

**INFLECTIONAL MORPHEMES IN STANDARD ENGLISH  
AND KURDISH: A CONTRASTIVE STUDY**

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The present article is an attempt to deal with inflectional morphemes. The research is about the contrastive study between Kurdish and English morphemes. This article is largely a theoretical study between English and Kurdish languages in inflectional morphemes. Then the method used here is analytical and descriptive approach describing the data using the principles of contrastive linguistics to show the similarity and dissimilarity between them in morphology, in particular in inflectional morphemes.

Keywords: morpheme, inflection, morphology, prefix, suffix.

This article presents the approaches of inflectional morphology. It sheds some light on some definitions of morphology, morpheme, inflectional and the differences and similarities between inflectional morphemes. Morphology can be defined as a major of linguistics which deals with the internal structure of words. Morphology is one of the most attracting and interesting parts for linguists and morphologists as well and tempts and encourages them to study and investigate morphology and also there is no language in the world that can develop without knowing very well established word formation values. Not only linguistics, but also teachers and psychologists are interested in morphology and they are eager the ways how the speakers use it so as to increase their lexical capacity. Inflectional Morphemes having bound grammatical morphemes are

called inflectional morphemes, and also its types and categories are explained. They never change the syntactic category of the words or morphemes to which they are connected. They are always connecting to complete words. The major syntactic categories that are marked by inflections are nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

Most second language learners encounter various problems trying to acquire the second or target language, particularly, in non-native environment. The major influence is usually that of the mother-tongue interference and the sociolinguistic / sociocultural environment where the speaker/learner lives.

Another problem arises in Kurdish is that some morphological affixes can change the whole meaning added to the lexeme, such as the prefix “ba”, which means “in” in Kurdish, can change the meaning when added to the word “roz” day becoming “baroz” everyday.

As far as inflections are concerned, Kurdish language is not an easy system in case of inflections. Thus, it could be difficult to use the inflections compared with English. In Kurdish, the verb is suffixed to the suffix “krt” referring to the past tense inflection, without changing the verb form, such as:

Mn eshaka tawawa akam. – I will finish my work.

English morphology format presupposes due to Aronoff and Fudeman [1]: that the term morphology was generally recognized by German poet, novelist, writer and philosopher Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe, in the nineteenth century which was used normally in biology. It was derived from Greek, morph' means 'shape' form. This term in biology is used to denote the study of formula and construction of organisms and through geology is known as the study of the pattern and making progress and advancing of land forms. Regarding to linguistics, morphology is a branch of linguistic, that contracts with words, their structure and the way of words are made.

Within the framework of Kurdish morphology the term morphology in Kurdish language comes from the Greek language and consists of morph which means shape, and logos which means science. The term of morphology has defined by different linguists many times, but the accepted definition is made by Kareem: morphology is an investigation which is dealing with word in the state of forming and shifting.

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As for English morpheme, Yule [3] states that “the definition of a morpheme is minimum unit of meaning or grammatical function. Units of grammatical function include forms used to indicate past tense or plural”.

Brinton [2] says that morpheme is defined as the smallest meaning unit in a language, and isn't equal to a word but can be smallest unit such as the phoneme, the morpheme indicate either a class of form or an abstract form from particular shapes of language. A morpheme can be subdivided into smaller meaningful units because it isn't internally separate.

Morpheme is the smallest meaningful part in the language, it consists of phoneme or more than one which has a grammatical function in a language, excluding and changing any phoneme or dividing it, the original meaning or the rule is disturbed.

As for English inflections, Crystal [3] believes that inflection can be defined as a term used in morphology to denote one of the main processes of the word-formation which is inflectional morphology. Inflectional morphology refers to grammatical relationships, such as plural, past, and possession. A word inflects for past, plural etc. e.g., *play, plays, played* constitutes a single paradigm.

Huddleston and Pullum [4] define inflection as the difference in the forms of a lexeme. For instance *car* and *cars* are unlike inflectional shapes of the same lexeme CAR. Similarly, *big, bigger, biggest* are inflectional forms of the lexeme BIG. These differences are grammatical. They are covered under a single dictionary entry and there is no exact mentioning of the word-forms in the dictionary.

As far as inflections are concerned the inflectional morphemes in Kurdish language are limited and less than derivational ones. The researchers give a deep report about inflection in Kurdish and the function of them as well. The term of inflectional morpheme has been defined by linguists. Inflectional morphemes have grammatical functions aimed at organizing the relations between words.

Some grammarians believe that inflections are attached to words and base, and don't change the category of the word. For instance, when (tr and trin) which is in English (more and most) are added to adjective without changing the class word. It is still remaining as an adjective and used in the position an adjective. For example, English possesses "er" for compare two things and also "est" for more than two things. And Kurdish has "tr" for compare two things and "trin" for more than two. For example:

Old – older– oldest, pir – pirtr – pirtrin.

The dissimilarity is in Kurdish language which does not have (more and most) whereas English has them when the words are than two syllables.

Inflectional morphemes have the grammatical function such as Kur==kuran, boy==boys. But those morphemes which change include prefix and suffix that word formation change the part of speech for example: yasa==yasdanar, law==lawyer.

The two nouns morphemes in English (s) and (a) in Kurdish are used to indicate plurality and they are similar to each other. Both morphemes emerge at the end of nouns in two languages, for example, cat – cats, Kur – kuran. And also

Kurdish possesses another group to show plurality which is dissimilar to the English language and English does not have this group such as (at, hat, chat. Gal, aha) baxat – gardens, Dihat – villages.

Possessive nouns in English use two morphemes ('s and s') to show singular or plurality possessiveness which is dissimilar to the Kurdish language which only has ...y.... to demonstrate possessiveness. For instance, the girl's book for singular and the girls' book for plural and in Kurdish only uses ...y....for example, (kiliely dargaka ) which mean in English ( door key) to possessive for both singular and plural.

There is another dissimilarity between the two languages regarding the past simple, Kurdish has the morpheme (s, h, I, t) to show the past simple when the verb is active and pronounced are added to the last of the verb, but when it is passive, the morphemes (I) is appears following (r) ed and which is different from English because English has (ed) and some exceptions to illustrate:

Active: xwardn=xward, froshtn=frosht, shkan=shka.

Passive: Froshtn=froshta, xwardn=xwra, kre=kra.

For English: play= played, go=went.

Another difference between two languages are two morphemes (da) which is used with past continuous and comes before the verb and in English (ing) is added to the verb and comes at the end. Where as:

Kurdish: chw – dachw, went – was going.

English: eat – eating.

In fact, the rational purpose behind this article is to identify the similarity and dissimilarity in the two languages (inflectional morphemes). Thus, each language has its own principles to demonstrate grammatical functions which are sometimes, in some cases, similar or dissimilar to each other. In this article, the researchers studied morpheme and inflectional morpheme in Kurdish and English language proven with examples in distinguishing in both languages.

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