Types of Word Formation

1. Coinage

Invention of totally new words

Extension of a name of a product from a specific reference to a more general one e.g. Kleenex, Xerox, and Kodak

Eponyms: words based on a name of a person or a place. E.g. sandwich, jeans, watt

2. Borrowing

Taking over of words from another language

English borrowed a lot of Latin and French words Leak (Dutch) Barbecue (Spanish) Piano (Italian) Sofa (Arabic) Croissant (French) Yogurt (Turkish)

Arabic also borrowed a lot of words from English, e.g. television, radio, supermarket Loan-translation or calque

A phrase that is introduced into a language through translation

3. Compounding

Two or more words joined together to form a new word. Examples: Home + work homework (N) Pick + pocket pickpocket (N) Low + paid low-paid (Adj)

Note: The meaning of a compound is not always the sum of the meanings of its parts. Baby oil Coconut oil oil made from coconuts. Olive oil oil made from olives. NOT oil made from babies
4. Blending - Similar to compounds, but in blending only parts of the words are combined.
   Examples: Motor + hotel - Motel  Breakfast + lunch - Brunch  Smoke + fog - smog  Teleprinter + exchange - telex

5. Clipping - Shortening a word by deleting one or more syllables
   Examples: Facsimile - fax  Hamburger - burger  Gasoline - gas  Advertisement - ad  Professor - prof  Doctor - doc

6. Backformation
   Creative reduction due to incorrect morphological analysis.
   Examples: editor edit  television - televise  babysitter - babysit
   Note: backformation always involve reduction (changing the form of the word)

7. Conversion
   Assigning an already existing word to a new syntactic category.
   Examples: butter (N) V to butter the bread  permit (V) N an entry  permit empty (A) V to empty the litter-bin  must (V) N doing the homework is a must  Microwave (N) V

8. Acronyms
   Words derived from the initials of several words
   Other examples of Acronyms: a) Radar  b) FYI  c) TGIF  d) a.k.a  e) Html  f) www  g) btw  h) ATM  i) FAQ  a) Radio detecting and ranging  b) For Your Information  c) Thanks God It’s Friday  d) also known as  e) Hypertext mark-up language  f) World wide web  g) By the way  h) Automatic Teller Machine  i) Frequently asked questions

9. Derivation
   The most common word formation process.
   affixes  Examples: Happy- unhappy, happiness  Arrange - rearrange
Prefixes vs. suffixes

Infixes inside the word  Tell them I’ve gone to Singabloodypore!

Activity 1- Multiple Processes

The creation of a particular word involves more than one process.

Example: Problems with the project have snowballed Snow + ball compound Snowball (N) (V) conversion

Multiple Processes  Identify the processes involved in the creation of the following forms.

I just got a new car-phone

James wants peace propos

Activity 2


To comb Deli Boycott clipping blends blends compounding blends conversion clipping eponym