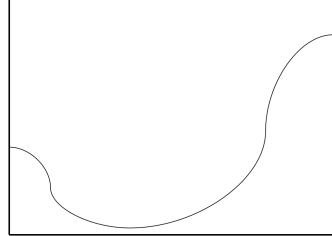
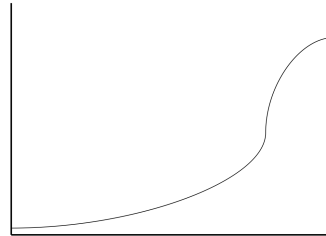


The definition of word is based on the distribution of morphemes associated with bonds of variable strengths. The two idealized graphs below plot the frequencies (on the vertical axis) of morphemes of varying bond strengths (on the horizontal axis).

(3) (a) *A language with words*



(b) *A language without words*



Many languages exhibit a *bimodal* distribution of the kind shown in (3a), in which the two peaks represent the relatively greater frequencies of clearly bound and clearly unbound morphemes, with the trough between the two peaks constituting the cut-off point between morphology and syntax, and providing for a cross-linguistically viable comparative category of word. Some languages, however, exhibit a *unimodal* distribution of the kind shown in (3b): such languages have few bound morphemes, and therefore do not provide clear instantiations of the comparative category of word — instead, they may be said to be isolating.

A detailed investigation of Riau Indonesian shows the distribution to follow the pattern in (3b), with relatively few bound morphemes, and relatively few grammatical phenomena providing evidence for a distinction between variable bond strengths. A summary of the available evidence for word structure categories of various kinds in Riau Indonesian is presented in the following table:

	CORE FOOT	INNER WORD (terminal)	INNER WORD (non-terminal)	OUTER WORD
focus intonation	X			
no reduction	X			
epenthesis	X			
loanword expansion	X			
obligatory <i>si-</i>	X			
<i>N-</i> realized as <i>nge-</i>	X			
<i>Warasa</i> ludling	X			X
final <i>k</i> realized as <i>ʔ</i>		X		
<i>Sabaha</i> ludling		X		
<i>Bahasiswa</i> ludling		X		
<i>Pantun</i> rhythm		X		
reduplication			X	
spelling		X	X	X

As suggested above, there is relatively little hard-core grammatical evidence for word-internal structure; much of the evidence is paralinguistic, involving ludlings, poetic meter, and orthography. The strongest evidence is for a core disyllabic foot which is typically monomorphemic. Three additional larger levels of structure, which might plausibly be associated with the notion of wordhood, are relatively more weakly supported. Thus, Riau Indonesian is shown to be a language without a prominent instantiation of the comparative concept of word; it is thus a fine exemplar of the isolating language type.

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