

**Degree iii, (English Honours)**

**Paper – VIII**

**Section – 3**

**Subject- Linguistics**

*Morphology—Definition, Different types of Morpheme, allomorphs.*

## **Morphs**

Any phonetic shape and representation of a phoneme is a morph. Each morph like. each phone, or each person or each day, happens only once and then it is gone. To quote John Lyons, “when the word can be segmented into parts, these segments are referred to as morphs.” Thus, the word shorter is analysable into two morphs, which can be written orthographically as short and er, and in phonological transcription /fæt/and /ə/ each morph represents a particular morpheme, but each morpheme does not have a morph. For example, the plural noun sheep has one morph, but it has two morphemes [ **sheep** ] and [ ] went as one morph, but two morpheme [go] and [ed.]

## **Allomorphs**

It frequently happens that a particular morpheme is not represented everywhere by the same morphs, but by different morphs in different

environments. The alternative phonological manifestation or representation of such a morpheme are called allomorphs or morpheme alternates or morpheme variants. An allomorph, therefore, is non distinctive variants of a morpheme, or it may be called a family or a class of morphs which are phonemically and semantically identical, that is an allomorph is a family of morphs which are alike in two ways : i in the allophones of which they are composed and. ii in the meaning which they have.

The allomorphs are phonologically conditioned. Their forms are dependent on the adjacent phonemes. Or else they are morphologically conditioned. That is when morphemes are affected by their phonological environment 'sandhi', they became allomorphs. For example, /-z/, /-s/, /-iz/, and /ə/ are the various allomorphs of the plural morpheme { -z } in English.

The study of different shapes of allomorphs is half-way between phonology and morphology, and is sometimes referred to as morphophonology or morphonology. In America where phonology is considered as part of descriptive linguistics synchronic linguistics has relied on phonemic analysis, the term morphophonemics is used for this aspect of grammar.