

LG572 MORPHOLOGY

Chapter One What Morphology Is About

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE LEXEME CONCEPT	1
3. MORPHOLOGICAL PROCESSES - COMPOUNDING, DERIVATION AND INFLECTION	2
4. A WORKED EXAMPLE - SWAHILI MORPHOLOGY	3
4.1 CONSTITUENTS OF WORDS	3
4.2 SWAHILI EXAMPLE - DATA	3
4.3 SOLUTION	4
4.4 SUMMARY	7
5. TYPES OF INFLECTION.....	7
6. CONCLUSIONS.....	13

1. Introduction

Morphology is the study of word structure, that is, the study of the way words are formed, how the parts of words relate to each other, and how words themselves relate to each other. It is also the study of the way that word structure relates to other areas of grammar, for instance, pronunciation (phonology) and sentence structure (syntax). Finally, an important aspect of morphology which is becoming increasingly important is the study of how the structure of words is related to the meanings of words.

In this chapter I present a brief overview of the basic concepts in morphology and the basic phenomena that morphology deals with. Most of these will be taken up in much more detail in later chapters. We begin by characterizing what we mean by ‘word’. It turns out that the ordinary English word covers a variety of different concepts which need to be teased apart if we are to avoid confusion.

2. The lexeme concept

How many words are listed in (1)?

- (1) {cat, dog}

Clearly two. How many are listed in (2)?

- (2) {cat, cats}

In a sense there are also two words here, but in another sense there is only one word, ‘cat’, with two forms, *cat* and *cats*. If you look in a dictionary under ‘cat’, you’ll only find the one form, *cat*. The plural, *cats*, is formed by a completely general rule of English and there is no need to list it separately. We can describe *cat* as ‘the singular form of the word “cat”’ and *cats* as ‘the plural form of the word “cat”’. It is rather useful to have different terms for the two different senses of the word ‘word’ here. We will therefore say that there is a **lexeme** ‘cat’ which has two **word forms**, *cat* and *cats*. We will write the names of lexemes in small capitals from now on. Thus, we speak of the lexeme CAT. For the present we will think of a lexeme as a single meaning associated with a set of word forms.

The lexeme concept is also valuable for analysing verbs. Consider the examples in (3):

- (3) a. Tom will walk to work
 b. Tom walks to work
 c. Tom is walking to work
 d. Tom walked to work

Here we see various forms of the lexeme WALK: {*walk*, *walks*, *walking*, *walked*}. Again, these forms can all be produced by perfectly regular rules of English grammar. The form *walking* has a variety of uses and this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two. The form *walked* expresses a tense form (past tense), indicating the time of the event relative to the time of speaking (i.e. some time in the past). The form *walks* is used just when the subject is of the type *Tom*, *Harriet*, *the girl*, *she*, i.e. when the subject is third person (not *I* or *you*) and singular (ruling out *they* or *the boys*). We

say that the form *walks* **agrees** with the subject for the grammatical properties of person (third) and number (singular).

We will discuss the notion of ‘word’ in more detail later in subsequent chapters, and refine the notion of lexeme considerably. For instance, we will need to know exactly what we mean by saying that a lexeme has a ‘single meaning’ and what it means to be a form of a lexeme.

3. Morphological processes - compounding, derivation and inflection

There are two main functions of morphology. One is to create word forms such as the plural *cats* of the lexeme CAT. The other is to create new words on the basis of existing lexemes. The simplest way to create a new word is to take two existing words and combine them. For instance, to refer to the particular kind of comestible which is designed specifically for consumption by pet cats we take the lexeme FOOD and the lexeme CAT and create the new word *catfood*. This is called **compounding** and the resulting construction is known as a **compound word** or (more usually) just a **compound**.

Why is *catfood* a word and not a phrase? The reason is that it behaves like a single word. For instance we can modify the whole combination with an adjective: *delicious catfood*, just like *delicious food*. Very often, an adjective modifying a noun can be separated from that noun by a parenthetical comment: *They sell really delicious (according to Tabatha, at any rate) food there*. However, but we can’t split up the components ‘cat’ and ‘food’ in the compound: **They sell cat (according to Tabatha, at any rate) food there*.

Later in the book we’ll see that identifying compounds as opposed to phrases can be somewhat tricky and we’ll discuss the way that compounds are formed and the linguistic properties that they have in more detail in Chapter Four and Chapter Twelve. For present purposes a compound is simply the concatenation of two existing words to form a combination which behaves like a single word.

Now consider the words *printer, reader, formatter*. These are all nouns related to verbs: *print, read, format*. They all mean roughly ‘person or instrument that *prints, reads, formats*’ and they are often called Agentive or Instrumental nominals (because words such as *printer* refer to. Clearly, it is the ending *-er* which conveys this new aspect of meaning and creates a new noun from a verb. Now, *printer* is not a form of the verb *print* in the way that *prints* or *printing* is a form of the verb. For one thing, *printer* is not a verb. It is customary to treat *print* and *printer* as distinct lexemes. This means that by adding *-er* to *print* we have created a new lexeme from an old one. The creation of new lexemes is referred to as **derivation** or **derivational morphology**. Each of the three major categories of lexeme in English, noun, verb and adjective, can be turned into the other. Prepositions, which are often also considered a major lexical category, don’t participate in derivation in English (or most other languages for that matter).

Now consider words such as *printable, readable, formattable*. Here, the verb becomes an adjective with the meaning ‘such that can be *printed, readed, formatted*’, by addition of *-able* (also spelt *-ible* in cases such as *convertible*). In *happiness, pretentiousness, complicatedness* we create nouns from adjectives by adding *-ness* (to

happy, pretentious, complicated). We also find cases in which an adjective is turned into a verb, e.g. by addition of *-en*: *shorten, weaken, widen*. We can create adjectives from nouns, as in *boyish, childish*, and we can create verbs from nouns, as in *motorize, demonize*. Finally, it is possible to create a new lexeme without changing the grammatical category of the word. Thus, we can create the nouns *boyhood, childhood* from the nouns *boy, child*, the adjectival lexemes *unhappy, unpretentious, uncomplicated* and the verbs *re-print, re-read, re-format*.

We now have two ways in which new ‘words’ are produced: we can produce new lexemes such as *printer* from *print* and we can produce word forms of a single lexeme such as the plural form of *cat* or the past tense form of *walk*. The construction of word forms is known as **inflection** or **inflectional morphology**. Since inflection gives rise to the various forms of a lexeme, it does not generally change the grammatical category (though we will discuss this question in rather more detail in the next chapter). What inflections there are in a language depends on the grammar of the language. Many languages, for instance, don’t have plural forms for nouns, while others have a singular, plural and a special form, the dual, for referring to two objects. For those languages which distinguish, say, singular from plural, or past tense from present tense, we say that there is an **inflectional** or **grammatical category** or number or tense. When a noun is ‘in the plural’ or a verb is ‘in the present tense’ we will say that it has the **inflectional property** of ‘plural (number)’ or ‘present (tense)’.

We will refer to the construction of inflected forms or the construction of new lexemes as **morphological processes**. Thus, we can speak of the (inflectional) process of forming the plural of a noun or the (derivational) process of forming an agentive noun from a verb.

4. A worked example - Swahili morphology

4.1 Constituents of words

There are several ways in which we construct new words and we will consider a variety of these in more detail in Chapter Four. Consider a word such as *reprints*. The central part of this word is the element *print*, the root of the word, the indivisible core of a word which carries the basic meaning. Added to the left edge of this is the element *re-*, a **prefix**, giving us *re-print* and to this we add the ending or **suffix** *-s*. Prefixes and suffixes are collectively called **affixes**. When we analyse a morphologically complex word in this way what we are looking for is components that recur in words throughout the language and which seem to have more-or-less the same meaning or function. The recurrent forms are called **morphs**. The relationship between the forms (morphs) and their function turns out to be quite complex and we’ll be discussing this in great detail throughout the book. For the moment we’ll disregard the problems of figuring out the relation between form and function and just concentrate on relatively simple cases.

4.2 Swahili example - data

We are now in a position to see how we might analyse a less familiar morphological system. Below are a number of sentences in Swahili with an English translation. The task is to segment the Swahili words into their components (roots and affixes) and identify the function of each component.

[Orthography as in English; NB word initial m before consonant is syllabic [m].
Stress on penultimate syllable]

1.	Mtafika	You (pl.) will arrive
2.	Ninafika	I am arriving
3.	Walifika	They arrived
4.	Aliniona	He saw me
5.	Nitawaona	I will see you (pl.)
6.	Tutawaona	We will see them
7.	Tutakuona?	Shall we see you?
8.	Watatuona	They will see us
9.	Wanasoma	They are reading
10.	Atasoma?	Will he read?
11.	Nitakiona	I will read it
12.	Unavisoma?	Are you reading them?
13.	Walisoma kitabu jana	They read the book yesterday
14.	Tulifika jana	We arrived yesterday
15.	Mliona kisu jana?	Did you (pl.) see a knife yesterday?
16.	Watoto walifika jana	The children arrived yesterday
17.	Mpishi alisoma jana	The cook read yesterday
18.	Kitabu kimoja kitafaa	One book will do
19.	Visu vitatu vinafaa	Three knives are suitable
20.	Mtoto mmoja anafika	One child is arriving
21.	Visu vidogo vitafaa	Small knives will do
22.	Wapishi watatu watafaa	Three cooks will do
23.	Kisu kimoja kilifaa	One knife was suitable
24.	Mpishi mmoja atafaa	One cook will do
25.	Vitabu vitatu vitafaa	Three books will do
26.	Vitabu vidogo vitatu vilifaa	Three small books were suitable

4.3 Solution

In solving a problem of this sort we must be careful to work systematically, justifying our analytic decisions at every step. At each stage we will be generating and testing hypotheses and we must expect to make a few wrong guesses from time to time and backtrack to revise our hypotheses and test new ones. Ultimately, we will be looking for the solution which gives the most plausible and elegant account of the data.

Step 1: Determine roots, grammatical categories etc. from the English glosses and isolate the Swahili equivalents

Grammatical categories:

Person/number - different forms for 'I', 'you' etc.; different forms corresponding to English subject and object pronouns; tense [present/past/future]; number [singular/plural]

Lexical items:

Verbs: - *arrive, be suitable (do), read, see*

Nouns: - *book, child(ren), knife, cook*

Modifiers: - *one, three, small*

Step 2. Isolating roots. Identify the longest stretch common to all forms /first pass/:

SEE: aliniona root: *ona*
 nitawaona
 tutawaona
 tutakuona?
 nitakiona
 watatuona

Similarly: faa ‘be suitable, do’
 soma ‘read’
 fika ‘arrive’

(Or maybe the final *-a* is a suffix of some kind?)

itabu	‘book’
toto	‘child’
isu	‘knife’
pishi	‘cook’
moja	‘one’
tatu	‘three’
vidogo	‘small’

Step 3: Identify Swahili grammatical categories and how they are realized

Tense:

Present	Past	Future
nina-fika	wali-fika	mta-fika
wana-soma	alini-ona	nitawa-ona
unavi-soma	wali-soma	tutawa-ona
vina-faa	tuli-fika	tutaku-ona
ana-fika	ali-soma	watatu-ona
	mli-ona	ata-soma
	kili-faa	nitaki-ona
	vili-faa	kita-faa
		vita-faa
		wata-faa
		ata-faa

Pres. = -na-

Past = -li-

Fut. = -ta-

Subject forms

I	ni-	we	tu-
you	u-	you	m-
he	a-	they	wa-
	m-		vi-
	ki		

Object forms

me	-ni-	us	tu
you	-ku-	you	-wa-
it	-ki-	them	-wa-, -vi-

Noun prefixes:

	sg.	pl.
book	k-	v-
child	m-	wa
knife	k	v
cook	m	wa

Step 4 Determine the grammatical organization (agreement)

Modifiers (numerals, adjectives) agree with the noun they modify:

19. v-isu vi-tatu
V-knife VI-three 'three knives'
20. m-toto m-moja
M-child M-one 'one child'
22. wa-pishi wa-tatu
WA-cook WA-three 'three cooks'

and so on (see also 17, 18, 21, 23—26)

Verbs agree with the subject noun:

16. wa-toto wa-lifika
WA-child WA-arrived 'the children arrived'
- cf. 3. walifika 'they arrived'

NB. Often the prefixes for modifier agreement and verb-subject agreement are identical, but not always:

13. m-pishi a-li-soma 'the cook read'

All this suggests that our original analysis for 'book', 'knife', 'small' was wrong. Assume these are instead *tabu*, *su*, *dogo* respectively. Hence,

18. ki-tabu ki-moja
26. vi-tabu vi-dogo vi-tatu

4.4 Summary

What we have been doing here is looking for invariant stretches of words to correspond to invariant meanings or grammatical functions. Our first job is to try to identify the basic roots of words and to do this we assume that the root is the longest stretch of sounds which is common to all forms of the word. We've already seen that this doesn't always work perfectly and we'll see systematic reasons for this in later chapters. Morphology is used for a purpose, often to show the grammatical relationships which hold between words in phrases and sentences. To be able to analyse such cases we need to be able to recognize what those relationships might be. This means that we have to have some understanding of syntax (for instance, we need to know that in some languages verbs agree with their subjects, or adjectives agree with the nouns they modify). An important lesson is that morphological analysis generally requires us to start with a series of educated guesses and which allow us to formulate clearly stated hypotheses about the nature of the system. We then test these hypotheses as ingeniously as we can by rechecking the data we have or by collecting new data. This almost always brings up problems with our analysis and forces us to reconsider our original hypotheses and entertain new ones, thus creating a new cycle of testing and refinement.

How can we be sure that the process is complete and we've got the definitive analysis? The answer is (as in any scientific discipline) we can't be sure. Even for English, whose morphology has been studied in extremely minute detail, we can't be absolutely certain that we have the correct analysis.

5. Types of inflection

Having seen a certain amount of inflectional morphology in action we will now take a broader look at the problem. We will begin by distinguishing two basic types of inflectional morphology. In the first type the inflection signals some grammatical category of importance in the language and a word form with such an inflection bears that category as an inherent feature, and we will call this **inherent inflection**. In the second type the inflections signal relationships between words in the sentence, what we will call **contextual inflection**. Contextual inflection is illustrated by **agreement** and by **government**. I shall begin by illustrating some cases of inherent inflection.

i) Inherent inflection - expressing functional categories

There are a variety of grammatical functions (or grammatical 'meanings') that can be expressed by inflectional means. These include¹:

◇ verb tense: e.g. Swahili past, present, future

ninasoma	'I read, am reading' [present]
nilisoma	'I read' [past]
nitasoma	'I will read' [future]

¹ We'll explain some of these terms later.

- ◇ verb mood: e.g. indicative, subjunctive, imperative, ...
- ◇ noun: number, definiteness, case
- ◇ comparison of adjectives: positive, comparative, superlative: *long, longer, longest*

We will encounter a number of these as we proceed.

Verb mood indicates the speaker's attitude towards their own utterance. Thus, in many languages an indicative form is used for matter-of-fact statements, while a subjunctive would be used for hypothetical statements, wishes, predictions and so on, *If I were you ...* The imperative is used for issuing commands: *go away!*

We've seen how in Swahili nouns are marked for number (singular and plural) and noun class or gender. Also listed as a typical inherent inflection for nouns is definiteness. In English this is signalled by the definite article *the*, but in many languages definiteness is indicated by a piece of inflectional morphology. Thus, in Swedish 'house' is *hus* but 'the house' can be expressed as *huset*, with the suffix *-et*.

English regular verbs have rather few inflectional categories. In addition to the category of agreement (which only has one special form, that of the 3rd sg.), we find the suffixes *-ing* and *-ed*, each of which has several functions. The *-ed* suffix conveys Past Tense (*Harriet formatted Dick's disk*). However, it is also used with the Perfect Aspect form (in conjugation with the auxiliary verb 'have': *Harriet has formatted Dick's disk*), when it is referred to as the Perfect Participle. It is also found with the Passive Voice in the company of the auxiliary verb 'be': *the disk was formatted by Harriet* (the Passive Participle). Frequently, we'll use the general term Past Participle to cover 'Perfect/Passive Participle'. The *-ing* suffix is also rather complex. It is used to convey the Progressive Aspect, combined with the auxiliary 'be': *Harriet is formatting a disk*. It is also used to create a noun form from the verb: *formatting disks is fun*. In this example the phrase *formatting disks* behaves rather like an ordinary noun such as *history* in *history is fun* (or indeed the phrase *the history of Switzerland* in *the history of Switzerland is fun*). However, in a phrase such as *the person formatting my disks* the word seems to behave more like an adjective, just like the adjective *responsible* in *the person responsible for my disks*. The use of a participle as an adjective is even clearer in an expression such as *running water*. We will discuss participles in more detail in a later chapter.

ii) Contextual inflection - agreement

We regularly find agreement in person/number with subjects and/or objects. In many European languages (e.g. Latin, German, Russian) the verb just agrees with the subject, and this is marginally true of English as we saw in Section 2. In Swahili the verb takes object markers where the object would correspond to an English pronoun. It is also common for adjectives to agree with the nouns they modify, as we saw in the Swahili examples. In Bantu languages generally, nouns are divided into noun classes (corresponding effectively to genders) and adjectives agree with noun in gender and number. This sort of agreement is also widespread in Indo-European languages such as Latin, German and Russian, but with only two or three (sex-based) genders. In (4) we see some examples from Russian. There are three genders (masculine, Feminine, Neuter). For words referring to male humans are Masculine in gender and those

referring to females are Feminine, but in general it's impossible to predict the gender of words referring to any other kind of entity (including most animals - 'bee', 'mouse', and 'horse' are feminine, while 'mosquito', 'vole' and 'whale' are masculine).

(4)	Masc.	star-yj dom	old house
	Fem.	star-aja izba	old cottage
	Neut.	star-oje zdanie	old building

iii) Contextual inflection - government

In many languages noun take on different inflections depending on the function or role in the sentence. Such inflections (invariably suffixes, as it happens) are called **cases**. Very often the inflections have the principal role of signalling grammatical relations such as subject and object. Typical pairings of form and function are:

Nominative (Nom)	subject	(<i>Mary</i> read the book)
Accusative (Acc)	direct object	(Mary read <i>the book</i>)
Genitive (Gen)	possessor	(<i>Mary's</i> book)
Dative (Dat)	indirect object	(give <i>Mary</i> the book)

In English this is visible only with the pronouns. Thus, when a pronoun is the subject of a finite (tensed) verb it takes a special subjective form (*I, you, he/she/it, we, you, they*) and in all other cases it takes an objective form, which is the same as the subjective for you, it but different for the other pronouns: *me, him/her, us, them*. We could call these case forms, though they are suppletive and not formed by suffixation. In Latin all nouns had a number of cases as illustrated in (5):

- (5) a. catullus clo:diam ama:bat²
 Catullus.NOM Clodia.ACC loved
 'Catullus loved Clodia'
- b. catullum clo:dia no:n ama:bat
 Catullus.ACC Clodia.NOM not loved
 'Clodia didn't love Catullus'
- c. catullus libellum corne:li: dedit
 Catullus.NOM book.ACC Cornelius.DAT gave
 'Catullus gave the book to Cornelius'
- d. ami:cus clo:diae corne:lium wi:sit.
 friend.NOM Clodia.GEN Cornelius.ACC saw
 'Clodia's friend saw Cornelius'

² When affixes are separated from their stems in the original examples, the meaning or principal function of that affix will be separated from the meaning of the stem in the first line of the translation. However, when the articulation of the original word into separate pieces is irrelevant or impossible, this will be shown by separating the grammatical meaning or function from the stem with a full point. Thus, 'Clodia.ACC' in (5a) means that the form *clo:diam* is the Accusative case form of the lexeme notated as 'Clodia'.

In many languages when a preposition forms a phrase with a nominal phrase, the noun has to go into a specific case. We then say that the preposition **governs** that case. In (6) we see some examples from Russian:

- (6) a. Ivan idjot k Borisu
Ivan.NOM walks to Boris.DAT
'Ivan is walking towards Boris'
- b. Boris idjot k Ivanu
Boris.NOM walks to Ivan.DAT
'Boris is walking towards Ivan'
- c. Lampa stoit na stole
Lamp.NOM stands on table.LOC
'The lamp is standing on the table'
[*stol* 'table, Nom.']
- d. Ivan postavil lampu na stol
Ivan.NOM put lamp.ACC on table.ACC
'Ivan stood the lamp on the table'

In (6c) the form *stole* is in a special case, the Locative, which is only used along with a preposition such as *na* 'on'. In (6d) the same preposition is used with the same noun, but this time the noun is in the accusative case (which happens to be homophonous with the nominative for this class of nouns), because the verb indicates motion towards the table, rather than indicating position on the table.

iv) inflectional classes

There are many languages in which nouns inflect for number (e.g. singular/plural) and case. In Finnish, for instance, a word such as *talo* 'house' has special forms meaning 'in the house' (the Inessive case) and 'from (inside) the house' (the Elative case), as well as a special form for the plural, as shown in Table 1.1 (we will discuss the Finnish data in more detail in the next chapter):

	Singular	Plural
Inessive	talo-ssa	talo-i-ssa
Elative	talo-sta	talo-i-sta

Table 1.1 Sample case/number forms for Finnish *talo* 'house'

Essentially the same suffixes are used for all nouns in Finnish.

Russian nouns, too, inflect for number (singular and plural) and for case (there are six in all). However, whereas in Finnish there is just one set of endings for all nouns, in Russian the nouns fall into three main groups depending on which endings they take to signal which combination of properties. This is illustrated in Table 1.2 for some of the case forms of the singular and plural:

	'law'	'room'	'place'
Singular			
Nominative	zakon	komnata	mesto
Accusative	zakon	komnatu	mesto
Genitive	zakona	komnaty	mesta
Dative	zakonu	komnate	mestu
Plural			
Nominative	zakony	komnaty	mesta
Accusative	zakony	komnaty	mesta
Genitive	zakonov	komnat	mest
Dative	zakonam	komnatam	mestam

Table 1.2 Russian noun classes

A number of the forms (e.g. Dative Singular, Dative Plural) are the same for all three types, but other forms are rather different. I have simplified my discussion by omitting one class of nouns, and if we were to add that class we would find greater differences.

What we see in Table 1.2 is that Russian nouns fall into a number of **inflectional classes** or **declensions** and the declension type determines what endings are found.

The three nouns *zakon*, *komnata*, *mesto* all trigger agreement with any modifying adjective, just like the nouns *dom*, *izba* and *zdanie* mentioned above. Indeed, *zakon* is a masculine noun (like *dom*), *komnata* is feminine (like *izba*), and *mesto* is neuter (like *zdanie*). Moreover, the case/number endings for *komnata*, *zakon* and *mesto* are the same as those for *dom/izba/zdanie* (ignoring certain instances of phonologically conditioned allomorphy - see below for this notion). We might therefore want to refer to the three classes as Masculine, Feminine and Neuter. However, this isn't entirely accurate, for three reasons. First, there is another inflectional class with slightly different endings. These words are almost all Feminine gender (though one is Masculine). Therefore, we can't call the *komnata*-class the Feminine class. This means that even if we know the gender of the noun we can't therefore always predict which inflectional class it will belong to.

Second, there are words such as *metro* 'metro/underground/subway', *kino* 'cinema', *kenguru* 'kangaroo', which don't take any endings at all. Thus, although we say (7), we cannot say (8):

- (7) Ivan idjot k mestu
Ivan walks to place.DAT
'Ivan is walking to the place'
- (8) *Ivan idjot k metru/kinu
'(Ivan is walking to the metro/cinema)'

Instead, we have to say (9):

- (9) Ivan idjot k metro/kino
'Ivan is walking to the metro/cinema'

Words such as *metro* have no inflected forms whatever and for this reason are called **indeclinable** nouns. This entails that they do not belong to any inflectional class. However, we have just seen that adjectives agree with the noun they modify in a way that depends on their gender. Adjectives which modify indeclinable nouns treat them as members of one or another gender class, as seen in (10):

- (10) a. star-oje metro/kino
 old-NEUT metro/cinema
- b. star-yj kenguru
 old.MASC kangaroo³

Actually, (10b) is the form we get when we don't know the sex of the animal. If we see the kangaroo with a joey in its pouch then we would (probably) say (10c) (though Russian speakers are sometimes unsure exactly how to handle such cases):

- (10) c. star-aja kenguru
 old-FEM kangaroo

The fact that indeclinable nouns still have a gender again means that we have to separate the two notions.

The third reason for separating the notions of declension and gender is in some senses the most interesting, and proves decisively that gender and inflectional class are distinct. For there are quite a few words in the *komnata*-class which are masculine gender, such as *mužčina* 'man': *staryj mužčina* (not **staraja mužčina*) 'old man'.

Verbs, too, can come in inflectional classes in which case the traditional term is **conjugation**. In Table 1.3 we see some simple examples of conjugations in Russian. A Russian verb agrees with its subject in Person and Number, just like the Swahili verb, but the endings found with a given verb depend on which inflectional class the verb belongs to:

³ This is the official story. In practice, younger speakers may be less certain about these judgements and treat *kenguru* as neuter. Either way, the word has a gender even though it has no inflectional class.

	1st conjugation	2nd conjugation
	'give	'stand'
1sg	daj-u	stoj-u
2sg	daj-o-š	stoj-i-š
3sg	daj-o-t	stoj-i-t
1pl	daj-o-m	stoj-i-m
2pl	daj-o-te	stoj-i-te
3pl	daj-u-t	stoj-a-t

Table 1.3 Russian conjugation (verb classes)

As can be seen in the table, the endings which correspond to the Person/Number properties are essentially the same. What distinguishes the 1st conjugation from the 2nd conjugation verbs is the vowel which links the base form of the verb (*daj-* 'give' and *stoj-* 'stand') with those endings. In the 1st conjugation it's (mainly) *-o-*, while in the 2nd conjugation it's (mainly) *-i-*.

6. Conclusions

In this chapter we drew a number of important distinctions, such as lexeme vs. word form, inflection vs. derivation. In addition, we've had a taste of how to do morphological analysis. Finally, we've briefly summarized some of the main types of inflection, distinguishing inherent inflection, which signals various types of grammatical meaning, from contextual inflection, which signals the syntactic relationships between words within phrases. Finally, we've seen a special kind of inherent inflection whose function is simply to group words into classes on the basis of the kinds of inflections they take. Inflectional classes such as these have no impact on the syntax and don't signal any grammatical meaning. They are purely morphological.