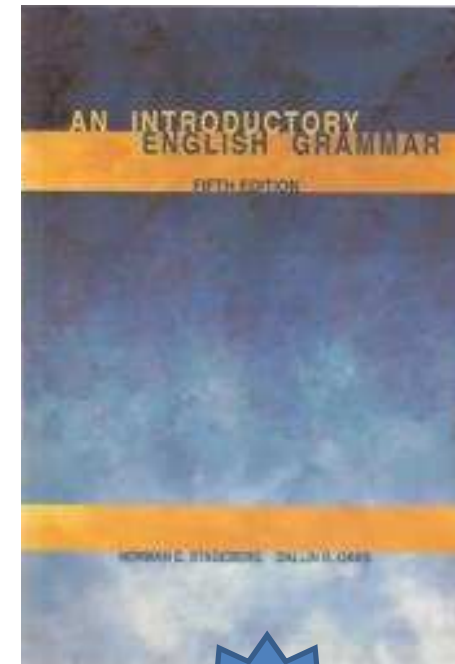
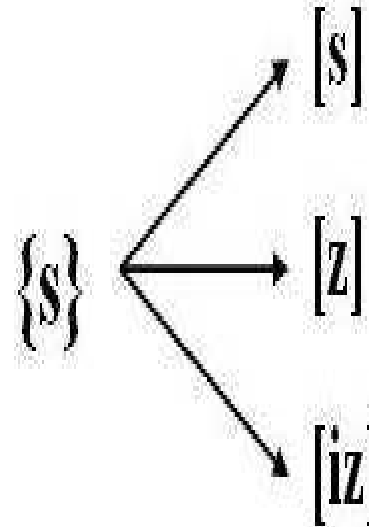




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**LANE 333 -  
MORPHOLOGY  
2012 - Term 1**



# ALLOMORPHS

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## Morphemes and Allomorphs

**PAST TENSE:** called [d], talked [t], glided [əd]

**MORPHEME:**

[-d]

**ALLOMORPHS:**

/-d/

/-t/

/-əd/

# Morphemes and Allomorphs

**Plural formation:** desks [s], cars [z], buses [əz]

**MORPHEME:**

[-s]

**ALLOMORPHS:**

/-s/

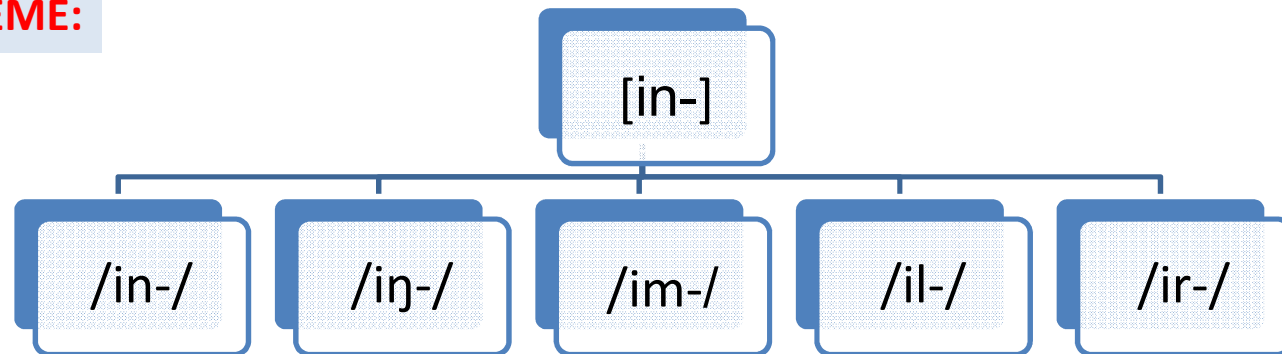
/-z/

/-əz/

## Morphemes and Allomorphs

The negative [in-]: insane [in] , incomplete [in], impossible [im], illegal [il], irrevocable [ir].

**MORPHEME:**



**ALLOMORPHS:**

# ALLOMORPHS: VARIATIONS OF MORPHEMES

## DEFINITION:

An allomorph is 'any of the different forms of a morpheme'.

[Richards, Platt & Weber, 1987: 9]

## EXAMPLE: long, length

MORPHEME

{long}

FREE ALLOMORPH

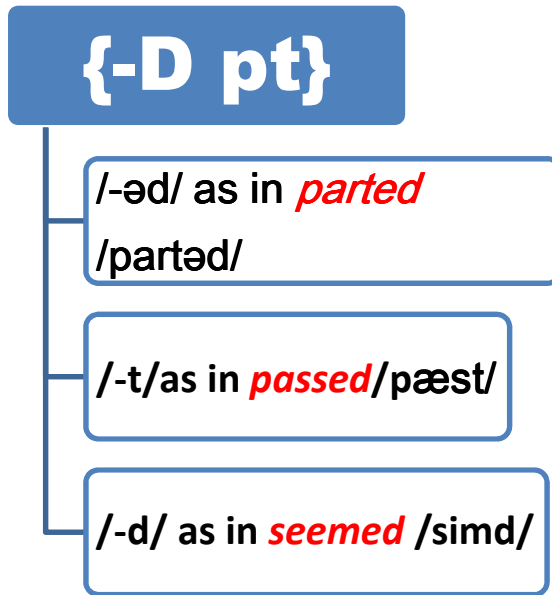
/lɔŋ/

BOUND ALLOMORPH

/lɛŋ-/

**NOTE:** a morpheme may have more than one phonemic form.

## SELECTION OF ALLOMORPHS:



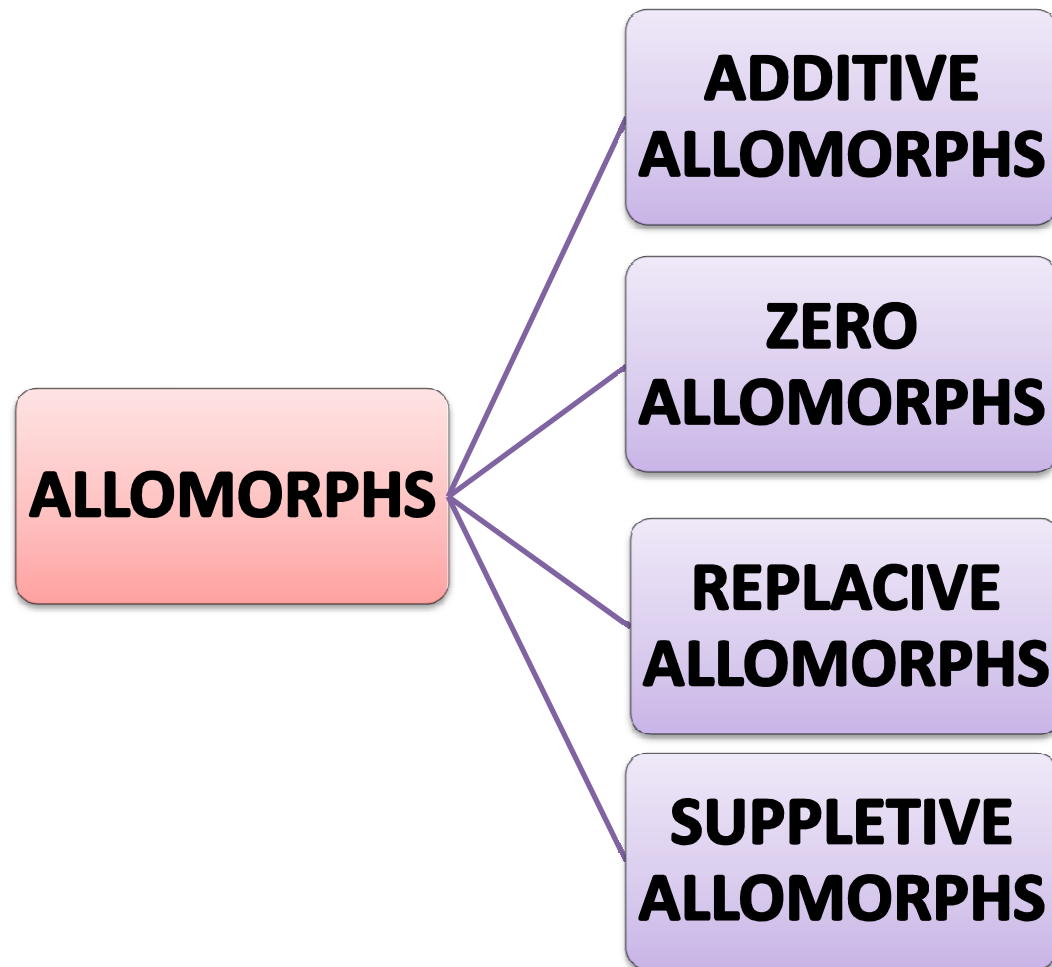
- The past-tense ending , the morpheme {-D pt}, has three phonemic forms.
- The choice depends on the preceding sound.
- After an alveolar stop /t/ or /d/, the allomorph /-əd/ takes place as in *parted* /partəd/.
- After a voiceless consonant other than /t/, the allomorph /-t/ takes place as in *laughed* /læft/.
- After a voiced consonant other than /d/, the allomorph /-d/ takes place as in *begged* /bɛgd/.
- The occurrence of one or another of them depends on its **phonological environment**.
- This pattern of occurrence is called **complementary distribution**.

**NOTE:** These **three phonemic forms of {-Dpt}** are not interchangeable. They are **positional variants**. They are **allomorphs** belong to the **same morpheme**.



- It must be emphasized that many morphemes in English have only one phonemic form, that is, one allomorph – for example, the morpheme {**boy**} and {-**hood**} each has one allomorph - /**bɔɪ**/ and /-**hʊd**/ - as in *boyhood*.
- It is really not the morpheme but the allomorph that is **free** or **bound**.
- For example the morpheme {**louse**} has **two allomorphs**: the free allomorph /**laʊs**/ as in the singular noun *louse* , and the bound allomorph /**laʊz-**/ as in the adjective *lousy*.

# TYPES OF ALLOMORPHS





## 1. ADDITIVE ALLOMORPHS:

To signify some difference in meaning, something is added to a word. For example, **the past tense form of most English verbs is formed by adding the suffix –ed** which can be pronounced as either /-t/, /-d/ or /-əd/:

**ask + –ed = /a:sk/ + /-t/, liv(e) + –ed = /Iv/ + /-d/, need + –ed = /ni:d/ + /-əd/.**

## 2. REPLACIVE ALLOMORPHS:

To signify some difference in meaning, a sound is used to replace another sound in a word. For example, the /I/ in **drink** is replaced by the /æ/ in **drank** to signal the simple past. This is symbolized as follows:

**/drænk/ = /drInk/ + /I > æ /.**

## 3. SUPPLETIVE ALLOMORPHS:

To signify some difference in meaning, there is a complete change in the shape of a word. For example:

- **go + the suppletive allomorph of {-D pt} = went;**
- **be + the suppletive allomorph of {-S 3d} = is;**
- **bad + the suppletive allomorph of {-ER cp} = worse;**
- **good + the suppletive allomorph of {-EST sp} = best.**

## 4. THE ZERO ALLOMORPH:

There is no change in the shape of a word though some difference in meaning is identified. For example, **the past tense form of hurt is formed by adding the zero allomorph of {-D pt} to this word.**

# Allomorph

## Phonologically Conditioned

e.g. Plural forms in English

|s| cats

|əz| glasses

|z| dogs

## Lexically Conditioned

e.g. Plurals  
sheep, oxen  
(each one has a different form and cannot be predicted)

## Morphologically Conditioned

where the choice of the allomorphs -ceive- or -cept- is systematically determined by the morphemes added to them:

**a.** receiver,  
receivable;  
deceiver,  
deceivable;  
conceivable

**b.** reception,  
receptive;  
deception;  
concept,  
conception,  
conceptual

## Suppletion

is an extreme form of allomorph in which two completely different roots realize the same morpheme.

Examples are

go | went

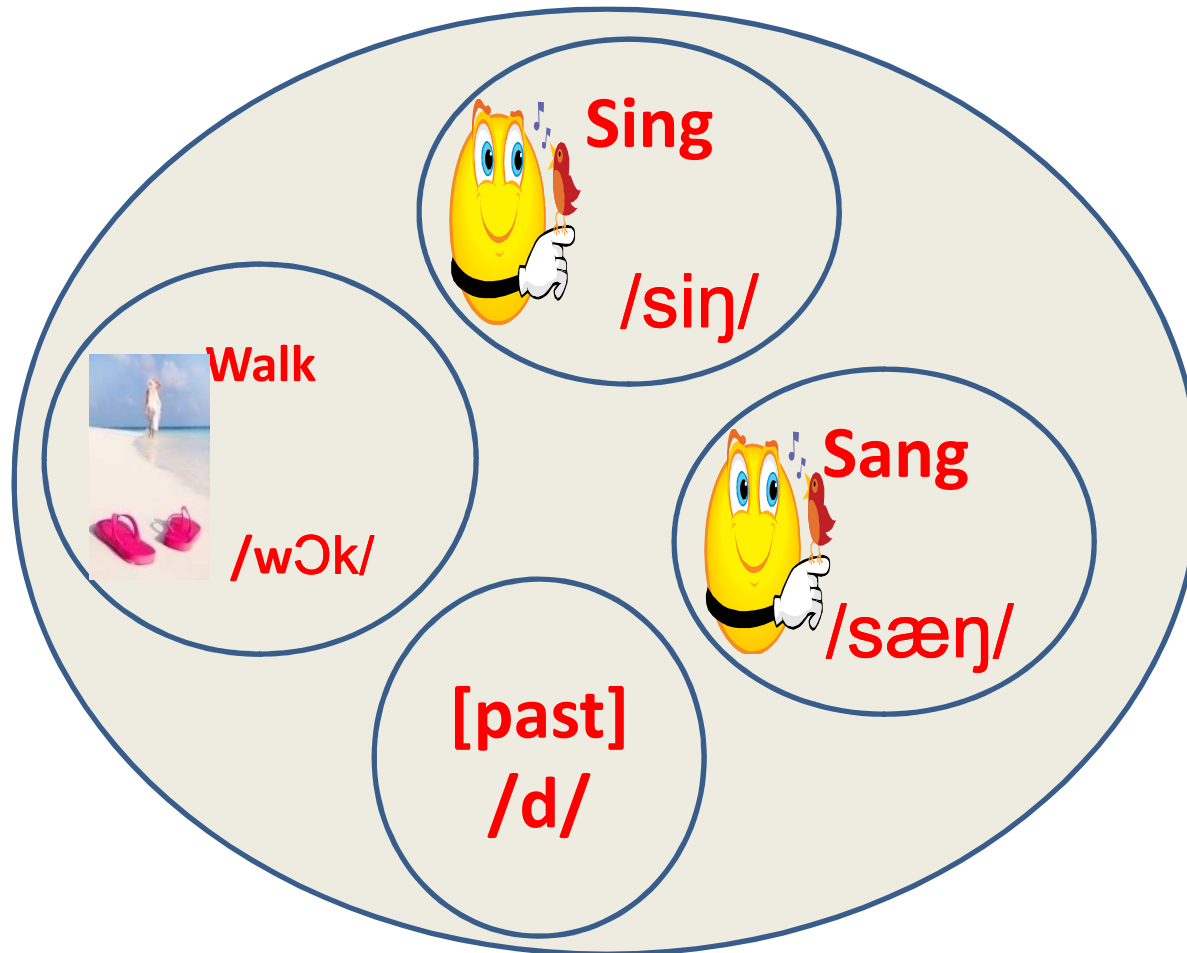
Be | is | was | were | am

Good | better | best

Bad | worse | worst

One | first

Two | second



**A schematic representation of the lexicon as the irregular allomorphs are stored as distinct lexical entries, while the regular past tense form is derived by combining the stored stem and the stored past tense morpheme according to the regular rule. (Linnaea C. Stockall, 1999).**



**{-D pt} = /-əd/ ~ /-t/ ~ /-d/**

- Braces **{ }** are used for morphemes;
- Slants **//** for allomorphs;
- a tilde **~** means “ phonological alternation”.



**{-S pl} = /-əz/ ~ /-z/ ~ /-s/ ∞ /-ən/ ∞ /∅/**

- Braces **{ }** are used for morphemes;
- Slants **//** for allomorphs;
- a tilde **~** means “ phonological alternation”.
- **∞** means “ morphological alternation”.



**{be}+{-D pt} = /wəz/ ∞ / wər/**

- Braces **{ }** are used for morphemes;
- Slants **//** for allomorphs;
- a tilde **~** means “in alternation with”.
- **∞** means “morphological alternation”.

# THE EXERCISES OF ALLOMORPHS

**EXERCISE 1:** Explain why ‘*a*’ and ‘*an*’ are two allomorphs of the same morpheme.

**EXERCISE 2:** Identify the allomorphs of the inflectional verb past simple morpheme {-Dpt} in the verb ‘*be*’. How are they conditioned?



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