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**“A Morphological Analysis of Key Passages in Oscar
Wilde’s The Happy Prince: Linguistic Insights and
Literary Impact”**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

"هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ
السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ ۚ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ
يَعْلَمُونَ"

صدق الله العظيم

(سوره يونس : آيه ٥)

Dedication

To those who have been a support and a help ,

To my dear father, who , to me in every step taught me the meaning of giving , without expecting anything in return.

To my brothers, childhood companions and partners in joy

And to my beloved husband, life partner and supporter of my dreams,

I dedicate this research as a token of loyalty and gratitude to your pure hearts and your inexhaustible support.

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Abstract

In general, morphology – is derived from the Greek word *morphs* meaning "shape" – studies the internal structure and composition of words as well as the patterns and principles on which their structure is based. This study explain the study of the subject of morphology to show the utmost importance of morphology in the development of spoken and written language; this science is concerned with the structure of the word, and how words are formed from their constituent parts, in terms of the number of letters their vowels, and the changes that occur to them and how they contribute to the formation of "The research being discussed the topic (A morphological description of some of Sakis' texts , The Open Window) in the first and second chapters. In the first chapter, this study explain morphology and some definitions related to morphology and types of morphology. How morphology affects meanings and words in language with clear examples. In the second chapter, this study discuss the short story and analyze how morphology affects the words in the story.

Introduction

Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince* is a timeless literary work renowned for its poetic language, vivid imagery, and profound moral themes. Set in a fictional city, the story follows the statue of a compassionate prince and a self-sacrificing swallow who work together to alleviate the suffering of the poor. Wilde's eloquent use of language plays a crucial role in conveying the story's emotional depth and social message. One way to explore this language is through morphological analysis, which focuses on the structure of words and their grammatical roles within sentences. Morphology examines elements such as roots, prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings, and word formation processes. By analyzing key passages in *The Happy Prince*, this study can uncover how Wilde's linguistic choices contribute to the tone, imagery, and symbolic elements of the narrative. For instance, the use of descriptive adjectives emphasizes the contrast between opulence and poverty, while verb forms highlight action and transformation throughout the plot. This morphological analysis not only reveals Wilde's meticulous attention to linguistic detail but also demonstrates how language structure supports the story's overarching themes of empathy, sacrifice, and societal inequality.

Chapter One

Morphology and its Types

1.1 Morphology

Morphology was first named a branch of linguistics by German Linguist August Schleicher in 1859. Morphology has evolved over the years to become one of the most important branches of linguistics(Booij , 2007). According to(Haspelmath & Sims, 2013) Morphology examines morphemes (the smallest meaningful units in a language) and how they combine to form words. Morphology is the study of a set of inflections used to produce words. Morphology is a Branch of linguistics that studies the grammatical properties of words and How words are related to each other in a language. In fact, the main task of morphology is to study how words are related (O'Grady, 1997).

1.2 Definition of morphemes

A morpheme is any of the smallest meaningful components within a linguistic expression, especially within a word. Many words are themselves independent morphemes, while other words contain multiple morphemes; in linguistic terminology, this is the distinction, respectively, between free and bound morphemes. The field of linguistic study devoted to morphemes is called morphology. (Haspelmath & sims, 2010) In English, within a word with multiple morphemes the main morpheme that gives the word its basic meaning is called the root (such as cat in cats), which can be bound or free. At the same time, additional bound morphemes, called suffixes, can be added before or after the root, such as -s in cats , which indicate multiplicity but are always attached to the root name and are not considered a word In their own right. The morpheme is the smallest morphological unit that carries a meaning or grammatical function. It is the basis of modern morphological analysis. It should be noted that the morpheme is

included in a major divisional series called the stereotypical compounds or the speech series(Qaddour, 2008) , (Shaheen. 1980) .According to (Yule, 2006) a Morpheme is a "minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function". Units of grammatical function include the forms used to indicate past tense or plural.

1.3 Types of morphemes

1.3.1 The free morphemes.

There are free morphemes, that is, morphemes that can stand by themselves as single words, for example, open and tour .(Yule, 2006) .A free morpheme Is a morpheme (or word element) that can stand alone as a word. It is also called an unbound morpheme or an independent morpheme. A free morpheme is the opposite of a bound morpheme, which is a word element that cannot stand alone as a word.(Richard N. , 2019)

1.3.1.1 Simple words

A simple word consists of one morpheme, as well as a free Morpheme, a morpheme that has the ability to occur independently. In " The farmer kills the duckling", the free morphemes are farm, kill, and Duck. It is important to note here that (in this sentence) not all of these free morphemes are words in the sense of minimal free forms—farm and duck are examples of this."(MacGregor, 2009).Free morphemes can be divided into content words and function words. Content words, as their name suggests, carry most of the content of a sentence. Function words generally perform some sort of grammatical role, and carry little meaning of their

own. One circumstance in which the distinction between function words and content words is useful is when one tends to keep verbosity to a minimum; for example, When drafting a telegram, where every word costs money. In such circumstances, one tends to exclude most of the function words (such as to, that, and, there, some, and but), and concentrate instead on the content words to convey the essence of the message."(Wessler & Milicic, 1999)

1.3.1.2 Lexical and Functional Morphology

Free morphemes fall into two categories. The first category is that group of regular nouns, adjectives, and verbs that we think of as the words that carry the “content” of the messages we are conveying. These free morphemes are called lexical morphemes, and examples include:(Girl, man, house, tiger, sad, long, yellow, sincere, open, look, follow, Break). We can add new lexical morphemes to a language fairly easily, so they are treated as an “open” class of words. Other types of free morphemes are called functional morphemes, and examples include(and, but, when, because, on, near, above, in, the, that, it, them) . This group consists largely of the functional words in the language such as conjunctions, prepositions, articles, and pronouns. Because we almost never add new functional morphemes to a language, they are described as a “closed” class of words.)(Yule, 2006).

1.3.2 The bound morphemes

Bound morphemes, which are those forms that cannot normally stand alone and are usually attached to another form, for example(re-, -ist, -ed, and s) . We can say that all the suffixes (prefixes and suffixes) In English are bound morphemes. Free morphemes can generally be defined as a set of separate English word forms such as basic nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc. When used with attached bound morphemes, the basic word forms Are technically known as roots (Bloomfield, 1933)

We should be noted that this type of description is a partial simplification of the morphological facts of English. There are a number of English words where the element treated as the root is not, In fact, a free morpheme. In words like Receive, Reduce and Repeat, we can identify the bound morpheme re- at the beginning, but the elements –ceive, -duce and -peat are not separate word forms and so cannot be free morphemes. These types of morphemes are sometimes described as 'bound stems' to keep them distinct from 'Free stems' like dress and care. There are two types of restricted morphology: inflectional morphology and derivational morphology . (Richard, 2020).

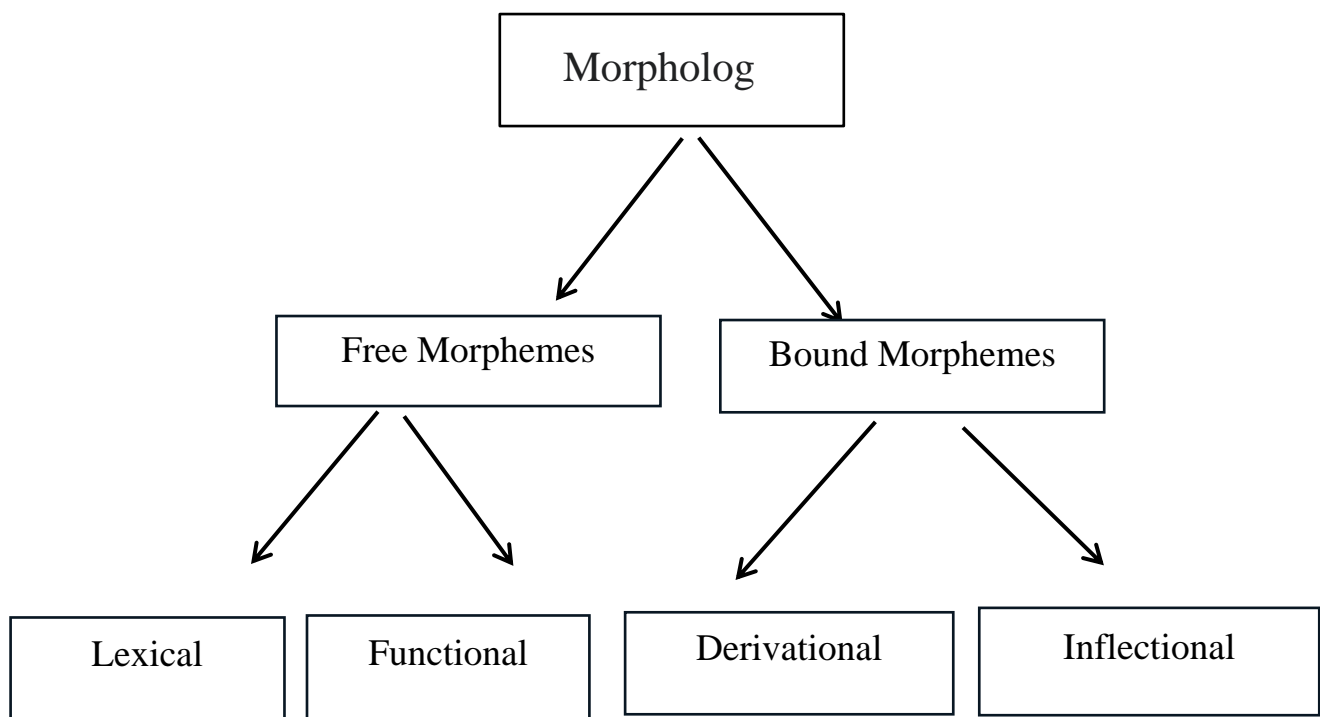
1.3.2.1 Derivational morpheme

A derivational morpheme is an affix that derives a new word or a new form of an existing word. The simple definition is that derivational morphemes are those that derive new words . As a reminder, an affix is a Letter or group of letters we attach to the beginning (prefix) or end (suffix) of a root word. Here are some examples of derivational morphemes :

- -" .ness" added to "kind" creates "kindness "
- -.ment" added to "develop" creates "development "
- ize" added to "modern" creates "modernize "
- -".less" added to "hope" creates "hopeless"(Vaia 2024 ,)

1.3.2.2 Inflectional morpheme

In English morphology, an inflectional morpheme is a suffix that's added to a word (a noun, verb, adjective or an adverb) to assign a particular grammatical property to that word, such as its tense, number, possession, or comparison. Inflectional morphemes in English include the bound morphemes -s (or -es); 's (or s'); -ed; -en; -er; -est; and – ing. These suffixes may even do double- or triple-duty. For example, - s can note possession (in conjunction with an apostrophe in the proper place), can make count nouns plural, or can put a verb in the third-person singular tense. The suffix -ed can make past participles or past-tense verbs.(Richard, 2020)



Morphology from
(1)

Chapter Two

Analysis morphology in The Happy Prince

2. Analysis morphology in The Happy Prince

In general, morphology – the term is derived from the Greek word *morphs* meaning "shape" – studies the internal structure and composition of words as well as the patterns and principles on which their structure is based. We explain the study of the subject of morphology to show the utmost importance of morphology in the development of spoken and written language; this science is concerned with the structure of the word, and how words are formed from their constituent parts, in terms of the number of letters, their vowels, and the words in the story. The story "The Happy Prince" by Oscar Wilde, Morphology can be applied to analyze the text and delve into linguistic structures. In the example mentioned before, the focus is on words and structures that indicate the psychological state and general context.

**" I am quite happy, and all my flowers are doing well I am afraid I had
Rather a hard time of it, and I am afraid that I can not enlarge my Experience
in it, but now the spring has come, and I am quite happy, And all my flowers
are doing well" (Wilde, p, 2,1888)**

Flowers in the story are often associated with hope, beauty, and psychological comfort. The speaker's use of the phrase "all my flowers are doing well) symbolizes the state of psychological balance he has reached after "winter" or a difficult period. In this sentence, the writer uses the bound morpheme in the word (flowers) because morphemes that cannot exist independently, and need to be linked to a root or word such as: -s, -ed –Ing.)(Francis 1993) . Also the word (enlarge) Enlarge belongs to derivational prefix where it consists of large as a base morpheme and en- as a bound morpheme. The Word enlarge based on the above data belongs to de derivational affix because prefix en- that changes the class or

category adj. into verb.)(Francis1998).Oscar Wilde relies on morphemes to enrich meaning, such as using bound morphemes to add detail (en_large) or present tense (do_ing).

"I really had no money at all to buy bread with, it's like the winter Embalmed my feet" .(reference, page, year) (Wilde, p, 2. 1888)

In this line, the free morphemes are the standalone words that can exist Independently, such as: "I," "really," "had," "no," "money," "at," "all," "to," "buy," "bread," "with," "it's," "like," "the," "winter," "my," and "feet."(Picket & Elson, 1962).

The bound morphemes are parts of words that cannot stand alone and modify the meaning of free morphemes. In this sentence:Embalmed (V), (em-)+balm (N) + (-ed). The word Embalmed it consists of balm as a base morpheme and em-and-ed as a bound morpheme.Process of derivation by added prefix em-, it changes the meaning of the base morpheme from balm (N) means 'the thing related with medicine on cream which is hot' into embalmed (V) means 'doing the activity using balm'. The contraction "it's" contains two morphemes: the free morpheme "it" and the bound morpheme "'s" (short for "is").(Francis ,1993) .

""Why can't you be like the Happy Prince?' asked a sensible mother of her Little boy who was crying for the moon ".(Wilde, p, 2.,1888)

This text is taken from the story "The Happy Prince" by Oscar Wilde, and carries a deep symbolic meaning. A wise mother blames her crying child for something impossible (the moon), and demands that he be like the Happy Prince, a character in the story known for his sacrifice and apparent happiness despite the hidden pain. The Happy Prince was a gilded statue who looked sadly at the suffering of the people, and decided to sacrifice everything he had to help them.

"Why can't you be like the Happy Prince?" The text contains free Morphemes (such as "like", "prince", "happy"), and bound morphemes (such As "t" in "be", and "the" in "The Happy Prince"). This analysis shows how a sentence is made up of small units with specific meanings that are combined to form the complete meaning.

Conclusion

This study delved into the morphological aspects of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince*, examining how deliberate morphological choices enhance meaning and amplify the story's emotional and thematic resonance. Through a close analysis of selected passages, the research revealed that Wilde's morphological structures are intricately woven into the narrative, reinforcing key motifs such as sacrifice, compassion, and societal injustice. His strategic use of word forms, affixations, and derivational patterns not only enriches the text's aesthetic quality but also deepens its emotional impact, allowing readers to engage more profoundly with the characters and their struggles.

By bridging linguistic analysis and literary criticism, this study underscores the significance of morphology as a tool for literary interpretation, demonstrating how linguistic precision can illuminate a text's underlying messages. The findings suggest that Wilde's craftsmanship extends beyond thematic and symbolic layers to include meticulous linguistic design, where every morphological choice serves a narrative or affective purpose.

This interdisciplinary approach paves the way for further research at the intersection of linguistics and literary studies, encouraging scholars to explore how morphological, syntactic, and phonological elements collectively shape literary meaning. Future studies could expand this framework to other works of Wilde or apply it to different genres and authors, fostering a more nuanced understanding of how language mechanics and artistic expression interact in storytelling. Ultimately, this research affirms that linguistic analysis is not merely supplementary but integral to unlocking the full interpretive potential of literary texts.

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