

## Morphological Analysis of an Ecolinguistics Text

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### Abstract

Morphology is a central field in linguistics that examines the internal structure of words and the processes by which they are formed. A key concept in morphological studies is the morpheme, defined as the smallest meaningful unit of language. This study aims to analyze the types and functions of morphemes found in an academic ecolinguistics text in order to illustrate how morphological processes operate in written discourse. The data for this study were obtained from selected lexical items and sentences taken from a subchapter of Arran Stubbe's *Ecolinguistics*. A qualitative descriptive method was employed to identify and classify free morphemes, bound morphemes, derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, compound words, and word classes. The analysis was conducted by segmenting words into their morphemic components and examining their grammatical functions within context. The findings indicate that derivational morphemes, particularly those forming abstract nouns and technical terms, occur frequently in the text, reflecting the academic nature of ecolinguistics discourse. Inflectional morphemes mainly serve grammatical functions such as tense and number, while compound words contribute to the expression of interdisciplinary concepts. This study highlights the importance of morpheme analysis in understanding word formation and meaning construction in academic texts, especially in the field of linguistics.

**Keywords:** morpheme, morphology, word formation, ecolinguistics, linguistic analysis

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## **I. Introduction**

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies the internal structure of words and the processes of word formation. According to Lehmann (1972), a morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in language. Similarly, Nida (1952) defines morphology as the study of morphemes and their arrangement in forming words. Haspelmath and Sims (2010) further explain that morphology examines the systematic relationship between form and meaning in words as well as the way morphemes combine to create complex lexical items. Wardhaugh (1977) classifies morphemes into free morphemes, which can stand independently, and bound morphemes, which must be attached to other forms. These classifications are fundamental in understanding how meaning and grammatical function are encoded in language.

This assignment focuses on the morphological analysis of selected texts from the subchapter “Morpheme Classification and Analysis” in *Ecolinguistics* by Arran Stibbe. The analysis aims to identify and classify inflectional morphemes, derivational morphemes, compound words, and word classes found in the text in order to demonstrate how morphological processes operate in academic discourse related to ecolinguistics.

## **II. Method**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design. The object of the study was an academic text in the field of ecolinguistics, taken from a subchapter of Arran Stibbe’s *Ecolinguistics*. The data consisted of selected words and sentences containing morphological elements such as derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, compound words, and various word classes. The data were obtained through document analysis by carefully reading the text and identifying words relevant to morphological analysis. The analysis was conducted by segmenting the selected words into their morphemic components and classifying them based on their form and grammatical function. The results of the analysis were then described qualitatively to explain how morphological processes contribute to meaning construction in the text.

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design using textual analysis. The data were derived from an academic ecolinguistics text taken from Arran Stibbe’s *Ecolinguistics*. The research focused on identifying and describing morphological features, including free morphemes, bound morphemes, derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, compound words, and word classes found in the text. This design was selected because it allows for in-depth analysis of linguistic forms and functions without involving numerical measurement or human participants.

## **Participants**

This study did not involve human participants. The data were obtained from a written academic text in the field of ecolinguistics, taken from a subchapter of Arran Stibbe's *Ecolinguistics*. The selected text served as the unit of analysis in this study. The data consisted of words and sentences containing morphological elements relevant to the research objectives, such as derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, compound words, and word classes.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

The data in this study were collected using document analysis. The primary instrument of data collection was the researcher, supported by a morphological analysis checklist and classification tables. These instruments were used to identify and categorize morphological elements found in the text. The data collection procedure involved several steps. First, the selected ecolinguistics text was read carefully and repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of its content. Second, words and sentences containing morphological features such as derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, compound words, and different word classes were identified and marked. Third, the selected data were recorded and organized into tables based on their morphological categories. This systematic procedure ensured that the data collected were relevant to the research objectives.

## **Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive approach. The analysis focused on identifying and interpreting morphological features found in the selected text. The analysis process involved several steps. First, the collected data were coded based on morphological categories, including free morphemes, bound morphemes, derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, compound words, and word classes. Second, each coded item was examined to determine its form and grammatical function within the context of the text. Third, the results of the analysis were organized into tables and described narratively to explain how morphological processes contribute to meaning construction in the text. This qualitative analysis did not involve statistical calculation, as the purpose of the study was to provide descriptive and interpretative insights rather than numerical measurement.

### III. Findings of Morpheme Analysis

Some morphemes may function differently depending on context therefore, classification in this analysis is based on their function within the selected text. The findings show that the selected ecolinguistics text contains a high frequency of derivational morphemes, particularly affixes such as -tion, -ity, -al, -ism, and eco-. These affixes are commonly used in academic and scientific discourse to form abstract nouns and technical terms, for example ecolinguistics, ecological, environmentalism, and interaction. This reflects the conceptual and theoretical nature of the text, which relies heavily on nominalization to express complex ideas.

No	Word	Base	Derivational Morpheme	Word Class Change
1	ecolinguistics	linguistics	eco-	Noun → Noun (field)
2	ecological	ecology	-ical	Noun → Adjective
3	sustainability	sustain	-ability	Verb → Noun
4	interaction	interact	-ion	Verb → Noun
5	environmentalism	environment	-al, -ism	Noun → Noun
6	awareness	aware	-ness	Adjective → Noun
7	domination	dominate	-ion	Verb → Noun
8	political	politics	-al	Noun → Adjective

Inflectional morphemes were also frequently identified, especially plural markers (-s), past participles (-ed), and present participles (-ing). These morphemes primarily function to mark grammatical relationships such as tense, number, and aspect without changing the core meaning or word class of the base forms.

No	Word	Base	Inflectional Morpheme	Function
1	subjects	subject	-s	Plural noun
2	studied	study	-ed	Past tense
3	humans	human	-s	Plural noun
4	extending	extend	-ing	Present participle
5	committed	commit	-ed	Past participle

In addition, many compound words and compound phrases were found, such as ecological turn, environmental communication, and life-sustaining interactions. These compounds play an important role in conveying interdisciplinary concepts by combining ecological and linguistic terminology.

No	Compound Form	Components	Meaning
1	ecological turn	ecological + turn	Shift toward ecological perspective
2	environmental communication	environmental + communication	Communication about environment
3	life-sustaining interactions	life-sustaining + interactions	Interactions that maintain life
4	human societies	human + societies	Social human groups
5	natural world	natural + world	Non-human environment

The word class analysis further demonstrates that noun phrases dominate the text, indicating a strong emphasis on concepts, processes, and abstract entities. Verb phrases are mainly used to describe relationships and processes, while adjective and adverbial phrases serve to qualify and evaluate these concepts. Overall, the morphological patterns identified in the text reflect the characteristics of academic writing in ecolinguistics, which prioritizes precision, abstraction, and conceptual clarity.

Sentence	Noun Phrase (NP)	Verb Phrase (VP)	AdjP
The ecological turn has helped humanities subjects...	the ecological turn, humanities subjects	has helped	ecological
Ecolinguistic studies have normative goals...	ecolinguistic studies, normative goals	have	normative

#### IV. Discussion

This discussion interprets the findings of the morpheme analysis in relation to the research objectives and relevant linguistic theories. The analysis demonstrates how morphological patterns contribute to meaning construction and knowledge representation in academic ecolinguistic discourse.

##### 4.1 Dominance of Derivational Morphemes in Ecolinguistic Discourse

One of the main findings of this study is the high frequency of derivational morphemes, particularly affixes such as *eco-*, *-tion*, *-ity*, *-al*, and *-ism*. These morphemes are commonly used to form abstract nouns and technical terms, which are characteristic of academic and scientific writing. This dominance reflects the conceptual nature of ecolinguistics, a field that integrates linguistic analysis with ecological and philosophical perspectives.

Derivational morphemes enable writers to condense complex processes and relationships into nominal forms, such as interaction, sustainability, and environmentalism. This process of nominalization allows abstract ecological concepts to be discussed as stable entities, facilitating theoretical explanation and critical analysis. This finding supports Plag's (2003) claim that derivational morphology plays a crucial role in academic word formation by expanding lexical resources and enabling conceptual abstraction.

#### 4.2 Inflectional Morphemes and Grammatical Precision

The analysis also reveals frequent use of inflectional morphemes, including plural markers (-s), past tense (-ed), and present participles (-ing). These morphemes primarily function to express grammatical relationships such as tense, number, and aspect without altering the core meaning or word class of the base words.

In academic ecolinguistic texts, grammatical precision is essential for clearly expressing relationships between agents, processes, and outcomes. The consistent use of inflectional morphemes ensures clarity and coherence in presenting arguments and describing ecological phenomena. This finding aligns with Haspelmath (2002), who emphasizes that inflectional morphology serves to maintain syntactic and semantic clarity in extended discourse.

#### 4.3 Compound Forms as Interdisciplinary Meaning-Making Tools

Another important finding is the presence of compound words and phrases such as ecological turn, environmental communication, and life-sustaining interactions. These compound forms play a significant role in ecolinguistics by integrating concepts from ecology and linguistics into unified expressions.

Compounding allows writers to create terms that represent interdisciplinary ideas efficiently, reflecting the hybrid nature of ecolinguistics as a field. This supports Katamba's (2005) view that compounding is a productive morphological strategy in English, particularly in academic domains where new concepts must be named and conceptualized.

#### 4.4 Word Class Distribution and Academic Writing Style

The word class analysis indicates a dominance of noun phrases in the selected text. This pattern suggests that the text prioritizes concepts, theories, and abstract entities rather than actions or events. Verb phrases mainly function to describe relationships and processes, while adjective and adverbial phrases are used to evaluate and specify these concepts. This distribution is consistent with characteristics of academic discourse, which often relies on nominalization to present knowledge in an objective and impersonal manner. According to Biber et al. (1999), academic texts tend to favor noun-heavy constructions to achieve formality, precision, and informational density. In ecolinguistics, this linguistic style supports the critical examination of human–environment relationships.

#### 4.5 Implications for Morphological Theory and Language Learning

From a theoretical perspective, the findings reinforce the importance of morphology in meaning construction and discourse organization. The interaction between derivational, inflectional, and compound forms illustrates how morphological processes contribute to both lexical expansion and grammatical structure. From a pedagogical standpoint, the results suggest that explicit instruction in morpheme analysis can enhance learners' understanding of academic vocabulary, particularly in interdisciplinary fields like ecolinguistics. Awareness of morphological patterns may help learners decode complex terms and improve their academic reading and writing skills, supporting previous studies on morphology-based vocabulary instruction.

### **V. Conclusion**

This study examined morphological patterns in an ecolinguistics academic text with a focus on derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, compound forms, and word class distribution. The findings reveal that derivational morphemes, particularly affixes such as *eco-*, *-tion*, *-ity*, *-al*, and *-ism*, dominate the text, reflecting the abstract and conceptual nature of ecolinguistic discourse. Inflectional morphemes were also frequently used to mark grammatical relationships, while compound words and phrases functioned as key tools for expressing interdisciplinary concepts. Additionally, the dominance of noun phrases highlights the emphasis on conceptualization and theoretical discussion in academic writing.

One major strength of this study lies in its detailed morphological analysis of authentic academic data, which provides clear insight into how meaning is constructed through word formation in ecolinguistics. By focusing on representative examples, the study effectively illustrates dominant morphological patterns without overwhelming the analysis. However, a limitation of the study is that it is based on a single selected text, which may not fully represent the full range of morphological variation across ecolinguistic discourse. Future studies could analyze a larger corpus of texts from different authors or subfields to strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

In terms of practical implications, the findings suggest that morpheme analysis is a valuable tool for understanding academic vocabulary, particularly in interdisciplinary fields such as ecolinguistics. For language education, explicit instruction in morphological awareness may help learners comprehend complex academic texts more effectively. For linguistic research, this study reinforces the importance of morphology in discourse analysis and highlights its relevance in examining how ecological concepts are linguistically constructed.

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