University of Tikrit

College of Education for Humanities

Department of English

Process of Word Formation 1

Grammar

Second year

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2024-2025

The process of word formation in English

Word formation process: concerns the processes that allow us to create new words with grammatical resources already available within a language. It is how new words are created in a language. In English, this involves systematic rules and patterns that modify or combine existing words (or parts of words) to form new ones. It's an essential part of how the language grows and adapts.

Types of Word Formation:

1. Affixation or Derivation

   Derivation is one of the most productive word formation processes in English. In affixation, an affix attaches to a stem. All the words in the sentence "Teachers dislike yawning students" are affixed words. We can analyse affixes based on two criteria: according to their distribution, and according to their meaning. Prefixes precede the stem and suffixes follow the stem. Examples of derivation:

   Disadvise (dis- + advise)

   Emplane/Deplane (*en-/de-* + plane)

   Teleplay (tele- + play)

   Ecosystem (eco- + system)

   Coachdom (coach + -dom)

   Counselorship (counselor + -ship)

   Re-ask (re- + ask

2. Compounding:

   Compounding is a word-formation process in which two or more words (usually free morphemes) are combined to create a new word with a distinct meaning.

Each of the stems in a compound is itself a word of the language, and therefore belongs to a particular word class. However, the word class of each stem does not necessarily correspond to the word class of the compound word itself, as shown in the table below:

Stems	Compound	Word class of stems	Word class of compound
hand + bag	handbag	N + N	N
pick + pocket	pickpocket	V + N	N
pull + over	pullover	V + P	N
sea + sick	seasick	N + Adj	Adj
bare + foot	barefoot	Adj + N	Adj
run + down	rundown	V + Adv	Adj
spoon + feed	spoonfeed	N + V	V
over + shadow	overshadow	P + V	V
in + to	into	P + P	P

Compound words can be written in three ways:

(a) Closed Compounds

Written as a single word without spaces or hyphens.

Examples: Notebook, sunflower, keyboard, toothpaste.

(b) Open Compounds

Written as separate words but function as a single unit.

Examples: Post office, high school, real estate, ice cream.

(c) Hyphenated Compounds: Joined by a hyphen.

Examples: Mother-in-law, well-known, state-of-the-art, check-in.

3. Blending:

   A blend can be seen as the compounding of clipped words, in that it takes segments from words and joins them together in a new word that retains meaning characteristics from the original words. The word smog, for example, is a blend of smoke and fog, and means a 'blend' of smoke and fog. Similarly, brunch is a blend of breakfast and lunch, a modem is a blend of a modulator and demodulator, while a dramedy blends drama and comedy.

Common blended words

Blended Word	Original Words	Meaning
brunch	breakfast + lunch	A late morning meal combining breakfast and lunch
smog	smoke + fog	Thick, polluted air
motel	motor + hotel	A roadside hotel for motorists
blog	web + log	An online journal or informational website
email	electronic + mail	Messages sent via electronic communication
hangry	hungry + angry	Irritable due to hunger
infomercial	information + commercial	A television program that promotes a product in detail
netizen	internet + citizen	A frequent or active user of the internet
bridezilla	bride + Godzilla	A bride-to-be who is extremely demanding or difficult
workaholic	work + alcoholic	A person addicted to or obsessed with work

4. Invention:

   It is the invention of totally new words either deliberately or accidentally. This is a very rare and uncommon method to create new words, but in the media, people try to outdo each other with more and better words to name their products. Often these trademark names are adopted by the masses and they become "everyday words of a language". Coinage also refers to the extension of a name of product from a specific reference to a more general one. For e.g. Xerox, Kodak, google, nylon,

band-aid In other words, Coinage are words that somebody creates and people start using it.

5. Clipping:

Clipping simply cuts a word short, without reference to morphological structure. Examples of clipped words include exam from examination, maths from mathematics, and pub from public house. Many students taking English Language refer to their course as Elang. Many of us surf the net rather than the internet, and ride in cars rather than motorcars. These examples show that clipping can affect any part of the original word, its beginning, end or middle. The words fridge and flu, from refrigerator and influenza, for example, retain the middle, while clipping off the beginning and end of the words.

Only a very few words have been formed by both fore and aft clipping. Four common ones are flu, Liz, still (apparatus for distilling hard liquor), and fridge. Clipped words are formed not only from individual words but from grammatical units, such as modifier plus noun. Paratrooper, for example, is a clipped form of parachutist trooper. In cases like this it is often the first part that is shortened while the second part remains intact. Also, two successive words may be clipped to form one new word, as in sitcom (= situation comedy).

Common clipped words

Clipped Word	Full Form	Meaning
info	information	facts or data
ad	advertisement	a public promotion of something
vet	veterinarian	an animal doctor

gym	gymnasium	a place for physical exercise
exam	examination	a formal test
lab	laboratory	a place for scientific research or experiments
math	mathematics	the study of numbers and shapes
bus	omnibus	a large vehicle for transporting people
phone	telephone	a device used for voice communication
fridge	refrigerator	an appliance used to keep food cold

References

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