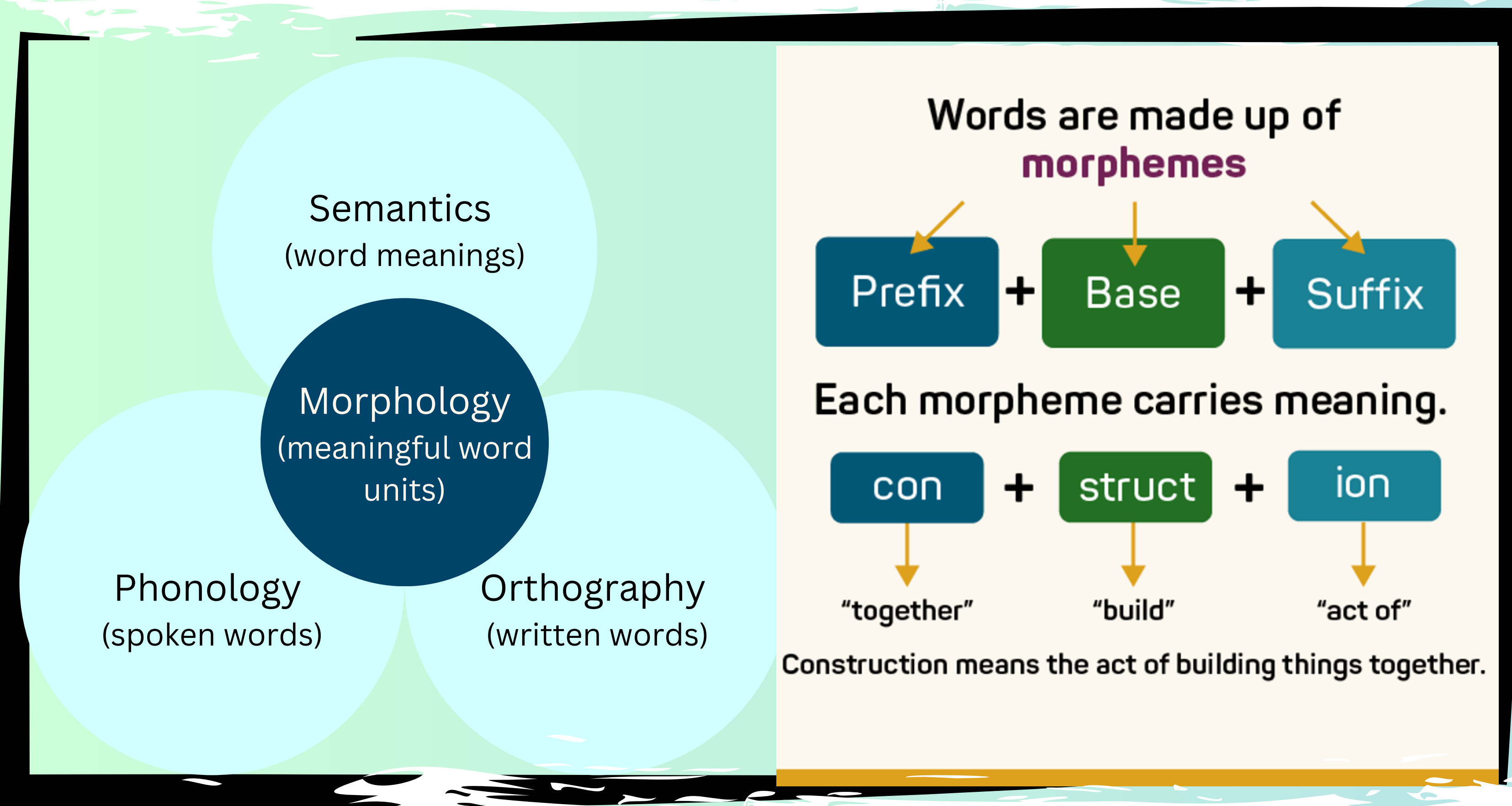


Morphological Complexity of FL ELA Texts

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Background

- Morphemes are meaningful units of words (e.g., *pre-* or *-s*) (Carlisle, 2003).
- Morphemes are crucial in vocabulary. Words have orthographic (written), phonological (spoken), and semantic (meaning-based) representations (Perfetti & Hart, 2003). Morphemes tie these representations together for learners (Kirby & Bowers, 2017)



Impacts and Expected Results

- We expect to find a high rate of morphological complexity in school textbooks. Dawson et al. (2023) found 44% of words were morphologically complex.
- With this data, education efficacy may improve. Specialized instructions in morphology can be implemented according to the morphological complexity of the texts that students are reading.

Research Aims

The main aim of this study is to examine the morphological complexity of the vocabulary in students' textbooks in Florida.

Method

- Our study used public domain readings that were recommended in the Florida ELA standards (FL ELA BEST Standards).
- We converted all the readings into a .txt file, removing all titles, line numbers, footnotes, etc.
- Words from the compiled .txt files will be compiled into a database.
- Our database we compiled will be matched against MorphoLex to determine the morphological complexity of words found in ELA texts.
- MorphoLex (Sánchez-Gutiérrez et al., 2017) is a database of morphological data on 70K words. It is widely used by linguists to understand morphological complexity.

- Academic vocabulary is morphologically complex (Nagy & Anderson, 1984)
- A student's knowledge of vocabulary is related to their understanding of morphology (Lee et al., 2023).
- This understanding can be improved with morphological instruction (e.g., Goodwin & Ahn, 2010; 2013).
- While there is emerging research about the morphological complexity of modern British school texts (e.g., Dawson et al., 2023), there are little comprehensive data on morphological complexity in American school texts.

Recent Studies:

- Dawson et al., 2023: Researchers analyzed a corpus (collection) of British children's texts to examine the frequency of morphologically complex words and complex morphemes (derivations) for readers aged 5-14.
- Korochkina & Rastle (2024): Researchers examined a different corpus of British children's texts for ages 7-16. Analyses examined the frequency and structures of morphologically complex words and compared morphological complexity of texts to television.

Example

"Conventionality is not morality. Self-righteousness is not religion."
 -- From Jane Eyre

to "Conventional-ity is not moral-ity. Self-righteous-ness is not religion."
 4 multimorphemic words, 1 prefixes, 3 suffixes, 30.1% of words are morphologically complex.



Abstract and
 References