

# Deconstructing Meaning: A Morphological Analysis of Content Words in Edith Tiempo's Poems

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## Abstract

This study explores how Edith Tiempo constructs meaning in her poetry through morphological linearity. This refers to the arrangement of morphemes, the building blocks of words. Analyzing six poems, it reveals Tiempo's skillful manipulation of free and bound morphemes within content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs). Each poem exemplifies how the poet uses affixation to achieve specific effects and create richness. Employing qualitative research design, with specific utilization of linguistic analytical description focusing on the meticulous examination of the morphological structures within content words, the findings demonstrate Tiempo's mastery of language. By strategically deploying morphological linearity, she crafts impactful expressions through the interplay of meaning within morphemes. This study further suggests her poems hold value as educational tools, offering examples for teaching grammatical concepts. It also recommends expanding a proposed monograph on content word morphology to encompass a wider range of literature, fostering a deeper appreciation for language and poetic artistry.

**Keywords:** Deconstruction, Morphology, Morphological Analysis, Content Words, Edith Tiempo



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## INTRODUCTION

Edith Tiempo, recognized as the first female National Artist for Literature in the Philippines, made significant contributions to Philippine poetry through her exceptional craftsmanship and depth of insight. Her works are distinguished by their precision and balance, combining lyrical elegance with intellectual rigor. Tiempo's poetry often reflects themes of human relationships, existential reflection, and the Filipino experience, articulated in language that is both accessible and profound making her works worthy to be a subject for analysis. Further, her notable poem, "Bonsai" is also one of the most read and critiqued poems that features the interplay of morphological and syntactic vibrancy of the poem which is a

significant feature in learning communicative English among learners.

As a second language (L2), the ability to communicate effectively in English, both orally and in writing, remains a significant challenge for many Filipino learners (Bautista et al., 2019). Research suggests a critical link between this struggle and a lack of proficiency in morphological awareness, the understanding of morphemes – the smallest units of meaning within words (Carlisle, 1995). This deficiency in morphological knowledge can manifest in various forms of written expression, hindering students' ability to construct grammatically correct sentences and develop coherent discourse, essential elements of L2 communicative competence (Elley, 1990).

As Harris, cited in Aitchison (1989), emphasizes, mastering word structure – composed of morphemes – is fundamental to linguistic competence. Morphemes, unlike syllables or word length, are the indivisible building blocks of meaning. Consider the word "walking": here, "walk" is the content word root (a verb), and "-ing" is the suffix indicating the present participle. Neither "walk" nor "-ing" can be further divided.

Addressing this gap in L2 learners' knowledge requires educators to equip students with the skills to identify and manipulate morphemes. A structured and progressive approach is crucial for developing this linguistic competence. This would ultimately lead to the ability to apply this knowledge in crafting coherent discourse texts, a hallmark of communicative competence (Hockett, 1958).

Given the dynamic nature of language, understanding how words form, evolve, and function is paramount in the field of linguistics. This study focuses on morphological structure, aiming to provide valuable tools and insights for teaching and learning English language morphology, with a particular emphasis on utilizing poetry as a platform for analysis (Lin, 2014). Analyzing poetry through a structural lens fosters a logical progression in understanding morphemic knowledge and its application in both communication and textual studies.

## LITERATURES

This study delves into the morphological intricacies within Edith Tiempo's poems, particularly focusing on two key aspects: Morphological Linearity which refers to the arrangement of morphemes within a word, following a specific order and explore how Tiempo utilizes this order to create meaning and evoke emotions in her poetry; and Affixation which refers to the process of adding prefixes, suffixes, or infixes to a root word to create new words or modify existing ones and examine how Tiempo uses affixation to shape the grammatical function and semantic meaning of words within her poems.

This exploration is rooted in the theory of morpheme linearity, as articulated by Fromkin and Rodman (1988). They propose that the morphology, or word structure, of a language is fundamentally built upon morphemes – the smallest units of meaning that cannot be further divided. Fromkin and Rodman's theory underscores that a morpheme represents the most basic unit that contributes to a word's grammatical form and meaning. This linearity progresses from larger linguistic units like sentences to smaller ones like words, ultimately breaking down into individual morphemes, encompassing both roots (meaningful units) and affixes (prefixes, suffixes, and infixes that modify meaning or grammatical function).

The term "morpheme" itself originates from the Greek word "morphe," signifying "form," as elucidated by Weisler and Milekie (1998). This concept is exemplified through English words with varying morphemic complexities. For instance, "desire" is a single morpheme word, while "undesirability" is a multi-morphemic word comprising several morphemes.

Marchand's classification (1969) further refines our understanding by distinguishing between free and bound morphemes. Free morphemes, akin to roots, can stand alone as complete words and possess inherent meaning (e.g., nouns like "cat," verbs like "run"). Bound morphemes, on the other hand, cannot function independently and require attachment to free morphemes during affixation. These bound morphemes include prefixes (added before the root, e.g., "un-" in unhappy), infixes (inserted within the root, less common in English), and suffixes (added after the root, e.g., "-ly" in happily).

Kroeger (2004) introduced a nuanced categorization of free morphemes, differentiating between content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) and function words (pronouns, determiners, conjunctions, prepositions, interjections). Content words carry the primary meaning within a sentence, while function words play a grammatical role in structuring the sentence. This distinction is

crucial in understanding the diverse roles that morphemes play in language construction.

Bound morphemes, represented by prefixes, suffixes, and infixes, serve distinct functions. Inflectional bound morphemes indicate grammatical relationships within a sentence without altering the word's part of speech. For example, in the word "loved," the "-ed" suffix signifies past tense inflection. Derivational bound morphemes, on the other hand, change a word's part of speech or meaning. Examples include "beautiful" derived from the noun "beauty" (where "-ful" acts as a derivational suffix) and "unhappy" derived from the adjective "happy" (where "un-" acts as a derivational prefix).

Greenberg's (1966) emphasis on categorizing words based on their morphemic composition (simple, complex, or compound) added another layer of complexity to understanding morphological structures. Simple words consist of a single morpheme (e.g., dog), complex words contain a root word and one or more derivational affixes (e.g., happiness), and compound words are formed by joining two or more free morphemes (e.g., audiobook).

Morphology, according to Parker and Riley (2000) is defined as the structure of words that involves word-formation. Each word is made up of basic units of meaning (morphemes) which is more or less constant in sense and form. Generally, that can stand alone (having sense) in meaning as words by themselves are called **FREE MORPHEMES**, whereas those morphemes that can only be meaningful when attached to free morphemes are called **BOUND MORPHEMES**. In the word "BOYS", the word BOY is the free morpheme (root) and -S is the bound morpheme (suffix of plurality). **FREE MORPHEMES** can be lexical morphemes (can stand in a sentence sensibly alone as content words) such as Noun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb or grammatical morphemes (can only be sensible when they express some sort of relationship between lexical morphemes as function words) such as Preposition, Determiners, and Conjunction. **BOUND MORPHEMES** refer to affixes (prefix, suffix, infix), which can be

inflectional morphemes (do not change the part of speech of words to where they are attached) and derivational morphemes (change the part of speech of words or vary/shift the meaning of words to where they are attached). Parker and Riley further theorize that new words are formed through a process known as **WORD-FORMATION** (also known as idiom-formation). The processes involved are as follows; **DERIVATION** - addition of a derivational affix, changing the syntactic category of the item to which it is attached. Example, orientation. **CATEGORY EXTENSION** - the extension of a morpheme from one syntactic category to another. Example, chair as a noun to chair as a verb. **COMPOUNDING** - creating a new word by combining two free morphemes. Example, put-down. **ROOT CREATION** - a brand-new word is made based on no pre-existing morphemes. Example, Kodak. **CLIPPED FORM** - a short form of a preexisting morpheme. Example, bra for brassiere. **BLEND** - the combination of parts of two pre-existing forms. Example, smog. **ACRONYM** - a word formed from the first letter(s) of each word in a phrase. Example, NASA. Lastly, **ABBREVIATION** - a word formed from the names of the first letters of the prominent syllables of a word. Example, TV for Television.

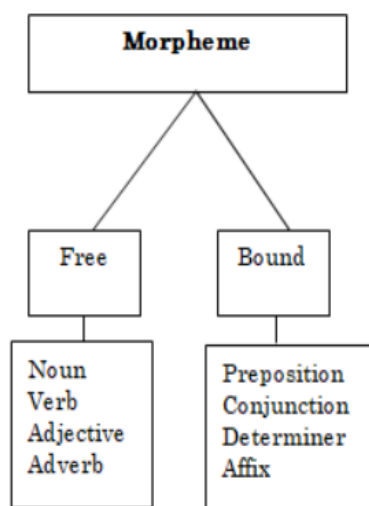


Figure 1  
*Morphological Framework*

Within the framework of morpheme linearity theory, this study aims to analyze and appreciate the linguistic mastery embedded in

Edith Tiempo's poetry. By systematically examining the morphological constructs within her work, the research aspires to contribute valuable insights to the understanding of language competence and the intricate interplay of morphemes in the context of English as a second language.

## METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design specifically utilizing a linguistic analytical description. This method focuses on the meticulous examination of the morphological structures within content words, particularly the interplay between roots and affixes (Leech, 2014).

The primary objective is to unravel the "smallest units of meaning" in words, focusing on the morphological organization of roots and affixes found specifically in content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) within Edith Tiempo's poems. Here, the researchers analyzed a selection of six poems for in-depth scrutiny.

Table 1  
*Selection of Six Lyric Poems from Edith Tiempo*

Edith Tiempo's Poems	Year Published	Genre
Mid-morning of Sheba	1957	Lyric poetry
The Tracks of Babylon	1966	Lyric poetry
Lament for the Littlest Fellow	Mid-20 <sup>th</sup> century	Lyric poetry
Narcissus in New York	Mid-20 <sup>th</sup> century	Lyric poetry
The Pestle	Mid-20 <sup>th</sup> century	Lyric poetry
Bonsai	1972	Lyric poetry

All of the selected poems by Tiempo are lyric poems published during her most active era in writing and publishing poetry which was between 1950s and 1970s.

The analytical process involves a close reading and segmentation of words to distinctly identify roots and affixes (prefixes and suffixes). Following Kroeger (2004), the researchers categorized roots as free morphemes and affixes as (Greenberg, 1966) bound morphemes. This segmentation then allowed researchers to categorize word structures within the poems as simple (one morpheme), complex (root + derivational affixes), or compound (two or more

free morphemes joined together). This categorization provided a nuanced understanding of the morphological composition inherent in Tiempo's poetic language.

The focus of this qualitative inquiry centers on content words utilized in affixation processes within the six chosen poems. Through this systematic examination, the research aims to shed light on the intricacies of how morphological structures function within the context of Tiempo's poetry.

This methodological approach aligns with the broader objective of advancing the understanding of linguistic competence, particularly the deliberate choices made by Tiempo in shaping the morphological landscape of her poetry. By utilizing a linguistic analytical description, this study facilitates a comprehensive exploration of the smallest units of meaning in her words. This exploration enriched the discourse on morphological structures within poetry and contributed valuable insights to the broader field of linguistic research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Morphological Linearity in Edith Tiempo's "Mid-Morning of Sheba". This section explores the morphological linearity of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) within Edith Tiempo's poem "Mid-Morning of Sheba." The analysis, as presented in Table 2, focuses on how free and bound morphemes are arranged to create meaning.

The poem contains nine nouns formed through affixation. There are also eleven verbs, eight adjectives, and one adverb created using affixes. Each content word is examined for its morphemic composition (identifying free and bound morphemes) and its grammatical function within the poem.

The poem "Mid-Morning of Sheba" by Edith Tiempo has sixteen (16) free morphemes. There are nine (9) bound morphemes with suffixes ten; and +s. These are present in the words

shadow-shorts, legs, eyes, trees, children, brands, wires, dogs and shadows. All of these are plural forms of nouns. Most nouns present in the poem are common nouns with two (2) compound nouns such as shadow-shorts and fencerow.

Table 2  
*Morphologic Linearity in The Poem "Mid-Morning of Sheba" By Edith Tiempo*

Nouns	Free Morphemes	BOUND Morphemes		Grammatical Forms
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
dog	dog			common noun
shadows	shadow		+s	plural form of the noun shadow
heart	heart			common noun
valley	valley			common noun
slope	slope			common noun
shadow-shorts	shadow and short		+s	compound noun and adjective
billows	billow		+s	plural form of the noun billow
clothesline	clothes and line			compound noun plural form of the noun
grass	grass			common noun
legs	leg		+s	plural form of the noun leg
eyes	eye		+s	plural form of the noun eye
trees	tree		+s	plural form of the noun tree
children	child		+en	plural form of the noun child
girl	girl			common noun
sun	sun			common noun
grill	grill			common noun
wind	wind			common noun
thorn	thorn			common noun
brands	brand		+s	plural form of the noun brand
bull	bull			common noun
fencerow	fence and row			compound noun
wires	wire		+s	plural form of the noun wires
horn	horn			common noun
dogs	dog		+s	plural form of the noun dog
day wash	day and wash			compound noun + verb
<b>Verbs</b>				
yapped	yap		+ed	past tense form of the verb yap
running	run		+ing	present progressive tense form
slant	slant			present tense form
scaling	scale		+ing	present progressive tense form
whipping	whip		+ing	present progressive tense form
wondered	wonder		+ed	past tense form of the verb wonder
climb	climb			present tense form
look	look			present tense form
listen	listen			present tense form
yapping	yap			present progressive tense
putting	pull		+ing	present progressive tense
ripped	rip		+ing	past tense of the verb rip
broke	break		+ed	irregular verb break
tearing	tear		+ing	present progressive tense
stamping	stamp		+ing	present progressive tense
blowing	blow		+ing	present progressive tense
<b>Adjectives</b>				
fast	fast			descriptive adjective
small	small			descriptive adjective
fierce	fierce			descriptive adjective
wide	wide			descriptive adjective
skinny	skin		-ny	noun + ny
sweaty	sweat		-y	noun + y
white	white			descriptive adjective
sparse	sparse			descriptive adjective
brown	brown			descriptive adjective
dazed	daze		+d	verb + d
roaring	roar		+ing	verb + ing
green	green			descriptive adjective
struggling	struggle		+ing	adjective + ing
alone	alone			descriptive adjective
old	old			descriptive adjective
tangled	tangle		+d	verb + d
shaking	shake		+ing	verb + ing
twisting	twist		+ing	verb + ing
shouting	shout		+ing	verb + ing
brisk	brisk			descriptive adjective
half	half			descriptive adjective
<b>Adverbs</b>				
too	too		a+	adverb of degree
across	cross		mid-	a + noun / adverb of place
suddenly	sudden		+ly	adjective + ly / adverb of manner
mid-morning	morning			mid + noun / adverb of time

The verbs in affixation found in the poem "Mid-Morning of Sheba" include sixteen (16) verbs. Five (5) of them are free morphemes. There are eleven (11) bound morphemes. There are eight (8) words ending in +ing such as running, scaling, whipping, yapping, running, pulling, tearing, stamping and blowing. There are three (3) affixes with -ed or past tense form of the verb include yapped, wondered, and ripped. Most grammatical forms present progressive tenses.

There are twenty-one (21) adjectives found in the poem with eight (8) words affixed with -ny, +y, +ed, and +ing. These words are skinny, sweaty, dozed, roaring, struggling, tangled, shaking, twisting, and shouting. Most adjectives here are descriptive adjectives.

There are four (4) identified adverbs in the poem "Mid-Morning of Sheba". These are too, across, suddenly, and mid-morning. There are two (2) bound morphemes with prefixes a+ and mid+. These are present in across and midmorning. The suffix+ly is used in the word suddenly. These are classified into adverbs of manner, adverb of place, adverb of time, and adverb that shows extent or degree.

Edith Tiempo's "Mid-Morning of Sheba" is rich in content words affixed with s in nouns, ing in verbs, ed and ing in adjectives and ly in adverbs. This finding proves the presence of morphologic linearity in the content words of this poem which is subjected to morphologic analysis.

Morphologic Linearity of Content Words in the poem in E. Tiempo's "The Tracks of Babylon". Table 3 presents the morphological analysis of content words in terms of free and bound morphemes of nouns in affixation in the poem of "The Tracks of Babylon" by Edith Tiempo.

The morphologic linearity found in the poem "The Tracks of Babylon" include thirty-six (6) noun morphemes with the sixteen (16) bound morphemes. Bound morphemes are present in the words decrepitude, slopes, peaks, wedges, hooks, whores, mysteries, eyes, possibility,



bodies, maggots, memory, tiredness, wisdom, and destroyer.

Table 3  
*Morphologic Linearity in The Poem "The Tracks of Babylon"*

Nouns	Free Morphemes	BOUND Morphemes		Grammatical Forms
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
decrepitude	decrepit		+ude	adjective + ude
wisdom	wise		+dom	adjective + dom
hand	hand			common noun
pen	pen			common noun
slopes	slope		+s	plural form of noun slope
peaks	peak		+s	plural form of noun peak
wedges	wedge		+s	plural form of noun wedge
hooks	hook		+s	plural form of noun hook
whores	whore		+s	plural form of noun whore
mysterries	mystery		+ies	noun + ies
grass	grass			common noun
bull	bull			common noun
plowman	plow +man			common noun + noun
queen	queen			common noun
lion	lion			common noun
eyes	eye		+s	plural form of noun
stance	stance			common noun
sheet	sheet		+ity	common noun
possibility	possible		+ies	adjective + ity
bodies	body			noun + ies
furnace	furnace			common noun
heart	heart			common noun
core	core			common noun
rice	rice			common noun
man	man			common noun
limb	limb			common noun
maggots	maggot		+s	plural form of the noun maggot
memory	memory			common noun
tiredness	tired		+ness	adjective + ness
pain	pain			common noun
token	token			common noun
scab	scab			common noun
Babylon	Babylon			proper noun
eyes	eye		+s	plural form of the noun eye
menace	menace			common noun
destroyer	destroy		+er	verb + er
<b>Verbs</b>				
loved	love		+d	regular verb + d
fumbles	fumble		+s	present tense
strains	strain		+s	present tense
lost	lose			past tense of irregular verb lose
whittled	whittle		+d	past tense form
strung	string			past tense of irregular verb string
tangled	tangle		+d	past tense
whipped	whip		+ed	verb past tense
involuted	volute	in-	+d	in + verb + d past tense
lift	lift			present tense
fumbles	fumble		+s	present tense
harvested	harvest		+ed	present tense
assaults	assault		+s	present tense
left	leave			past tense of irregular verb leave
pick	pick			present tense
<b>Adjectives</b>				
young	young			descriptive adjective
ignorant	ignorant			descriptive adjective
grown	grow			past participle of irregular verb grow
runic	rune		+ic	descriptive adjective
fence-like	fence and like			compound noun
potent	potent			descriptive adjective
dichotomized	chotomous	di-	+ized	noun + ized
cracking	crack		+ing	noun + ing
leaning	lean		+ing	verb + ing
fixed	fix		+ed	verb + ed
clammy	clam		+y	noun + my
kinetic	kinetic			descriptive adjective
wind-blown	wind and blown		+blown	compound noun
old	old			descriptive adjective
slavering	slave		+ry +ing	noun + ry + ing
fretting	fret		+ing	verb + ing
curious	curious			descriptive adjective
scared	scare		+d	verb + d
seared	sear		+ed	verb+ ed
terrible	terrible			descriptive adjective
buried	bury		+ied	verb + ied
coiled	coil			verb + ed
<b>Adverbs</b>				
bodily	body		+ly	noun + ily / adverb of manner adjective
yellowy	yellow		+y	+y / adverb of manner
coiled-up	coil and up		+ed and up	verb + ed + up / adverb of manner

The grammatical forms in bound morphemes include plural forms of nouns such as slopes, peaks, wedges, hooks, whores, eyes, and maggots.

On verbs in affixations, there are 15 verbs identified and four (4) of them are free morphemes. There are four (4) bound morphemes ending in -d such as loved, whittled, tangled, and involuted. There are three (3) bound morphemes with suffix -s or present tense form of verb such as fumbles, strains, and assaults. There are two (2) morphemes affixes with -ed such as whipped and harvested. There is one bound morpheme ending in +t such as lost and also one (1) bound morpheme with prefix in in the word involuted. Most grammatical forms are expressed in present tense.

The morphemes found in the poem "The Tracks of Babylon" are twenty (22) adjectives. There are fourteen (14) adjectives in affixations which are affixed with +n, +ic, +ed, +ing, +ed, +y, +d, and +ied. These words are grown, runic, dichotomized, cracking, leaning, fixed, clammy, wind-blown, slavering, fretting, scared, seared, buried, and coiled. The word dichotomized h-possesses the prefix di- also. Most adjectives here are descriptive adjectives while free morphemes are mostly nouns.

There are three (3) identified adverbs in affixation in the poem "The Tracks of Babylon". These are bodily, yellowy, and coiled-up which are all bound morphemes. They are all adverbs of manner.

Edith Tiempo's "The Tracks of Babylon" is rich in content words affixated with s in nouns, s in verbs, ed and ing in adjectives and ly and y in adverbs. This finding proves the presence of morphologic linearity in the content words of this poem which is subjected to morphologic analysis.

Morphologic Linearity of Content Words in the poem in E. Tiempo's "Lament for the Littlest Fellow". Table 4 presents the morphological analysis of content words in terms of free and bound morphemes of nouns in affixation in the poem of "Lament for Littlest Fellow" by Edith Tiempo.

The morphologic linearity found in the poem "Lament for the Littlest Fellow" included

twenty-one (21) morphemes and six (6) bound morphemes. These are present in the words bars, eyes, fingers, mimics, denial, and question. Most of these are plural forms of nouns. They are common nouns according to grammatical forms.

Table 4  
Morphologic Linearity the Poem “Lament for The Littlest Fellow”

Nouns	Free Morphemes	BOUND Morphemes		Grammatical Forms
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
fellow	Fellow			common noun
bars	bar		+s	plural form of the noun bar
eyes	eye		+s	plural form of the noun eye
arm	arm			common noun
fingers	finger		+s	plural form of a noun finger
mimicries	mimicry		+ies	plural form of a noun mimicry
squeak	squeak			common noun
twist	twist			common noun
marmoset	marmoset			common noun
cage	cage			common noun
denial	deny		+ial	verb + ial
question	quest		+ion	noun + ion
mind	mind			common noun
answer	answer			common noun
face	face			common noun
pillow	pillow			common noun
truant	truant			common noun
pain	pain			common noun
rooms	room		+s	plural form of the noun room
rage	rage			common noun
hands	hand		+s	plural form of noun hand
<b>Verbs</b>				
held	hold			past tense form of the verb hold
blinked	blink		+ed	past tense of the verb blink
said	say			past tense of the verb say
took	take			past tense form of the irregular verb take
thinks	think		+s	present tense form of the verb think with singular subject
set	set			present tense form of the verb set with plural subject
unasked	ask	un	+ed	un-past tense form of the verb ask
sleeping	sleep		+ing	present progressive tense of the verb sleep
catch	catch			present tense form of the verb catch with plural subject
feed	feed			present tense form of the verb feed with plural subject
snatch	snatch			present tense form of the verb snatch with plural subject
bruise	bruise			present tense form of the verb bruise with plural subject
<b>Adjectives</b>				
littlest	little		+st	superlative degree
marmoset	marmoset			descriptive adjective
old	old			descriptive adjective
coaxing	coax		+ing	noun + ing
proud	proud			descriptive adjective
laughing	laugh		+ing	verb + ing
shutting	shut		+ing	verb + ing
enormous	enormous			descriptive adjective
final	final			descriptive adjective
sleeping	sleep		+ing	verb + ing
little	sleep	un		descriptive adjective
unaware	aware			un + verb
dark	dark		+ing	descriptive adjective
living	live			verb + ing
<b>Adverbs</b>				
yesterday	day	yester		adverb of time
tomorrow	morrow	to		adverb of time

On verbs in affixations, there are 12 verbs and eight (8) of them are free morphemes. There are two (2) bound morphemes ending in -ed such as blinked and unasked. There is one (1) each bound morpheme ending in +s in thinks; +ing in sleeping; and prefix un in the word unasked. Most grammatical forms are present tenses of verbs.

Of the 14 adjectives found in the poem “Lament for the Littlest Fellow”, five (5) words are affixed with +ing. These words are coaxing, laughing, shutting, sleeping, and living. There is one (1) word which is affixed with +st, littlest, and another word with prefix un which is unaware.

Most free morphemes here are descriptive adjectives.

There are two (2) identified adverbs in the poem, such as yesterday and tomorrow. There are two (2) bound s, yester- and to for yesterday and tomorrow respectively. Both are adverbs of time.

Edith Tiempo’s “Lament for the Littlest Fellow” is rich in content words affixed with s in nouns, ed in verbs, ing in adjectives and yester and to in adverbs. This finding proves the presence of morphologic linearity in the content words of this poem which is subjected to morphologic analysis.

Morphologic Linearity of Content Words in the poem “Narcissus in New York”. Table 5 presents the morphological analysis of content words in terms of free and bound morphemes of nouns in affixation in the poem of “Narcissus in New York” by Edith Tiempo. There are 14 identified free morphemes in the poem. There are four (4) nouns in affixation. Suffixes are present in the words citizens, flies, pavement and eyes. Most of these are plural forms of noun. Most nouns present in the poem are free morphemes.

On verbs in affixation, there are five (5) verbs and three (3) of them are free morphemes. There are two (2) bound morphemes; one ends in +d which is bristled and the other ends in -ed as in walked. Most grammatical forms are past tense forms of verbs.

There are nine (9) adjectives among the content words found in the poem “Narcissus on New York” by Edith Tiempo. Seven (7) bound morphemes are affixed with +d, +y, +ing, +less, +ed, and +r. These words are baked, windy, passing, engulfing, restless, amber-lighted and ampler. Most adjectives are descriptive adjectives.

Further, the poem has five (5) adverbs. These are day-long, very, beneath, evening, and beside. There is one (1) bound morpheme with prefix be, present in the word beside. There is one bound morpheme ending in +ning, present

in the word evening. There are two (2) adverbs of time, two (2) adverbs of place, and one (1) adverb of degree.

**Table 5**  
*Morphologic Linearity in The Poem “Narcissus In New York” By Edith Tiempo*

Nouns	Free Morphemes	BOUND Morphemes		Grammatical Forms
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
street	street			common noun
citizens	citizen	+s		common noun + s
flies	fly	+ies		plural form common noun + ies
feet	foot			plural form of irregular noun foot
pavement	pave		+ment	common noun
eyes	eye		+s	plural form of the noun eyes
might	might			common noun
face	face			common noun
glow	glow			common noun
bronze	bronze			common noun
form	form			common noun
grace	grace			common noun
ponds	ponds		+s	plural form of the noun pond
statues	statues		+s	plural form of the noun statue
<b>Verbs</b>				
seem	seem			present tense
bristled	bristle		+d	past tense form of bristle
made	make			past tense of irregular verb make
gave	give			past tense of irregular verb give
walked	walk		+ed	past tense of the verb walk
<b>Adjectives</b>				
baked	bake		+d	past tense form of bake
windy	wind		+y	noun + y
passing	pass		+ing	verb + ing
engulfing	engulf		+ing	en + noun + ing
restless	rest		+less	verb + less
kind	kind			descriptive adjective
amberlighted	amber and light		+ed	noun + noun + ed
amplifier	ample		+r	descriptive adjective
dumb	dumb			descriptive adjective
<b>Adverbs</b>				
yesterday	day	yester		adverb of time
tomorrow	morrow	to		adverb of time

Edith Tiempo’s “Narcissus in New York” is rich in content words affixed with -s in nouns, d and -ed in verbs, -ing and -ed in adjectives and day, be, long and -ing in adverbs. This finding proves the presence of morphologic linearity in the content words of this poem which is subjected to morphologic analysis.

Morphologic Linearity of Content Words in the poem in E. Tiempo’s “The Pestle”. Table 6 presents the morphological analysis of content words in terms of free and bound morphemes of nouns in affixation in the poem of “The Pestle” by Edith Tiempo.

Based on the poem “The Pestle”, morphological analysis revealed that there are thirty-one (31) identified nouns. There are 16 bound morphemes. Nouns in affixation are present in the words riddles, words, muscles, plows, safety, vows, beauty, strength, splinters, heresies, spots, fears, beads, hands, lips, and treasures. Most of these are plural forms of

nouns. Most nouns present in the poem are common nouns.

**Table 6**  
*Morphologic Linearity in The Poem “The Pestle”*

Nouns	Free Morphemes	BOUND Morphemes		Grammatical Forms
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
wash-stick	wash and stick			regular verb and common noun combination
words	word		+s	plural form of the noun word
riddles	riddle		+s	plural form of the noun riddle
message	message			common noun
smith	smith			common noun
muscles	muscle		+s	plural form of noun muscle
plows	plow		+s	plural form of the noun plow
safety	safe		+ty	adjective + ty
vows	vow		+s	plural form of noun vow
beauty	beau		+ty	noun + ty
strength	strength			common noun
splinters	splint		+ ers	noun + ers
bamboo	bamboo			common noun
tattoo	tattoo			common noun
heresies	heresy		+ies	plural form of the noun heresy
bole	bole			common noun
stem	stem			common noun
fire	fire			common noun
spots	spot		+s	plural form of the noun spot
fears	fear		+s	plural form of the noun fear
mire	mire			common noun
woman	woman			common noun
sun	sun			common noun
pestle	pestle			common noun
comb	comb			common noun
beads	bead		+s	plural form of the noun bead
clay	clay			common noun
hands	hand		+s	plural form of the noun hand
lips	lip		+s	plural form of the noun lip
treasures	treasure		+s	plural form of the noun treasure
home	home			common noun
<b>Verbs</b>				
betting	bet		+ing	Present progressive form
listen	listen			Present tense form of the verb listen with plural subject
cross	cross			Present tense form of the verb cross with plural subject
beating	beat		+ing	Present progressive form
folding	fold		+ing	Present progressive form
stokes	stoke		+s	Present tense form of the verb stoke with singular subject
sees	see		+s	Present tense form of the verb see with singular subject
flopping	flop		+ing	Present progressive form
leave	leave			Present tense form of the verb leave with plural subject
pushed	push		+ed	Past tense form of the verb push
smirk	smirk			Past tense form of the verb smirk with plural subject
lie	lie			Present tense form of the verb lie with plural subject
stored	store		+d	Past tense form of the verb store
<b>Adjectives</b>				
wise	wise			descriptive adjective
wooden	wood		+en	noun + en = descriptive adjective
dark	dark			descriptive adjective
good	good			descriptive adjective
tempered	temper		+ed	noun + ed = descriptive adjective
mildew	mild, dew		+ed	adjective + noun + ed
wrought	wrought			descriptive adjective
bleached	bleach		+ed	verb + ed = descriptive adjective
cracked	crack		+ed	verb + ed = descriptive adjective
crude	crude			descriptive adjective
crumbling	crumble		+ing	verb + ing = descriptive adjective
divine	divine			descriptive adjective
strange	strange			descriptive adjective
thousand	thousand			descriptive adjective
rinsed-out	rinse, out		+d	verb + preposition + d = descriptive adjective
white line	white, line			adjective + noun = descriptive adjective
old	old			descriptive adjective
best	best			descriptive adjective
thigh-bone	thigh, bone			noun + noun = descriptive adjective
baked	bake		+d	verb + d = descriptive adjective
high	high			descriptive adjective
tough	tough			descriptive adjective
sweaty	sweat		+y	noun + y = descriptive adjective
maggoty	maggot		+y	noun + y = descriptive adjective
<b>Adverbs</b>				
too	too			adverb of degree

On verbs in affixation in the poem “The Pestle”, there are thirteen (13) verbs and six (6) of them are free morphemes. There are eight (8) bound morphemes. Four (4) verbs in affixation are ending in -ing such as betting, beating, folding, and flopping. There are two (2) verbs in affixation with suffix +s or present tense form of verb such as stokes and sees. Most grammatical forms are present tenses of verbs.



There are 24 adjectives found in the poem “The Pestle”. There are 10 bound morphemes which are affixed with the suffixes +en, +ed, +ing, +d, and +y. These words are wooden, tempered, mildewed, bleached, cracked, crumbling, rinsed-out, baked, sweaty, and maggoty. Most adjectives here are descriptive adjectives.

There is only one (1) identified adverb in the poem “The Pestle”, the word too. It is an adverb of degree in grammatical form.

Edith Tiempo’s “The Pestle” is rich in content words affixed with s in nouns, ing in verbs, ed in adjectives and y in adverbs. This finding proves the presence of morphologic linearity in the content words of this poem which is subjected to morphologic analysis.

Morphologic Linearity of Content Words in the poem in E. Tiempo’s “Bonsai”. Table 7 presents the morphological analysis of content words in terms of free and bound morphemes of nouns in affixation in the poem of “Bonsai” by Edith Tiempo.

Morphological analysis of the poem Bonsai revealed that there are twenty-six (26) identified nouns. There are eight (8) bound morphemes present in the words sublimation, seashells, pieces, things, and breathless. Most of these are plural forms of nouns. Most of these are common nouns.

On verbs in affixation, seven (7) verbs were identified. Five (5) of them are free morphemes. There are two (2) bound morphemes ending in +s such as folds and keeps. Most grammatical forms are present tenses of verbs.

Furthermore, there are 15 adjectives found in the poem “Bonsai”. There are seven (7) with suffixes +y, +n, +ed, +en, +less, +st. These words are easy, gaudy, Indian, cupped, broken, breathless, and merest. Most adjectives here are descriptive adjectives.

Lastly, there are four (4) identified adverbs in the poem “Bonsai”. These are once, once again, again, and all time. There are three (3) adverbs of degree and one (1) adverb of time.

Table 7  
*Morphologic Linearity in The Poem “Bonsai”*

Nouns	Free Morphemes	BOUND Morphemes		Grammatical Forms
		Prefixes	Suffixes	
box	box			common noun
slit	slit			common noun
post	post			common noun
shoe	shoe			common noun
son's	son		+s	possessive form of noun
note	note			common noun
Dad's	dad		+s	possessive form of noun
tie	tie			common noun
picture	picture			common noun
queen	queen			common noun
shawl	shawl			common noun
bill	bill			common noun
sublimation	sublime		+ation	adjective + ation = noun
feat	feat			common noun
heart's	heart		+s	possessive form of noun common noun
control	control			common noun
hand's	hand		+s	possessive form of noun
seashells	sea, shell		+s	plural form of noun
pieces	piece		+s	plural form of noun
God's	God		+s	possessive form of noun
teeth	tooth			plural form of irregular noun
life	life			common noun
love	love			common noun
things	thing		+s	plural form of noun
breathless	breath		+less	noun + less
child	child			common noun
<b>Verbs</b>				
love	love			present tense form of verb
fold	fold			present tense form of verb
keep	keeps		+s	present tense form of verb
folds	fold		+s	present tense form of verb fold
keeps	keep			present tense form of verb keep
run	run			present tense form of verb ran
hand over	hand and over			noun + preposition
<b>Adjectives</b>				
hollow	hollow			descriptive adjective
easy	easy			descriptive adjective
one	one			descriptive adjective
gaudy	gaudy			descriptive adjective
roto	roto			descriptive adjective
blue	blue			descriptive adjective
Indian	India		+n	descriptive adjective
money	money			descriptive adjective
utter	utter			descriptive adjective
cupped	cup		+ed	noun + ed + descriptive adjective
broken	break		+en	verb + en
bright	bright			descriptive adjective
real	real			descriptive adjective
breathless	breath		+less	verb + less= descriptive adjective
merest	mere		+st	adjective + st= descriptive adjective
<b>Adverbs</b>				
once	once			adverb of degree
once again	once and again			adverb of degree
again	again			adverb of degree
all time	all and time			adverb of time

Edith Tiempo’s “Bonsai” is rich in content words affixed with s in nouns, s in verbs, y in adjectives and none in adverbs. This finding proves the presence of morphologic linearity in the content words of this poem which is subjected to morphologic analysis.

Conclusion. Across the examined poems – “Mid-Morning of Sheba,” “The Tracks of Babylon,” “Lament for the Littlest Fellow,” “Narcissus in New York,” “The Pestle,” and “Bonsai” – a consistent pattern emerged. Each poem showcased Edith Tiempo's skillful manipulation of morphemes to construct content words and achieve specific effects.

These findings overwhelmingly support the conclusion that Edith Tiempo's poetry relies

heavily on morphological linearity to create meaning and richness. The deliberate use of affixation in nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs contributes significantly to the overall linguistic texture of her poems. This study highlights Tiempo's mastery of language, demonstrating how she utilizes the smallest units of meaning to craft impactful poetic expressions.

Edith Tiempo's use of morphological linearity across her poems demonstrates a deliberate and skillful manipulation of language. The patterns of affixation and the balance between free and bound morphemes play a crucial role in shaping the thematic and rhythmic qualities of her work, showcasing her prowess in blending form and function in poetry. This morphological analysis underscores the intricacies of her linguistic choices and their impact on the reader's experience.

**Recommendations.** Based on these insights, it is recommended that Edith Tiempo's poems may be considered valuable resources for language educators. The concrete examples found in her work provide an excellent foundation for teaching various grammatical concepts, such as pluralization of nouns, verb tense formation through affixation, and the diverse forms of adjectives and adverbs. By incorporating Tiempo's poetry into language education curricula, educators can create more engaging and illustrative lessons that deepen students' understanding of these linguistic elements. Also, teachers can develop more interesting and visually stimulating lessons that help students comprehend these language components by incorporating Tiempo's poetry into language education programs.

Moreover, a proposed monograph on the morphology of content words may be developed. By incorporating a wider range of literary works beyond Tiempo's poems, a monograph can offer a more comprehensive exploration of morphological richness across diverse literary styles.

Further, there is compelling evidence to support the creation of an enlarged monograph that

explores the morphology of content words in greater detail. Although the original emphasis on Tiempo's poetry has yielded important insights, expanding the study to encompass a wider variety of literary works will enable a more thorough investigation of morphological richness in a variety of literary genres. The morphological devices employed by different authors might be compared and contrasted in this extended monograph, providing a deeper and more complex knowledge of how these devices work in various literary situations. In addition to improving academic research, this kind of material would be a great resource for teachers and students.

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