

A person is shown from the chest up, holding a large blue book titled "SHAKING UP THE SCHOLARSHIP" by SCHUBERT. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt. The background is a green circular area containing various mathematical diagrams and formulas, including $P=2\ell$, $\Gamma = \frac{F_{\text{out}}}{F_{\text{in}}}$, and $z = \frac{Z_1}{Z_2}$. The text "Morphophonemics" is written in large green letters, and the definition "variation in the form of morphemes because of phonetic factors, or the study of this variation." is written in smaller green letters below it.

Morphophonemics
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The sound structure (phonology) and the word structure (morphology) are two of the main components of a language system.

However, many a times, these systems interact and affect each other in some interesting ways and give rise to a phenomenon which is known as ‘morphophonemics’.

Sometimes, due to this interaction, pronunciation of a morpheme may get modified or completely changed.



These changes may be regular or irregular and usually are context sensitive in nature.

In ‘morphophonemics’, we specifically study the changes which occur at the boundaries of morphemes.



Morphophonemics

Morphophonemics may be defined as analysis and classification of the phonological factors which affect the pronunciation of morphemes or, correspondingly, the morphological factors which affect the appearance of phonemes.

In morphophonemics, we basically study interaction between morphological and phonological processes and how they these factors affect each other.



Morphophonemic change usually occurs at morpheme boundaries and it involves sounds that are associated with separate phonemes.

One very obvious example to morphophonemics would be the use of indefinite articles in English language.



Indefinite article in English has two manifestations: *a* and *an*. If a word begins with a consonantal sound then indefinite article is manifested as '*a*' (a mango or a cat), while it is manifested as '*an*' (an apple or an idiot) if following word starts with a vowel sound.

Note: The term 'sound' refers to the way a phone (consonant or vowel) is pronounced, not necessarily written, in English.

Therefore, an hour is a correct phrase not *a hour and a university is the correct phrase not *an university.

Morphophonemics Processes

Pluralisation in English

To understand the morphophonemics, it's very important to understand concepts A to B not only in isolation but also as to how they appear in a morphophonemic process.

Here, we will present regular pluralisation process of English language.





Word (Singular)	IPA Transcription	Word (Plural)	IPA Transcription
cut	[kʌt]	cuts	[kʌts]
kick	[kɪk]	kicks	[kɪks]
top	[tɒp]	tops	[tɒps]
dog	[dɒg]	dogz	[dɒgz]
rib	[rɪb]	ribz	[rɪbz]
kid	[kɪd]	kidz	[kɪdz]
judge	[dʒʌdʒ]	judges	[dʒʌdʒəz]
wish	[wɪʃ]	wishes	[wɪʃəz]
church	[tʃə:tʃ]	churches	[tʃə:tʃəz]
shoe	[ʃu:]	shoes	[ʃu:z]
day	[deɪ]	days	[deɪz]
pea	[pi:]	peas	[pi:z]




Upon careful observation of the data, it is noticed that plural morpheme in English is realized as /-s/, /-z/ and /-əz/ given different phonological environment of the stem to which plural morpheme gets attached to.

When one morpheme takes more than one form (morph) in different phonological or morphological environment, these morphs are referred as allomorph to one another.



In this kind of situation, we need to set up a single **underlying representation** from which other morphs are derived for their pronunciation in any particular context.

This underlying representation is achieved with the help of some rules, usually referred as **morphophonemic rules**.

A circular inset image on the left side of the slide shows a person's hands holding a dark blue book. The book's spine and cover are visible, with the title 'SILENTLY SHAKING UP THE SCIENCE' and the author's name 'DAVID A. REARDON' printed on it. The background of the slide is a solid blue color.

Therefore, it is evident distribution of plural allomorph in English is not random in nature but is conditioned by phonological environment occurring at right boundary of the morpheme.

Usually, the allomorph with the widest distribution qualifies as a suitable candidate for underlying representation.

In this case, /-z/ qualifies to become underlying allomorph as it occurs after most voiced consonants and after all vowels.

And from allomorph /-z/, other allomorphs /-s/ and /-
əz/ have been derived by (a set of) rules.

word + plural morpheme	cut-s	dog-s	judge-s
underlying representation	/kʌt-z/	/dɒg-z/	/dʒʌdʒ-z/
coda epenthesis	-	-	/dʒʌdʒəz/



morphophonemic changes.


There are some common types of morphophonemic changes in English :

(a) Loss of phonemes

- The phoneme /n/ of the negative prefix { *in-* } *is lost before the* morphemes beginning with sonorant sounds /m/; /r/; /l/ and /n/.

e.g. immobile ; irregular, illimitable, innumerable.





Morphophonemic behavior is predictable only when the grammatical status of and the grammatical relations between the given morphemes are understood.

- puli+oodu -- > puliyoodu (with the tiger)
- Teru + il -- > teruvil (on the street)
- puuTTu+il -- > puuTTil (in the lock)
- Kaal + oodu -- > kaalloodu (with the stone)
- Naan + pl -- > naam

Morphophonemic rules in Tamil

- $nāṇ + kaḷ = nāṇkaḷ$ '1p. Inclusive plural form-nām'
- $nī + kaḷ = nīṇkaḷ$ 'You plural'
- $vīṭu + il = vīṭṭil$ 'in the house'
- $pacu + iṭam = pacuviṭam$ 'with/in the cow'
- $peṭṭi + il = peṭṭiyil$ 'in the box'



Could you come up with some example in your language for morphophonemic rules?





