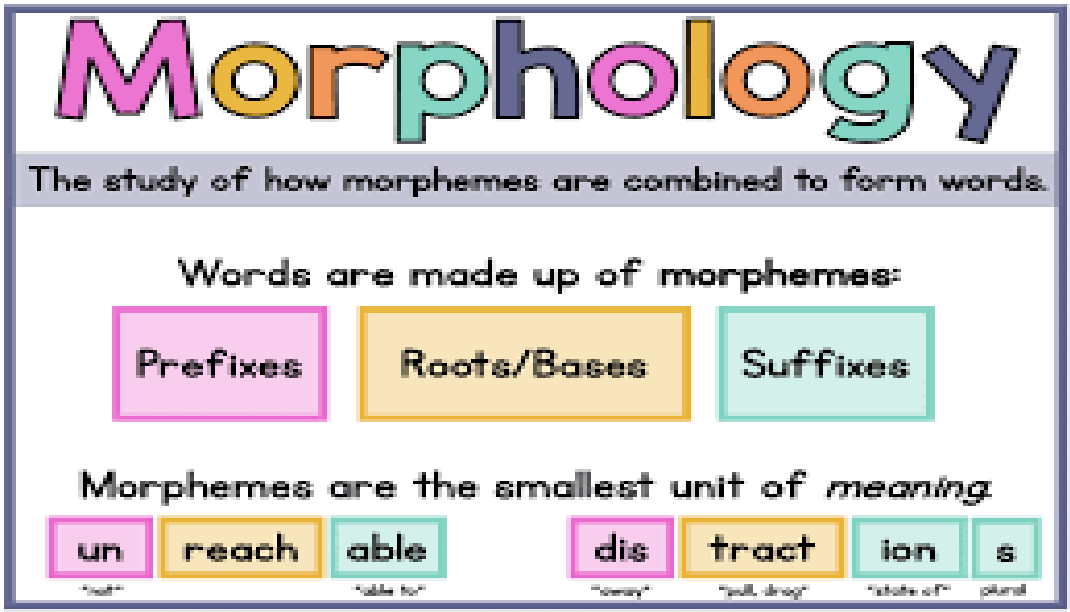
Introduction:

Morphology is the most fundamental area of linguistics. It analyses words, their construction, and their connections to other words in a particular language. It focuses on how words are grouped. Word constituents such as stems, prefixes, root words, and suffixes, called morphemes, are the smallest grammatical elements in the language. Besides uncovering the basic structure of words, morphology also studies the principles that regulate the development of new words and the modifications of existing ones.

In morphology, morphemes have a central position. Morphemes, the building blocks of language, either stand on their own, just like words, or they need to get attached to other words to make meanings, thus sharing an extensive framework for grasping the numerous manners in which words communicate specific meanings.For example, there are three morphemes in the word "unhappiness": "un", a prefix that stands for refutation; the base word is "happy", and "-ness", a suffix that represents either a condition or a state (Gaoet al., 2020).



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Morphology is the field of inquiry that combines phonological (the study of sounds of language) and syntactic (sentence framework).It plays a crucial role in linguistic comprehension and production, influencing how words are interpreted and formed across different languages and dialects. It plays a role in understanding and producing language, influencing how words are produced and processed throughout various dialects and languages. The study of morphology has considerable implications for dictionary formation or lexicography, semantics, meaning, language classroom instruction, and other linguistic areas. By offering learners the means to decipher and develop words, an understanding of morphological patterns may substantially enhance their vocabulary acquisition along with language development. It can strengthen students' language proficiency (Peters, 2017).

Branches of Morphology:

An important branch of Linguistics, Morphology has various subdomains or branches that deal with diverse facets of word structure or formation. These are as follows:

Inflectional Morphology:

This branch rearranges words to reflect grammar categories, including tense, number, aspect, mood, gender, and case. These morphemes are attached to root words to represent the grammatical characteristics without changing the actual meaning of words. For instance, if we add "-ed" to the root word "walk," we get its past tense, which is “walked" (Sereno, 1997).

Derivational Morphology:

It considers the formation of new words by attaching affixes (prefixes, suffixes, infixes, circumfixes) to root words. Contrary to inflectional morphology, these

morphemes can alter roots' meaning or word class. For example, if we add the prefix "un-" to the adjective "happy," it becomes a derivative "unhappy," hence the meaning has been changed to "not happy" (Marangolo et al., 2006).

Lexical Morphology:

Lexical morphology focuses on the composition and construction of words at the level of the lexicon—the language's mental dictionary that holds its vocabulary. It examines how words are mentally stored, acquired, and processed, how morphemes are arranged within words and how words are related to one another in semantic networks (Jarmulowicz & Taran, 2013).

Comparative Morphology:

Comparative morphology involves juxtaposing word structures from multiple language groups or languages. By juxtaposing two morphological systems, language researchers may uncover patterns of language evolution, past connections among different languages, and linguistic typology principles.

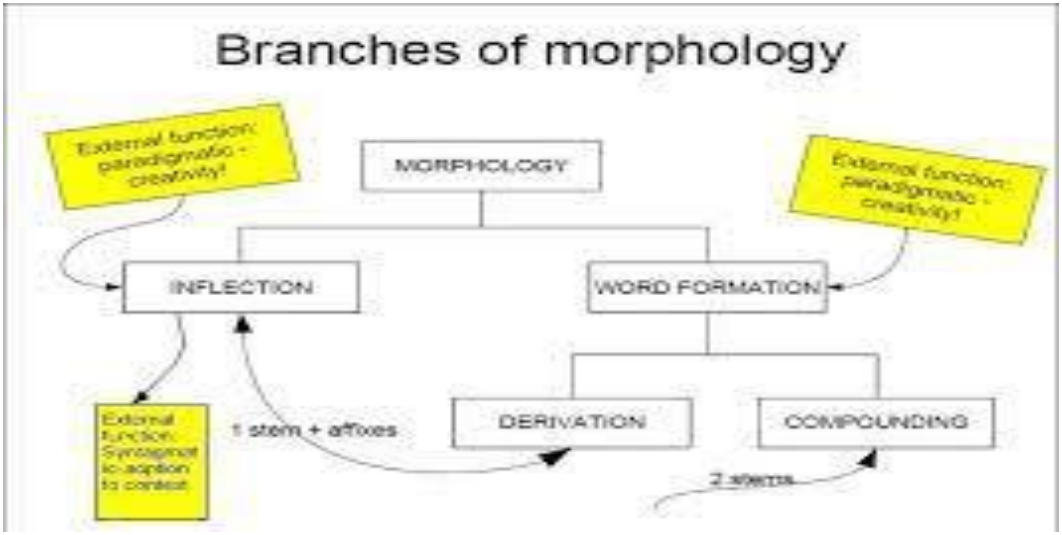
Morphophonology:

Morphophonology examines the interplay between morphology and phonology by centralizing how morphological operations influence pronunciation and phonological manifestations of words. The subfield under discussion examines ongoing phenomena, such as phonological alternations, assimilation, or vowel harmony, that occur during morphological processes.

Morph syntax:

Morph syntax analyzes the junction between morphology and syntax by focusing on how morphological structures work alongside syntactic structures during sentence construction. It further investigates the phenomena, i.e., agreement, order of words, and relationship between grammatical categories in a sentence while considering the part played by morphological markers in communicating the syntactic relationships.

All of the branches of morphology add to one's knowledge of word structure, processes of word formation, and the lexical knowledge organized within languages, yielding substantial insight into the mechanisms underpinning how languages are processed and used.



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Morphology in the Context of Pakistan:

Morphology, given the linguistic diversity of Pakistan, has a unique shape that is marked by the multilingual fabric of this place. Pakistan is painted in several languages, such as Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, and Balochi, along with many others, presenting an array of possibilities for exploring morphological variants and how they shape language acquisition and interactions. Urdu serves not only as a national language but also as a lingua franca, therefore integrating a complicated morphological system under the heavy influence of languages such as Persian, Arabic, and Turkic, besides its indigenous Indian heritage (Atta, 2021).

In Pakistan, morphologicalstudy is seen as crucial for multiple reasons. Firstly, it helps us understand the subtle differences between Urdu and other regional languages, especially the role of inflectional and derivational morphemes in word formation. For example, Urdu uses many suffixes and prefixes to change meanings and form new words, a hallmark for developing vocabulary and successful message exchange.

Morphological awareness may greatly impact language teaching techniques and learning objectives given academic context. Considering the different linguistic backgrounds of Pakistani students, incorporating morphology into pedagogical practices can add to improved understanding and grip on Urdu and the English language, which later accounts for a mode of instruction and transnational interactions. Knowledge of morphology enables students to comprehend the roots and affixes that makeup words, which can help decode challenging vocabulary, thereby improving their command of the language.

Morphology and Vocabulary Development:

Morphology is fundamental in building up one's vocabulary as it is the basis for absorbing and understanding unfamiliar terms. Focusing on the morphological makeup of words helps children interpret how terms are arranged. This knowledge helps comprehend novel phrases and infer meaning through base words, affixes, and other morphemes. Knowledge about morphological patterns enlightens students about word connections, thus broadening their lexical reserves. Likewise, studying morphology boosts the recognition of words and equips students with the skills to cope with difficult terminologies in academic papers or textbooks. Having considered these, morphology appears to be a valuable tool not only for expanding one's vocabulary but also for helping students further widen the range of their competence in language (Carlisle, 2007)

Students enrolled in grades fourth or fifth fall under the primary or elementary

level of education. These young children are probably nine to eleven years of age, but this may vary depending on the educational network or region. Children usually transform seemingly basic primary education into advanced learning exposures in grades under discussion. Students are expected to learn basic reading, writing, mathematics, and scientific and social studies skills and ensure their participation in complicated learning assignments and tasks. Fourth and fifth-grade children have been exposed to more intricate ideas, so they are strongly advised to utilize their analytical and solution-focused skills during their studies.

Significance of the Study

The present study on morphology is of paramount importance in the backdrop of Pakistan for its rich linguistic landscape, and the role languages play in different arenas of society. Successful communication, language sustenance, and academic progress heavily rely on understanding morphological structures or patterns. In a diverse landscape like Pakistan, morphology offers an in-depth understanding of the ravelled word and meaning construction procedures within the national language, including lingua franca and Urdu. By studying morphology, the investigators may facilitate language education, policydevelopment, and language conversation measures. It will ultimately lead to an expanded awareness about a wide range of languages, thus offering more open and effective ways of communication. Lookingforward, good linguistic competence, heritagepreservation, and social cohesiveness might be achieved by adding morphological studies in school curricula, language research and related undertakings.

Research Questions:

The following research questions were the focus of the study:

1. Can young learners in grades 4th and^{fifth}recognize the bases linked with morphologically complicated words as a learning outcome?

2. Does teaching based on morphological structure and patterns enhance vocabulary after being controlled for previous vocabulary knowledge?
3. Does the disparity in understanding of vocabulary between the experimental and control groups at the time of post-test result from their ability to spot roots or bases in challenging words?

Research Objectives

1.To evaluate if instruction can build on the ability of 4th and5th graders to locate the bases of morphologically complicated words.

2.This study assesses the influence of instruction based on morphological structure on vocabulary development, considering preexisting vocabulary knowledge.

3.The study aims to determine whether the ability to spot the bases of more complicated words contributes to any differences in vocabulary knowledge between the experimental and control groups duringthe post-test.

Research Methodology:

This research relies on qualitative methodology to analyze the structure and workings of morphology. In light of the existing body of literature in a given field, the present study aims to recognize and analyze all the constituents and activities involved in morphological activities and patterns by reviewing significant resources such as academic articles, research papers and books, present research attempts to dive into the theoretical systems, empirical results, and different methodological approaches utilized for studying morphology. This approach allows the researchers to unify previous literature and highlight gaps for further investigation in a given field.

Literature Review:

As stated by Allanson (2009), an area of study in linguistics, the morphological method of studying vocabulary examines the internal structure of words by

analyzing morphemes, thesmallest units that make meaning together. The above approach emphasizes splitting words into the underlying morphological parts, such as roots and affixes, to figure out related semantic and grammatical meanings. Through careful investigation of morphological intricacies underlying words, scholars may gain significant information regarding how languages evolve and how meaning is defined. This technique is crucial for recognizing the links among different words, their history, and how morphological mechanisms foster lexical variations. Therefore, our approach elevates the depth of our understanding of vocabulary application and unveils various levels of expressions inside manuscripts through the study of linguistic peculiarities.

Fazio and Gallagher (2014) emphasize the crucial role of morphology, the study of word patterns and construction, in supporting vocabularygain. Scrabbling through the rudimentary linguistic elements provides the equipment to decode unknown vocabulary, predict the underlying meaning of any new word, and anticipate relationships among words that share the same base words, prefixes, and suffixes. For example, the morpheme "bio-" represents life, helping the students group vocabulary such as biology, biography, and biosphere. This knowledge of morphology aids individuals in making reasonable presumptions about the meaning of wording, contributing to vocabulary building and improving their insights on subtleties of language. Eventually, mastery in morphology is a potential way of uncovering and getting a command of a range of words, allowing students to negotiate and present ideas efficiently throughout the linguistic domain.

Clahsen et al. (2010) state that morphology is of great importance in academia or language teaching and learning context settings. With the incorporation of morphological rules into methods of instruction, instructors encourage learners to decipher and construct new words. Manyak et al. (2018) emphasizes the

significance of morphology in elementary education, highlighting its role in nurturing language development among young learners. Introducing basic morphological concepts like prefixes, suffixes, and root words provides students with a framework for comprehending word structure and meaning. By teaching morphology at the elementary level, educators enable children to deconstruct unfamiliar words into familiar components, facilitating reading comprehension and vocabulary expansion.

Furthermore, morphological awareness enhances spelling and word formation skills, improving writing proficiency. As students grasp the foundational elements of language through morphology, they cultivate a deeper understanding of words and their interconnections, laying the groundwork for effective communication and literacy. The integration of morphology into elementary education thus emerges as a crucial component in fostering linguistic competence and instilling a lifelong passion for learning.

Conclusion:

Exploring how teaching morphological patterns influences vocabulary learning gains while considering word knowledge gives valuable insights into productive language development methods. The results demonstrate the need to incorporate morphological lessons into language acquisition projects, especially in the context of education. Primarily, this study explains how intense morphological practices could strengthen one's vocabulary learning in an unprecedented way.

Furthermore, this study explores morphology teaching in Pakistan, as the knowledge of morphology is crucial for safeguarding and recording the substantial linguistic lineage of the local languages. Every language contains a unique morphological configuration that offers insights into the societal, cultural, and historical context of a language community where language is spoken. Nevertheless, incorporating such studies in academic and language research is still

not free of challenges in a given context. Insufficient means, inadequate awareness about morphology, and the call for extensive linguistic catalogues, including research frameworks, are all issues one has to deal with. In order to tackle these challenges, the centres of learning, policymakers, and linguists need to make serious efforts to make others recognize the importance of morphology in improving linguistic competence, upholding linguistic legacies, and advancing effective communication throughout the multilingual terrain of Pakistan.

Way Forward and Suggestion:

Several key recommendations can guide the effective integration of morphology-based vocabulary instruction within Pakistan's educational landscape. Firstly, there is a pressing need for curriculum reform and the development of pedagogical resources that prioritize morphology as a foundational aspect of vocabulary learning. Educational policymakers should collaborate with curriculum developers and linguistics experts to incorporate explicit morphological instruction into language curricula at both primary and secondary levels. Educators can systematically scaffold students' morphological awareness and facilitate meaningful vocabulary acquisition by delineating clear learning objectives and instructional strategies.

Secondly, professional development programs and teacher training initiatives play a pivotal role in equipping educators with the knowledge and skills to implement morphology-based vocabulary instruction effectively. Workshops, seminars, and ongoing professional learning communities can allow teachers to deepen their understanding of morphological principles and explore innovative instructional approaches. Moreover, mentoring and peer collaboration initiatives can foster a supportive learning environment where educators exchange best practices and refine their pedagogical strategies.

Thus, theproficient handling of morphology-based language training is determined

by the partnership of different beneficiaries. i.e. teachers, policymakers, lawmakers and the community as a whole. Pakistan may tap into the revolutionary power of morphology-based vocabulary instruction programs by implementing such a strategy, which encompasses changing the curriculum, trainingteachers, and integrating technology and community involvement. It will provide the pupils with literacy and language competencies to help them flourish in this global arena.

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