WORD FORMATION PROCESSES

(Interdisciplinary Class)

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- How new words are being formed in the language?

- Why the process consists of a combination of morphemes that are rule-governed (when a new word is formed)?

- Why processes are formed frequently or commonly in the use of the English language?

Introduction

Nowadays, the terms 'word formation' does not have a clear cut, universally accepted usage. It is sometimes referred to all processes connected with changing the form of the word by, for example, affixation, which is a matter of morphology. In its wider sense word formation denotes the processes of creation of new lexical units. Although it seems that the difference between morphological change of a word and creation of a new term is quite easy to perceive, there is sometimes a dispute as to whether blending is still a morphological change or making a new word. There are, of course, numerous word formation processes that do not arouse any controversies and are very similar in the majority of languages.

1. Clipping

Clipping is the word formation process which consists in the reduction of a word to one of its parts (Marchand: 1969). Clippings are, also, known as "shortenings."Clipping mainly consists of the following types:

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a.   Back clipping

b.   Fore-clipping

c.   Middle clipping

d.   Complex clipping

a. Back Clipping

Back clipping or apocopation is the most common type, in which the beginning is retained. The unclipped original may be either a simple or a composite. For example:

ad (advertisement), cable (cablegram),

doc(doctor), exam (examination),

gas (gasoline), math (mathematics),

memo(memorandum),

gym (gymnastics, gymnasium)

mutt (muttonhead), pub(public house),

pop (popular concert), trad (traditional jazz),

fax(facsimile).

b. Fore-clipping

Fore-clipping or aphaeresis retains the final part.

For Example:

phone(telephone),   varsity (university),
chute (parachute),   coon (raccoon),
gator(alligator),   pike (turnpike).

c. Middle Clipping

In middle clipping or syncope, the middle of the word is retained.

For Example:

flu (influenza),   tec (detective),

polly (apollinaris),   jams (pyjamas),

shrink (head-shrinker).

d. Complex Clipping

- Clipped forms are also used in compounds. One part of the original compound most often remains intact. For examples are:

cablegram (cabletelegram),

op art (optical art),

org-man (organization man).

- Sometimes both halves of a compound are clipped as in navicert (navigation certificate). In these cases it is difficult to know whether the resultant formation should be treated as a clipping or as a blend, for the border between the two types is not always clear

2. Acronymy/Acronium

Acronyms and initialisms are abbreviations, such as NATO, laser, and IBM, that are formed using the initial letters of words or word parts in a phrase or name. Acronyms and initialisms are usually pronounced in a way that is distinct from that of the full forms for which they stand: as the names of the individual letters (as in IBM), as a word (as in NATO), or as a combination (as in IUPAC). Another term, alphabetism, is sometimes used to describe abbreviations pronounced as the names of letters.

Categories of Acronymy as Examples:

❑ pronounced as a word, containing only initial letters:

FNMA: (Fannie Mae) Federal National Mortgage Association

NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

❑ pronounced as a word, containing non-initial letters:

Amphetamine: Alpha-methyl-phenethylamine

Gestapo: GeheimeStaatspolizei ("secret state police")

❑ pronounced only as the names of letters

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

DNA: deoxyribonucleic acid

❑ shortcut incorporated into name

W3C: (double-u three cee) World Wide Web Consortium

W3M: (three em) originally Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Company

Categories of Acronymy as Examples:

❑ recursive acronyms, in which the abbreviation itself is the expansion of one initial (particularly enjoyed by the open-source community):

VISA: VISA International Service Association

GNU: GNU's Not Unix!

❑ pseudo-acronyms are used because, when pronounced as intended, they resemble the sounds of other words:

ICQ: "I seek you"

IOU: "I owe you"

❑ multi-layered acronyms:

GAIM: GTK+ AOL Instant Messenger, i.e. GIMP Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger, i.e. GNU Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger, i.e. GNU's Not Unix Image Manipulation Program Tool Kit America OnLine Instant Messenger

VHDL: VHSIC Hardware Description Language, i.e. Very High Speed Integrated Circuits Hardware Description Language

3. Blending

A blend is a word formed from parts of two other words. These parts are sometimes, but not always, morphemes.
A blend is different from a portmanteau word in that a portmanteau refers strictly to a blending of two function words, similar to a contraction.

3.1 Formation of Blendings: Most blends are formed by one of the following methods:

a. The beginning of one word is added to the end of the other.
   For Example: brunch (breakfast and lunch).
b. The beginnings of two words are combined.
   For Example: cyborg (cybernetic and organism)
c. One complete word is combined with part of another word.
   For Example: guesstimate (guess and estimate)
d. Two words are blended around a common sequence of sounds.
   For Example: Californication (from a song by the Red Hot Chili Peppers, is a blend of California and fornication)
e. Multiple sounds from two component words are blended, while mostly preserving the sounds' order. Poet Lewis Carroll was well known for these kinds of blends. This method is difficult to achieve and is considered a sign of Carroll's verbal wit. For Example: slithy (lithe and slimy).

4. Back-formation

Back-formation refers to the process of creating a new lexeme (less precisely, a new "word") by removing actual or supposed affixes. The resulting neologism is called a back-formation. Back-formations are shortened words created from longer words, thus back-formations may be viewed as a sub-type of clipping. For Example:

The noun resurrection was borrowed from Latin, and the verb resurrect was then back formed hundreds of years later from it by removing the -ion suffix. This segmentation of resurrection into resurrect+ ion was possible because English had many examples of Latinate words that had verb and verb+-ion pairs — in these pairs the -ion suffix is added to verb forms in order to create nouns (such as, insert/insertion, project/projection, etc.).

5. Borrowing

Borrowing is just taking a word from another language. The borrowed words are called loan words. A loanword (or loan word) is a word directly taken into one language from another with little or no translation. By contrast, a calque or loan translation is a related concept whereby it is the meaning or idiom that is borrowed rather than the lexical item itself. The word loanword is itself a calque of the German Lehnwort. Loanwords can also be called "borrowings".

For Example: Sakul/schakul from School

5.1 A Statistical Data of Loanwords in English

English has many loanwords. In 1973, a computerized survey of about 80,000 words in the old Shorter Oxford Dictionary (3rd edition) was published in Ordered Profusion by Thomas Finkenstaedt and Dieter Wolff. Their estimates for the origin of English words were as follows:

- French, including Old French and early Anglo-French: 28.3%
- Latin, including modern scientific and technical Latin: 28.24%
- Germanic languages, including Old and Middle English: 25%
- Greek: 5.32%
- No etymology given or unknown: 4.03%
- Derived from proper names: 3.28%
- All other languages contributed less than 1%

However, if the frequency of use of words is considered, words from Old and Middle English occupy the vast majority.

Examples:

Biology, boxer, ozone from German

Jacket, yoghurt, kiosh from Turkish

Pistol, robot from Czech

6. Coinage

Coinage is the invention of totally new words. The typical process of coinage usually involves the extension of a product name from a specific reference to a more general one.

For example: Kleenex, Xerox, and Kodak.

These started as names of specific products, but now they are used as the generic names for different brands of these types of products.

7. Reduplication

Process of forming new words either by doubling an entire word (total reduplication) or part of a word (partial reduplication). English makes use of reduplication very sporadically (rarely). Total reduplication is extremely rare!

Full and partial reduplication

Full reduplication involves a reduplication of the entire word. For example, Kham derives reciprocal forms from reflexive forms by total reduplication:

[gin]'ourselves'→[gingin]'we (to) us'(gin-gin) [jaː]'themselves'→[jaːjaː]'they (to) them'(jaː-jaː)*(Watters 2002)*.

Partial reduplication involves a reduplication of only part of the word. For example, Marshallese forms words meaning 'to wear X' by reduplicating the last *consonant-vowel-consonant* (*CVC*) sequence of a base, i.e. *base+CVC*:

kagir 'belt'→*kagirgir* 'to wear a belt' (kagir-gir) *takin* 'sock'→*takinkin* 'to wear socks '(takin-kin)*(Moravsik 1978)*.

English partial reduplication: Example: Humpty – Dumpty, Hocus - Pocus,

8. Inflection

In linguistics, **inflection** or **inflexion** is the modification of a word to express different grammatical categories such as tense, grammatical mood, grammatical voice, aspect, person, number, gender and case.

❑An inflection expresses one or more grammatical categories with an explicitly stated prefix, suffix, or infix, or another internal modification such as a vowel change.

For example: The Latin word *ducam*, (I will lead),

Includes: an explicit suffix, *-am*,
                         expressing person (first),
                         number (singular),
                         and tense (future).

For example: The English word "cars" is a noun

Inflected for: number, specifically to express the plural
                         "-s" is a inflectional suffix

Whereas: "car" is not an inflection.

9. Derivation

❑ In linguistics, **derivation** is the process of forming a new word on the basis of an existing word.

Example: *happi-ness* and *un-happy* from *happy*,

or *determination* from *determine*.

❑ Derivation stands in contrast to the process of inflection, which uses another kind of affix in order to form grammatical variants of the same word, as with *determine/determine-s/determin-ing/determin-ed*.

❑ Generally speaking, inflection applies to all members of a part of speech (e.g., every English verb has a past-tense form), while derivation applies only to some members of a part of speech (e.g., the nominalizing suffix *-ity* can be used with the adjectives *modern* and *dense*, but not with *open* or *strong*).

❑ Derivation is the process of forming a new words by means of Affixation (Prefix, Infix and Suffix).

9. Derivation

❑A derivational suffix usually applies to words of one syntactic category and changes them into words of another syntactic 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*) in British English or *-ize* (*archaic → archaicize*) in American English and Oxford spelling

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 (abstract): *-ance* (*deliver → deliverance*)

verb-to-noun (concrete): *-er* (*write → writer*)

10. Compounding

A compound is a lexeme (a word) that consists of more than one other lexeme. It can be categorized in to two i.e. endocentric and exocentric.

❑An endocentric compound consists of a head, i.e. the categorical part that contains the basic meaning of the whole compound, and modifiers, which restrict this meaning.

For example: The English compound doghouse, where house is the head and dog is the modifier, is understood as a house intended for a dog.

 Endocentric compounds tend to be of the same part of speech (word class) as their head, as in the case of doghouse. (Such compounds were called karmadharaya in the Sanskrit tradition.)

10. Compounding

☐ Exocentric compounds do not have a head, and their meaning often cannot be transparently guessed from its constituent parts.

For example: The English compound white-collar is neither a kind of collar nor a white thing.

☐ In an exocentric compound, the word class is determined lexically, disregarding the class of the constituents.

For example: a must-have is not a verb but a noun.

10. Compounding

English language allows several types of combinations of different word classes:

N + N lipstick , teapot

A + N fast food, soft drink

V + N breakfast, sky-dive

N + V sunshine, babysit

N + A capital-intensive, waterproof

A + A deaf-mute, bitter-sweet