

2. Derived Words and Affixes

Chamorro Dictionary Project
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Derived Words

- Many Chamorro words are ***derived*** from a base (= root or stem) by adding one or more ***affixes***

Examples

- **Sinangån-ña** is derived from the base word **sångan** by attaching the affixes -**in-** and -**ña**.
- **É'panglao** is derived from **pånglao** by attaching the affix **é'**-
- **Honggiyon** is derived from **hongge** by attaching the affix -**on**.

Question

- Which derived words should have their own dictionary entry?

Two Types of Affixes

- Linguists recognize two types of affixes
 - ***Inflectional*** affixes add grammatical information to the word, but do not change its meaning
 - ***Derivational*** affixes change the meaning of the word

Examples

- The affixes **-in-**, **man-**, and **-ña** are inflectional affixes
- Words formed by adding these affixes to **sångan** have more grammatical information than **sångan**, but the same meaning as **sångan** (“say”)

- **Sinangan** is the form of **sangan** used in a passive sentence
- **Mansinangan** is used when the subject of this passive sentence is plural
- **Sinangân-ña** is a form of **sangan** used in a relative clause or question when the subject is third person singular

A List of Inflectional Affixes

- The infixes **-um-** and **-in-**
- The prefixes **fan-**, **man-**, **ma-**
- The suffix **-ña** “more (than)” and the possessive suffixes (**-hu**, **-ku**, **-mu**, **-ña**, **-ta**, **-mâmi**, **-miyu**, **-ñiha**)
- The reduplication that indicates progressive (ongoing) action

Working Principle 1

- Words derived by adding inflectional affixes do not have their own dictionary entries
- **Why:** These words are completely predictable from the base word plus the way it is being used in the sentence

Types of Derivational Affixes

- ***Derivational*** affixes are more diverse than inflectional affixes
- All derivational affixes change the meaning of the word; ***but***

- Some derivational affixes change meaning in unpredictable ways
- Some derivational affixes also change the word's part of speech
- Some derivational affixes are ***unproductive***: they cannot be added to all words, and it is unpredictable which words they can be added to

An Example of Unpredictable Change in Meaning

- When the affix **chát-** is added to **såga** “stay”, it forms a word that unpredictably means “difficult, hard”: **chátsaga**

Examples of Change in Part of Speech

- When the affix **é'**- is added to the noun **pånglao** “crab”, it forms an intransitive verb: **é'panglao** “hunt for crabs”
- When reduplication-plus-vowel-change affects the verb **tuge'** “write”, it forms a noun: **títuge'** “writer”

An Example of an Unproductive Affix

- The affix **án-** is unproductive: it can be added to some nouns and verbs, like **sopbla, balle, kånno'**, but not to others (like **chotda, ineksa'**)

Other Examples of Derivational Affixes

- The affix **na'**- can be added to any verb or adjective to form a transitive verb whose meaning includes “cause” or “make” (**na'setbe**, **na'hånao**, **na'bråbu**)

Still More Examples

- The affix **á-** can be added to any transitive verb to form an intransitive verb that includes the meaning “each other” (**ásodda'**, **ákuentusi**)
- The affix **mina'-** can be added to any cardinal number to form an ordinal number (**mina'dos**, **mina'bente**)

A List of Derivational Affixes (Incomplete)

- The prefixes **á-**, **achá-**, **án-** **chát-**, **fa'-**, **ge'-**, **há-**, **ká-**, **mí-**, **mina'-**, **na'-**, **san-**, **ták-**, **ya-**
- The suffixes **-guan**, **-(y)i**, **-iyi**, **-(y)on**, **-ñaihon**
- The reduplication-plus-vowel-change that forms agentive nouns from verbs

Working Principle 2

- A word formed with a derivational affix has its own dictionary entry only when something about its formation is ***UNpredictable***
- ***Why:*** If everything about the derived word is predictable, why bother to list it?

Examples

- **É'guihan** and **é'panglao** will not have their own entries, because everything about these derived words is predictable: meaning, part of speech, pronunciation, etc.
- **É'ga'ga'** should have its own entry, because one of its meanings, “get busy”, is *not* predictable

More Examples

- Most derived words formed with **na'**- will not have their own entries, because they are predictable
- But **na'lågu** will have its own entry, because if it is formed from **lågu** by adding **na'**- (it might not be), its meaning is unpredictable

Predictability

- Derivational affixes form a continuum: some are completely predictable, some are unpredictable, and some are predictable when added to certain words but unpredictable when added to others

Working Principle 3

- At times, the group may decide that Working Principle 2 should be violated for certain derivational affixes
- Any violations should be systematic and consistent (note that the 1975 *Dictionary* violates Principle 2 unsystematically)

Two Final Questions

- Should ***affixes*** have their own dictionary entries?
 - **Yes.** Derivational affixes should have Prefix (pref.), Suffix (suf.), or Infix (infx.) as their part of speech. Inflectional affixes are more complicated; a linguist should be consulted

- Should ***combinations of affixes*** have their own dictionary entries?
 - Only if something about the combination is not predictable

Examples

- The fact that **fan-** plus **-an** means “place where” is not predictable, so this combination of affixes should have its own entry
- Most combinations of affixes **do** have predictable meanings and functions, so they should not have their own entries

Si Yu'us ma'åse' !