

## Re: stem or root?

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Helmut Richter wrote:

Besides their more special meanings, the words "stem" and "root" are both used to denote the core part of a word to which affixes are attached. Are the two words synonymous in this context?

In the German language, there are many words that look as if they had an affix (mostly a suffix) but this affix appears in each cognate word, e.g. "Wagen" with the suffix "-en", but all not to distant cognates contain the n of the suffix, e.g. "Wagner". The "-(e)n" thus belongs to the word itself and is not an \*additional\* affix. Would one say that it is part of the root? Or that it is part of the word stem?

Without being sure about the correct terminology, I would consider it part of the root but not part of the stem, but I want to check whether my terminology is correct in this point.

It depends on the way you see these three words: root, stem or base. Root suggests the letters (sounds) that carry the meaning as in Semitic languages. Stem suggests derivation and base has a more general meaning. All of them overlap in meaning.