

Handout 9 Morpho phonology /AS/ (aronoff #chap3)

Morphophonology (also **morphophonemics**, **morphonology**) is a branch of linguistics which studies:

- The phonological structure of morphemes.
- The combinatory phonic modifications of morphemes which happen when they are combined.
- The alternative series which serve a morphological function.

Examples of a morphophonological alternatives in English include these distinctions:

- Plurals "-es" and "-s", as in "bus, buses", vs. "bun, buns".
- Plural of "-f" is "-ves", as in "leaf, leaves".
- Different pronunciations for the past tense marker "-ed".

Allomorphs

[d]: blamed [blejmd], triggered [trig erd], realized [rij elajzd], sighed

[sajd], rubbed [rʌbd]

[t]: jumped [dʒʌmpt], licked [lɪkt], hushed [hʌʃt], laughed [læft],

itched [ɪtʃt]

[ed]: aided [ejr ed], knighted [nʌjɹ ed]

Assimilation rule

suffix /d/ → [t], the /d/ has **assimilated** to the preceding segment in voicing.

Epenthesis

in [ed], the [e] has been added by an automatic phonological rule of **epenthesis** (i.e., insertion of a phonological segment or segments) that is triggered by the fact that the final segment in the verb and the suffix itself agree in both place and continuancy.

The term used in phonetics and phonology to refer to a type of intrusion, where an extra sound has been inserted in a word; often subclassified into prosthesis (Latin status changed to Spanish estado and French état/été) and anaptyxis (insertion of a vowel. For example, English "hamster" /'hæmstər/ often pronounced with an added "p" sound,.)

Epenthetic sounds are common both in historical change and in connected speech (e.g. incredible as /ɪŋkʰredɪbl/).

Determining the basic form of the morpheme

not an easy job

Greek

aitiops 'Ethiopian'
p̄leps 'vein'

aitiopos 'of an Ethiopian'
p̄lebos 'of a vein'

Formation of Classical Greek *p̄leps*

a. Stem + nominative suffix: *p̄leb* + *s*

b. Voicing assimilation: *p̄leps*

voicelessness of the final consonant in the verb spreads forward to the suffix is called **progressive assimilation**. If the phoneme changes to match the preceding phoneme, it is progressive assimilation.

■ “dogs” :
 /s/ → [z] / [g] _____
 (the ending [s] is assimilated to [z] by the influence of the preceding voiced [g].)

■ “pubs” :
 /s/ → [z] / [b] _____
 (the ending [s] is assimilated to [z] by the influence of the preceding voiced [b].)

In the Classical Greek example, the voicelessness of the nominative suffix moves in the opposite direction. We call this **regressive assimilation**.

unwanted vowel–vowel contact hiatus.

A term used in phonetics and phonology to refer to two adjacent vowels belonging to different syllables. Examples include seeing, neo and way out. In such cases, the vowels are said to be ‘in hiatus’.

Auditorily perceivable distribution of two consecutive (heterosyllabic) monophthongs over two syllables.

For example, the two heterosyllabic monophthongs in Ital. [ˈmjɛ:iɪ] ‘mine’ vs the diphthong [ɛ:i] in the competing [mjɛ:i] or in Eng. [hay’ɛtəs] hiatus.

Hiatus can also occur between words in a sentence (the egg).

In English, the insertion of a semivowel may be introduced to eliminate hiatus or, in some dialects the insertion of r: *Edna-r-interjected*.

Hiatus bridging can also occur through contraction, crasis, liaison, and synaeresis.