**Unit 1: Vocabulary Building**

**Introduction to word formation**

In [linguistics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), **word formation** is the creation of a new [word](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Word). Word formation is sometimes contrasted with [semantic change](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantic_change), which is a change in a single word's meaning. The boundary between word formation and [semantic change](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semantic_change) can be difficult to define: a new use of an old word can be seen as a new word derived from an old one and identical to it in form.

**Compounding**

Compounding occurs when two or more words are joined to make one longer word. The meaning of the compound may be similar to or different from the meaning of its components in isolation. The component stems of a compound may be of the same part of speech—as in the case of the English word *footpath*, composed of the two nouns *foot* and *path*—or they may belong to different parts of speech, as in the case of the English word *blackbird*, composed of the adjective *black* and the noun *bird*. With very few exceptions, English compound words are stressed on their first component stem.

**Semantic classification**

A common semantic classification of compounds yields four types:

* endocentric
* exocentric
* copulative
* appositional

**An**[**endocentric**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endocentric)**compound** consists of a [*head*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Head_(linguistics)), 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](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Part_of_speech) (word class) as their head, as in the case of *doghouse*. (Such compounds were called *[tatpuruṣa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tatpuru%E1%B9%A3a" \o "Tatpuruṣa)* in the Sanskrit tradition.)

An [**exocentric**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exocentric)**compound** (called a *[bahuvrihi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahuvrihi" \o "Bahuvrihi)* compound in the [Sanskrit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanskrit_language) tradition) is a [hyponym](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyponym) of some unexpressed semantic category (such as a person, plant, or animal): none (neither) of its components can be perceived as a formal head, and its 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. The meaning of this type of compound can be glossed as "(one) whose B is A", where B is the second element of the compound and A the first. A bahuvrihi compound is one whose nature is expressed by neither of the words: thus a *white-collar* person is neither white nor a collar (the collar's colour is a [metonym](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metonym) for socioeconomic status). Other English examples include *barefoot*.

**Copulative compounds** are compounds with two semantic heads.

**Appositional compounds** are lexemes that have two (contrary) attributes that classify the compound.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Description** | **Examples** |
| **endocentric** | A+B denotes a special kind of B | *darkroom*, *smalltalk* |
| **exocentric** | A+B denotes a special kind of an unexpressed semantic head | *skinhead*, *paleface* (head: 'person') |
| **copulative** | A+B denotes 'the sum' of what A and B denote | *bittersweet*, *sleepwalk* |
| **appositional** | A and B provide different descriptions for the same referent | *actor-director*, *maidservant* |

### Syntactic classification

#### Noun–noun compounds

All natural languages have compound nouns. The positioning of the words (i.e. the most common order of constituents in phrases where nouns are modified by adjectives, by possessors, by other nouns, etc.) varies according to the language.

Examples: bedroom, water tank, motorcycle, printer cartridge

#### Verb–noun compounds

This construction exists in English, generally with the verb and noun both in uninflected form: examples are *spoilsport*, *killjoy*, *breakfast*, *cutthroat*, *pickpocket*, *dreadnought*, and *know-nothing*.

Also common in English is another type of verb–noun (or noun–verb) compound, in which an argument of the verb is [incorporated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incorporation_(linguistics)) into the verb, which is then usually turned into a [gerund](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerund), such as *breastfeeding*, *finger-pointing*, etc.

#### Verb–verb compounds

Verb–verb compounds are sequences of more than one verb acting together to determine clause structure. Examples:

*What did you****go and do****that for?*

*She****took and built****herself a house out of brush.*

**Clipping**

In [linguistics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistics), **clipping** is the [word formation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Word_formation) process which consists in the reduction of a word to one of its parts (Marchand: 1969). Clipping is also known as "truncation" or "shortening".

According to [Marchand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Marchand" \o "Hans Marchand) (1969), clippings are not coined as words belonging to the standard vocabulary of a language. They originate as terms of a special group like schools, army, police, the medical profession, etc., in the intimacy of a milieu where a hint is sufficient to indicate the whole. For example, *exam*(ination), *math*(ematics), and *lab*(oratory) originated in school [slang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slang); *spec*(ulation) and *tick*(et = credit) in stock-exchange slang; and *vet*(eran) and *cap*(tain) in army slang. Clipped forms can pass into common usage when they are widely useful, becoming part of standard English, which most speakers would agree has happened with *math*/*maths*, *lab*, *exam*, *phone*(from *telephone*), *fridge* (from *refrigerator*), and various others. When their usefulness is limited to narrower contexts, such as with *tick* in stock-exchange slang, they remain outside standard [register](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Register_(sociolinguistics)). Many, such as *mani* and *pedi* for *manicure* and *pedicure* or *mic*/*mike* for *microphone*, occupy a middle ground in which their appropriate register is a subjective judgment, but succeeding decades tend to see them become more widely used.

Clipping mainly consists of the following types:

1. **Final Clipping**:

Final (or back) clipping is the most common type, in which the beginning of the prototype is retained. The unclipped original may be either a simple or a composite. Examples are: *ad* (advertisement), *cable* (cablegram), *doc* (doctor), *exam* (examination), *fax* (facsimile), *gas*(gasoline), *gym* (gymnastics,gymnasium), *memo* (memorandum), *mutt* (muttonhead), *pub* (public house), *pop* (popular music).

1. **Initial Clipping**:

Initial (or fore) clipping retains the final part of the prototype. Examples: *bot* (robot), *chute* (parachute), *roach* (cockroach), *coon* (raccoon), *gator* (alligator), *phone* (telephone), *pike* (turnpike), *varsity* (university), *net* (Internet).

Final and initial clipping may be combined and result in curtailed words with the middle part of the prototype retained, which is the stressed syllable. Examples: *flu* (influenza), *frig* or *fridge* (refrigerator), *jams* or *jammies* (pajamas/pyjama) *polly* (apollinaris), *shrink* ([head-shrinker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychiatrist)), *tec* (detective).

1. **Medial Clipping**:

Words with the middle part of the word left out are equally few. They may be further subdivided into two groups: (a) words with a final-clipped stem retaining the functional morpheme: *maths* (mathematics), *specs* (spectacles); (b) contractions due to a gradual process of elision under the influence of rhythm and context. Thus, *fancy* (fantasy), *ma'am* (madam), and [fo'c'sle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fo%27c%27sle" \o "Fo'c'sle) may be regarded as accelerated forms.

1. **Complex Clipping**:

Clipped forms are also used in [compounds](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compound_(linguistics)). One part of the original compound most often remains intact. Examples are: *cablegram* (*cable*tele*gram*), *op art* (*op*tical *art*), *org-man* (*org*anization *man*), *linocut* (*lino*leum *cut*). Sometimes both halves of a compound are clipped as in *navicert* (*navi*gation *cert*ificate). In these cases it is difficult to know whether the resultant formation should be treated as a clipping or as a [blend](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blend_word), for the border between the two types is not always clear. According to Bauer (1983), the easiest way to draw the distinction is to say that those forms which retain compound stress are clipped compounds, whereas those that take simple word stress are not. By this criterion *bodbiz, Chicom, Comsymp, Intelsat, midcult, pro*-*am, photo op, sci-fi*, and *sitcom* are all compounds made of clippings.

**Blending**

A blend is a word formed by joining parts of two words after clipping. An example is *smog*, which comes from *smoke* and *fog*, or *brunch*, which comes from 'breakfast' and 'lunch'.

One subcategory of blending is the reduction of a word to one of its parts, e.g., fax (facsimile), flu (influenza) and bot (robot). Such [clipped words](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clipped_word) may not retain their original meaning. For example, "playing a [video game](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game) against a [bot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game_bot" \o "Video game bot)" is not the same as "playing a video game against a [robot](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robot)".

**Derivation**

Derivation is the formation of a new word or inflectable stem from another word or stem. It typically occurs by the addition of an affix.

The derived word is often of a different word class from the original. It may thus take the inflectional affixes of the new word class.

**Types: Prefix and Suffix**

**Prefix:**

A **prefix** is an [affix](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affix) which is placed before the [stem](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Word_stem) of a word.  Adding it to the beginning of one word changes it into another word. For example, when the prefix *un-* is added to the word *happy*, it creates the word *unhappy*. Particularly in the study of languages, a prefix is also called a **preformative**, because it alters the form of the words to which it is affixed.

Types of Prefix:

1. Prefix of Negation:

* ‘**un**’ – unhappy
* ‘**mis**’ – misuse
* ‘**non**’ – nonentity
* ‘**de**’ – deemphasise
* ‘**mal**’ – malfunction
* ‘**pseudo**’ – pseudo-drama
* ‘**ab**’ – abnormal
* ‘**in**’ – inability

1. Prefix of Location or Direction:

* ‘**pre**’ (before in time, rank, order, position, etc.) – predate
* ‘**post**’ (after in time or sequence; following; subsequent) – post-mortem
* ‘**trans**’ (across, beyond) – transatlantic

1. Prefixes of Attitude

* ‘**anti**’ –antisocial
* ‘**pro**’ –proactive
* ‘**co**’ – coexist
* ‘**counter**’ – counterattack
* ‘**contra**’ – contradistinction

1. Prefixes of number

* ‘**uni**’ – unidirectional
* ‘**di/bi**’ – dicotyledon, bi-annual
* ‘**tri**’ – tricycle
* ‘**quad**’ –quadrangle
* ‘**tetra**’ – tetrameter
* ‘**pent**’ – pentagon
* ‘**deca**’ – decametre
* ‘**deci**’ – decimetre
* ‘**multi**’ – multilateral

1. Prefixes Emphasizing Degree

* ‘**super**’ – supermarket, superman
* ‘**mini**’ – mini mart, miniskirt
* ‘**hyper**’ – hyperactive,
* ‘**over**’ – overloaded,
* ‘**out**’ – outnumber, outspoken
* ‘**less**’ – less important, less privileged
* ‘**infra**’ (below) – infrastructure
* ‘**ultra**’ (beyond) – ultraviolet
* ‘**supra**’ (over, above, beyond, or greater than) – supranational, supraorbital, supramolecular
* ‘**sub**’ (under, beneath, secondary in rank) – subtopic

1. Additive or Reflexive Prefixes:

* Increase/Decrease
* Appreciate/Depreciate
* Accelerate/decelerate
* Absent/Present
* Displace/Replace
* Inflate/deflate
* Implode/Explode
* Import/Export
* Immigrate/emigrate
* Inflow/Outflow

**Suffix:**

A Suffix is a morpheme or a type of an affix that comes at the end of the base, root or stem word; it comes at the final position of the root word.

## ****Derivational Suffixes****

These are suffixes that derive new words belonging to other Parts of Speech. For instance, when they are added to adjectives, they will derive words that are nouns or adverbs; when added to nouns, they will derive verbs and when they are added to adjectives, they will derive nouns. Examples of noun forming, verb forming, adjective-forming and adverb forming suffixes are given below:

### ****Noun-forming suffixes****

The following are [noun](https://akademia.com.ng/what-is-a-noun/)-forming suffixes:

* ‘**ness**’ – meekness, goodness,
* ‘**ism**’ – feminism, structuralism,
* ‘**ment**’ – management, enjoyment
* ‘**ist**’ – herbalist, motorist,
* ‘**ity**’ – plurality, mentality
* ‘**ian**’ – historian, magician,
* ‘**er**’ – maker, teacher, writer
* ‘**ship**’ – friendship, kinship, courtship,
* ‘**hood**’ – priesthood, neighbourhood,
* ‘**or**’ – juror, actor, conductor, generator,
* ‘**tion**’ – examination, culmination,
* ‘**ee**’ – payee, employee,

**Verb forming suffixes**

The following are [verb](https://akademia.com.ng/what-is-a-verb/)-forming suffixes:

* ‘**ify/fy**’ – clarify, satisfy,
* ‘**ise/ize**’ – italicise, canonise,
* ‘**ate**’ – accommodate, educate,
* ‘**en**’ – enlighten, frighten
* ‘**ke**’ – invoke, revoke,

### ****Adjective forming suffixes****

The following are [adjective](https://akademia.com.ng/what-is-an-adjective/)-forming suffixes:

* ‘**ful**’ – frightful, fretful
* ‘**ic**’ – rhythmic
* ‘**less**’ – boundless, meaningless.
* ‘**able**’ – habitable, unforgettable
* ‘**ish**’ – stylish, boyish, childish

**Adverb forming suffixes**

The following are [adverb](https://akademia.com.ng/what-is-an-adverb/)-forming suffixes:

* ‘**ly**’ – firstly, partly, etc. which are adjectives)
* ‘**wards**’ – upward, afterwards
* ‘**wise**’ – clockwise

**Creative respelling**  
Sometimes words are formed by simply changing the spelling of a word that the speaker wants to relate to the new word. Product names often involve creative respelling, such as *Mr. Kleen*, Koffee with Karan etc.

**Coinage**

There are some points of view about the meaning of coinage. Coinage is the word formation process in which a new word is created either deliberately or accidentally without using the other word formation processes and often from seemingly nothing. As neologism or coinage, we identify the word formation process of inventing entirely new words (neology). 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 language'' (Yule 2006, 53). Also coinage refers to extension of a name of a product from a specific reference to a more general one such as Kleenex, Xerox, and Kodak. And in some cases, the meaning of these words is broadened. Example, complicated chemical or technical terms (like *Aspirin*: acetylsalicylic acid) are adopted as the trademark term and often replace standard terms for e.g. in this example, painkillers. This also happened to words like *Xerox*, *Kleenex*or the German *Nutella*. Some words are differentiated from 'standard' neologisms, namely **eponyms**. Eponyms are words that are ''based on the name of a person or a place'' (Yule 2006, 53). Common eponyms are*watt*from name of the discoverer*, Fahrenheit*from name the expert*, jeans* takes from Italian city of JENWA, *sandwich* from a person who makes his meal between two slices of bread, *gold* from Italian scientist.

The following list of words provides some common coinages found in everyday English:

Aspirin       Escalator                      Heroin             Band-aid

Factoid       Frisbee                         Google             Kerosene

Kleenex     Laundromat                 Linoleum         Muggle

Nylon        Psychedelic                  Quark              Xerox

Zipper

Notice that many coinages start out as brand names for everyday items such as Kleenex for a facial tissue.

**Borrowing**

*Loanwords* are words adopted by the speakers of one language from a different language (the *source language*). A loanword can also be called a *borrowing*. The abstract noun *borrowing* refers to the process of speakers adopting words from a source language into their native language. "Loan" and "borrowing" are of course metaphors, because there is no literal lending process. There is no transfer from one language to another, and no "returning" words to the source language. The words simply come to be used by a speech community that speaks a different language from the one these words originated in.

Borrowing is a consequence of cultural contact between two language communities. Borrowing of words can go in both directions between the two languages in contact, but often there is an asymmetry, such that more words go from one side to the other. In this case the source language community has some advantage of power, prestige and/or wealth that makes the objects and ideas it brings desirable and useful to the borrowing language community. For example, the Germanic tribes in the first few centuries A.D. adopted numerous loanwords from Latin as they adopted new products via trade with the Romans. Few Germanic words, on the other hand, passed into Latin.

The actual process of borrowing is complex and involves many usage events (i.e. instances of use of the new word). Generally, some speakers of the borrowing language know the source language too, or at least enough of it to utilize the relevant word. They (often consciously) adopt the new word when speaking the borrowing language, because it most exactly fits the idea they are trying to express. If they are bilingual in the source language, which is often the case, they might pronounce the words the same or similar to the way they are pronounced in the source language. For example, English speakers adopted the word *garage* from French, at first with a pronunciation nearer to the French pronunciation than is now usually found. Presumably the very first speakers who used the word in English knew at least some French and heard the word used by French speakers, in a French-speaking context.

Those who first use the new word might use it at first only with speakers of the source language who know the word, but at some point they come to use the word with those to whom the word was not previously known. To these speakers the word may sound 'foreign'. At this stage, when most speakers do not know the word and if they hear it think it is from another language, the word can be called a *foreign word*. There are many foreign words and phrases used in English such as *bon vivant*(French), *mutatis mutandis* (Latin), and *Fahrvergnuegen* (German).

However, in time more speakers can become familiar with a new foreign word or expression. The community of users of this word can grow to the point where even people who know little or nothing of the source language understand, and even use, the novel word themselves. The new word becomes *conventionalized*: part of the conventional ways of speaking in the borrowing language. At this point we call it a borrowing or loanword.

(It should be noted that not all foreign words do become loanwords; if they fall out of use before they become widespread, they do not reach the loanword stage.)

Conventionalization is a gradual process in which a word progressively permeates a larger and larger speech community, becoming part of ever more people's linguistic repetoire. As part of its becoming more familiar to more people, a newly borrowed word gradually adopts sound and other characteristics of the borrowing language as speakers who do not know the source language accommodate it to their own linguistic systems. In time, people in the borrowing community do not perceive the word as a loanword at all. Generally, the longer a borrowed word has been in the language, and the more frequently it is used, the more it resembles the native words of the language.

English has gone through many periods in which large numbers of words from a particular language were borrowed. These periods coincide with times of major cultural contact between English speakers and those speaking other languages. The waves of borrowing during periods of especially strong cultural contacts are not sharply delimited, and can overlap. For example, the Norse influence on English began already in the 8th century A.D. and continued strongly well after the Norman Conquest brought a large influx of Norman French to the language.

It is part of the cultural history of English speakers that they have always adopted loanwords from the languages of whatever cultures they have come in contact with. There have been few periods when borrowing became unfashionable, and there has never been a national academy in Britain, the U.S., or other English-speaking countries to attempt to restrict new loanwords, as there has been in many continental European countries.

https://akademia.com.ng/prefix-definition-types-with-examples/