

Immediate Constituent IC

Here are three recommendations on IC division that will assist you in the exercise to follow:

1. If a word ends in an inflectional suffix, the first cut is between this suffix and the rest of the word. So:

preconceiv|ed malformation|s

2. One of the IC's should be, if possible, a free form. A free morpheme is one that can be uttered alone with meaning, e.g., enlarge, dependent, supportable. Here are examples of wrong and right first cut:

Wrong: En|largement Right: Enlarge|ment

Wrong: In|supportable Right: In|supportable

3. The meaning of the IC's should be related to the meaning of the word.

It would be wrong to cut *restrain* like this:

rest|rain

because neither *rest* nor *rain* has a semantic connection with *restrain*.

Nor would a division of *starchy* as *star|chy* be right because this would give an unrelated morpheme and meaningless fragment. The two examples are probably cut in this way:

re|strain starch|y

The ultimate constituents are the morphemes of which the word is composed.

Exercise

Diagram these words to show the layers of structure:

e.g. mal|con|struct|ion



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1. itemized
 2. counterdeclaration
 3. contradictory
 4. expressionism
 5. re-fertilize
 6. Icelandic
 7. lifelessness
 8. anticlerical
 9. supernatural
 10. unlawful
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