Derivation

In linguistics, **derivation** is the process of forming a new word on the basis of an existing word,
e.g. *happiness* and *unhappy* from *happy*.

It often involves the addition of a morpheme in the form of an affix, such as *-ness*, *un-* and *-ation*.

Derivation stands <u>**in contrast to**</u> the process of **inflection**, which means the formation of grammatical variants of the same word, as with:

determine/determines/determining/determined.

Derivational patterns

- Derivational morphology often involves the addition of a **derivational suffix or other affix**.

  Such an affix usually applies to words of **one lexical category** (part of speech) and changes them into words of another such category.

  For example, the English derivational suffix
  -ly changes adjectives into adverbs (*slow* →*slowly*).

Examples of English derivational patterns and their suffixes:

- Adjective to noun: **-ness** (*slow → slowness*)

- Adjective to verb: **-ise** (*modern → modernise*)

- Adjective to adjective: **-ish** (*red → reddish*)

- Adjective to adverb: **-ly** (*personal → personally*)

- Noun to adjective: **-al** (*recreation → recreational*)

- Noun to verb: **-fy** (*glory → glorify*)

- Verb to adjective: **-able** (*drink → drinkable*)

- Verb to noun : **-ance** (*deliver → deliverance*)

- Verb to noun: **-er** (*write → writer*)

- Verb to noun : *-ion*   (*protect* → *proctection*)
- Verb to adjective *:- ing*   (*dance* → *dancing*)
- Verb to adjective : *-ive*   (*assert* → *assertive*)
- Verb to noun : *-ment*   (*treat* → *treatment*)
- Noun to adjective: *-ful*   (*hope* → *hopeful*)
- Noun to adjective: *-ic*   (*optimist* → *optimistic*)
- Noun to adjective: *-less*   (*brain* → *brainless*)
- Noun to adjective: *-ous* (*poison* → *poisonous*)
- Adjective to verb: *-en*   (*black* → *blacken*)

Derivation can also occur without any change of form, for example *telephone* (noun) and *to telephone* (verb)
This is known as **conversion**, or **zero derivation.**

DERIVATION :

- is **not** obligatory

- typically produces a greater change of meaning from the original form,

- is more likely to result in a form which has a somewhat individual meaning.

- often changes the grammatical category of a root

Derivation and inflection

- Derivation can be contrasted with inflection, in that derivation produces *a new word* (a distinct lexeme), whereas inflection produces *grammatical variants of the same word*.

- However, it is important to note that derivations and inflections can share morphemes that have the same sound, but not the same meaning.

  For example, when the affix **-er**, is added to an adjective, as in *small-er* = **inflection**,

  but when added to a verb, as in *cook-er* = **derivation**

- Note that derivational affixes are **bound morphemes** – they are meaningful units, but can only normally occur when attached to another word.

- It also differs from inflection in that inflection does not create new lexemes but new word forms (*table* → *tables; open* → *opened*).

Productivity

- A productive pattern or affix is one that is commonly used to produce novel forms. For example, the negating prefix *un-* is more productive in English than the alternative *in-*

  both of them occur in established words
  (such as **un**usual and **in**accessible),

  but faced with a new word which does not have an established negation, a native speaker is more likely to create a novel form with *un-* than with *in-*.

References

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- Sobin, Nicholas (2011). *Syntactic Analysis The Basics.* West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell. pp. 17–18. ISBN 978-1-4443-3895-9.