

Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdallah University
Faculty of Letters & Human Sciences
English Studies
Modular Degree Program



Intro 2 Lx
Prof. Belfakir

MORPHOLOGY:
Morphological processes

Word formation processes

What mechanisms are employed by speakers of a language to change or modify the meaning of a particular base-form? Morphological processes result in adding or subtracting material (accompanied by a change in meaning).

Concatenative morphology: putting morphemes together.

Non-concatenative: modifying internal structure of morphemes

Morphological Processes	
Concatenative	Non concatenative
Affixation	Reduplication (repetition)
Compounding	Internal Modification (Ablaut)
	Conversion
	Back Derivation
	Abbreviation (Acronyms)
	Clipping

CONCATENATIVE PROCESSES

Affixation words are formed by adding affixes to a base.

V + -able → Adj: predict-able

V + -er → N: sing-er

un- + A → A: un-productive

V + -en → V: deep-en, thick-en

Compounding: forming words by combining two or more existing words.

Nouns: 'fire engine', 'oil well', 'green house', 'jump suit', etc.

Verbs: 'spoon feed', 'dry clean', 'under estimate', 'spit shine', etc.

Adjectives: 'sea green', 'red hot', 'over grown', etc.

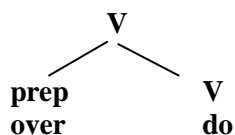
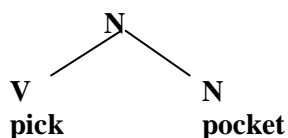
Multiple compound structure:

Adj + Adj → Adj: bitter-sweet

N + N → N: rain-bow

V + N → N: pick-pocket

P + V → V: over-do



Meaning of compounds

The head of compounds determines the category of the compound word.

- a. **Endocentric:** meaning denoted by its **head**. The head of endocentric compounds is the rightmost component. For example, the head of 'blackboard' is 'board'.

In endocentric compounds, the referent of the compound is always the same as the referent of its head.

- b. **Exocentric:** the referent of the compound as a whole is **not the referent of the head**.

- **air head, meat head, bird brain:** all refer to types of people – specifically stupid or disagreeable people – rather than types of heads or brains, respectively.

Reduplication is relatively common in **onomatopoeic expressions**. It is a process whereby an affix is realised by phonological material borrowed from the base.

pooh-pooh

zig-zag

sing-song

harum-scarum

goody-goody

roly-poly

wishy-washy

brain-drain
ding-dong
tick-tack

Blending: a process of word coinage in which phonetic fragments of two or more words are put together to make a single word,; e.g.

- breakfast + lunch → brunch
- smoke + fog → smog
- motor + hotel → motel
- Channel + tunnel → Chunnel

Internal modifications

Apophony a morphological process which consists in replacing word-internal segments: *fling* / *flung* (**brung* made by children as a mistake by analogy)

Vowel modification

‘strong’ verbs in English:

[i] – [æ] *begin – began, ring – rang, sing – sang,*

[i:] – [ou] *speak spoke, steal – stole, weave – wove,*

[ai] - [au] *bind – bound, find – found, wind – wound.*

In German it is called **ablaut**: *backen – buk – gebacken, beginnen – begann – begonnen*

Plural of some English nouns: [u(:)] – [i:] *foot – feet, goose – geese, tooth – teeth* [au] – [ai] *mouse – mice, louse – lice, [æ] – [e] man – men*

Total modification (suppletion):

go – went, good – better – best.

Conversion changes the word-class of a pre-existing word without any overt change in the shape of the input.

Examples: *(a) pilot – (to) pilot, (to) cook – (a) cook, empty (to) empty, (a) walk – (to) walk*

Conversion is just modification of function but not of form. Also, conversion can be made to look like affixation if we assume the existence of the so called zero morpheme.

Back-derivation: (back-formation) found in derivation and not inflection. The formation of a new lexeme by the deletion of a suffix, **or supposed suffix**,

laser > to lase where laser comes from an acronym!

preemptive > preempt

transcription – to transcript,

Diachronically speaking the following are also back derivations: *beggar > beg, editor > edit,*

peddler > peddle, sculptor > sculpt, automation > automate, electrocution > electrocute,

enthusiasm > enthuse, television > televise.

Clipping: longer words are shortened

doc(tor), **pro**(fessional), **lab**(oratory), **ad**(vertisement), **dorm**(itory), **exam**(ination)

auto(mobile), **gym**(nasium), **rhino**(ceros), **Jo**(seph),

Acronyms are like abbreviations, but act as normal words while **Initialisms** are abbreviations that do not.

Examples of Acronyms

- ***Laser***: light **a**mplification by simulated **e**mission of **r**adiation
- ***Radar*** : radio **d**etecting and **r**anging

Examples of Initialisms:

- ***FBI*** for the **F**ederal **B**ureau of **I**nvestigation
- ***PTA*** for **P**arent **T**eacher **A**ssociation,
- ***PR*** either '**p**ublic **r**elations'