

1-TOM, 11-SON  
WORD FORMATION: PRODUCTIVE AND NON-PRODUCTIVE TYPES OF  
WORD FORMATION

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**Annotation:** This article deals with what is word-formation, the different ways in which new words are created in a language and how certain words might have been formed, how many types is the formation of words classified, adding prefixes and suffixes(what are they and which are the most common ones?), as well as the productive and non-productive types of word formation. Word formation studies the derivative structure of existing words and the patterns on which a language builds. What is more, it is a certain principle of classification of lexicon and the main way of enriching the vocabulary.

**Key words:** Word-formation, word-derivation, word-composition, suffixation affixation, prefixation, conversion, compounding, shortening, blending, back-formation, sound and stress-interchange.

Word formation is the system of derivative types of words and the process of creating new words from the material available in the language after certain structural and semantic formulas and patterns. Word formation deals with the ways in which new words are built on the bases of other words; for example; clue-less-ness. In this article, we will examine a number of perspectives on word formation and apply these to English. It is no secret that, the English language is known for its wonderful quality of the way in which words and sentences are formed and used. Formation of new words from an existing root word by adding a syllable or another word is the general process, however, there are multiple ways in which it can be done. The formation of words is classified into 4 types based on how the process of formation is carried out. They are: a) by adding prefixes; b) by adding suffixes; c) converting from one word class to another; d) forming compound words.



## 1-TOM, 11-SON

**Adding prefixes.** The term "prefix" refers to one or more alphabets added to the stem of a word, mostly to make it negative. The most commonly used prefixes include in-, un-, dis-, im-, ir- and etc. For example; discipline- indisciplin, just-unjust, tidy-untidy, respect-disrespect, understand- misunderstand, comfortable- uncomfortable, comfort-discomfort, responsible-irresponsible, legal-illegal, ethical- unethical.

**Adding suffixes.** A suffix is a short syllable added at the end of a base word. The addition of suffixes usually changes the word class of the particular word. The most common suffixes include -ment, -ness, -ity, -ous, -tion, -sion, -al, -able, -ible, -ive, -ly, -ate, -er, -or. For instance; comprehend(verb)- comprehension(noun)-comprehensible(adjective); inform(verb)- information (noun) informative (adjective); invest(verb)- investment (noun)-investor (noun); write (verb)- writer(noun); authorize (verb)- authorization (noun); converse (verb)- conversation (noun); wide (adjective)-widen (verb); brave (adjective)- bravery (noun); quick (adjective)-quickly (adverb).

**Conversion.** The process of conversion focuses solely changing the word class of the particular word. If you have noticed, you would have seen how some nouns are used to perform the role of a word or an adjective acting like a noun just by the addition of another word or slightly altering the spelling of the actual word. For instance; "The rich should help the poor". Adjectives such as "rich" and "poor" are used as nouns by using them with the article "the". "Everyone is talented". "Talented"- a past participle is used as an adjective in the above the sentence. The word is formed by adding the suffix to the end of the noun "talent" . "The financial aid had to be approved before we could make a decision". The noun "finance" is used as an adjective by adding "-ial" to the end of it and the verb "decide" is used as a noun by removing "de" and adding "sion" to the word.

**Forming compound words.** Compound words are formed by combining one part of speech with another to form a specific word class. There are many ways in which compound words are formed. Verbs are combined with adjective to form compound verbs, a present participle is combined with a noun to form a compound noun, an adjective and a noun are combined, adverb is combined with a noun, adjective is combined with a past participle to form a compound adjective and so on. For example;

Over(adjective)+load(noun)=overload

White(adjective)+wash(verb)=whitewash

Black(adjective)+board(noun)=blackboard

Cup(noun)+board(noun)=cupboard

Swimming(present participle)+pool(noun)=swimming pool



### 1-TOM, 11-SON

Break(verb)+down(preposition)=break down

Up(preposition)+town(noun)=uptown

Copy(verb)+writer(noun)=copy writer

Round(adjective)+table(noun)=round table. [1]

#### **Productive and non-productive types of word formation:**

Some of the ways of forming words in present-day English can be resorted for the creation of new words whenever the occasion demands- these are called productive ways of forming words, other ways of forming words can not produce new words and these are commonly termed non-productive or unproving words ever since the Old English, period on the other hand sound interchange must have been at one time a word building means, but in Modern English, as has been mentioned above, its function is actually only to distinguish between different classes and forms of words. [2, 112]. There are 2 types of word formation:

Productive ways are widely used to form a lot of new words in Modern English. They are word-derivation, word-composition, conversion.

Non-productive are not frequently used for the production of new words in Modern English. They are blending, back-formation, sound and stress-interchange, sound imitation.

**Shortening** (Contraction). This comparatively new way of word building has achieved a high degree of productivity nowadays, especially in American English. Shortenings (or contracted/ curtailed) are produced in 2 different ways. **The first** is to make a new word from a syllable (rarer two) of the original word. The letter may lose its beginning ( as in phone made from telephone, fence from defence), its ending ( as in hols from holidays, vac from vacation, prop from properties, ad from advertisement), or both beginning and ending ( as in flu from influenza, fridge from refrigerator). **The second** way of shortening is to make a new word from the initial letters of a word-group: UNO from the United Nations Organisations, BBC from the British Broadcasting Corporation, MP from the Member of Parliament, O.K from okay. This type is called initial shortenings. Both types of shortenings are characteristic of informal speech in general and of uncultivated speech particularly. Some examples; movie- moving picture; gent-gentleman; specs-spectacles; circs- circumstances; exhibish-exhibition; metrop-metropoly; posish-position; co-ed-coeducational; lib-liberty; cert-certainty.[3, 50].

**Blending** is the formation of new lexical units by means of merging fragment of words into one new word or combining the elements of one word with another:



## 1-TOM, 11-SON

drunch=drinks+lunch, cinemagnate=cinema+magnate. [4, 22]. It is the formation of taking only the beginning of one word and attaching it to the end of another one such as, smog, smaze, smurk, bit, motel, spam, edutainmentant, , brunch. Blends are words formed from a word-group or two synonyms. In blends, two ways of word building are combined: abbreviation and composition. One of the first blends in English, was the word "smog" from 2 synonyms: smoke and fog. Mostly blends are formed from a word-group.

**Back-formation.** The earliest examples of this type of word building are the verb "to beg" was made from the French borrowing "begger", to burgle from burglar, to cabble from cabbler. In all these cases the verb was made from the noun by subtracting what was mistakenly associated with the English suffix -er. The pattern of the type to work-worker was firmly established in the subconscious of English Speaking people at the time when these formations appeared and it was taken for granted that any noun denoting profession or occupation is certain to have a corresponding verb of the same root. Later examples of back-formation are to butle from butler, to baby-sit from baby-sitter, to force-land from forced landing, to blood-transfuse from blood transfusing. [5, 52].

**Sound-imitation** (onomatopoeion). Words are made by imitating different kinds of sounds that may be produced by animals, birds, insects, and other human beings. It is interesting that sounds are produced by the same kind of animal are frequently represented by quite different sound groups in different languages. For instance: English dogs bark: bow-bow; English cocks cry cock-a-doodle-doo; ducks quack and frogs croack. [6, 19]

In conclusion, word formation is the process of creating new words from the material available in the language after certain structural and semantic formulas and patterns. As a subject of study English word formation is that branch of English Lexicology which studies the derivative structure of words and the patterns on which the English language builds new words. Like another linguistic phenomenon, word formation may be studied synchronically and diachronically. In addition to, there are 2 types of word formation in Modern English: word-derivation and word-composition. Within the types further distinction is made between the various ways and means of word formation. There is every reason to exclude the shortening of words, lexicolisation blending, acronym, from the system of word formation and regard them and other word forming process as specific means of vocabulary replenishment. Sound and stress-interchange in Modern English are a means of distinguishing between different words,



### **1-TOM, 11-SON**

primarily between words of different parts of speech. The degree of productivity and factors favouring it make an important aspect of synchronic description of every derivational pattern within the 2 types of word formation.

The degree of productivity are distinguished for derivational patterns and individual derivational affixes: 1) highly-productive; 2) productive or semi-productive; 3) non-productive. [7, 114].

Taking everything into account, gaining a great deal of information about how different words are created in languages and how certain words have been formed can aid us to make our speech awesome and also understand other people's speaking. Therefore, we should also know about some borrowed words from languages especially, from ancient Greek and the dead language, Latin.

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**1-TOM, 11-SON**

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