

: STRUCTURE :**6.0 Objectives****6.1 Introduction****6.2 Meaning of ‘Word Formation’****6.2.1 What is ‘Root’ ?****6.2.2 What is ‘Stem’ ?****6.3 Process of Word Formation.****6.3.1 Affixation Method including Prefix and Suffix****6.3.2 Compounding Method and formation of Compound and Complex words.****6.3.3 Blending Method****6.3.4 Conversion Method****6.3.5 Acronym Method****6.3.6 Initialism****6.3.7 Clipping****6.3.8 Onomatopoeia****6.3.9 Coinage****6.3.10 Eponym****6.3.11 Borrowing****6.4 Let Us Sum Up****6.5 Key Words****6.6 Books Suggested****6.7 Check Your Progress****Answers****6.0 OBJECTIVES**

In this unit we shall;

- discuss the meaning of ‘word’, ‘stems’ and ‘roots’,
- understand the process of word formation by various methods resulting in compound and complex words,

On completing the unit, you shall be able to;

- distinguish between the root and stem of the word,
- identify and use simple, compound and complex words in order to use language more effectively.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Before we understand the meaning and process of word formation, let's see what does 'word' mean :

- The word is the smallest free form found in a particular language.
- A free form is an element that can occur in isolation and/or whose position with respect to the neighboring elements is not entirely fixed. For e.g. in the word 'tourists', 's' cannot be a free form since it must always be attached to the end of some word.

6.2 MEANING OF 'WORD FORMATION'

Word Formation process in English is the process of building new words by means of existing elements of language according to certain pattern and rules. In linguistics this is known as 'Morphology'. Morphology is the study of words, how they are formed and their relationship to the other words in the same language.

In order to understand the process of word formation, it is necessary to understand the structure and basic parts of a word such as :

6.2.1 Root :

The root is a word or a part of word that that does not have a prefix in front of the word or a suffix at the end of the word. It is thus known as **Simple word** as opposed to compound or complex words. Root word can form the basis of new words by addition of prefixes and/or suffixes. For e.g. the root of the English word 'waiting' is 'wait' and 'ing' is suffix. Similarly root for 'bicycle' is 'cycle' and 'bi' is a prefix. Many new words can be formed from a single root.

For e.g. let's take the root word 'form' which means 'shape'. Words based on it are :

1. Information : 'descriptive shape'
2. Deformed : 'out of shape'
3. Malformed : 'badly shaped'
4. Conform : 'Thoroughly shaped' to others
5. Non Conformist : 'Not thoroughly shaped'
6. Formula : 'mathematical shape'
7. Formality : 'requirement of etiquette'
8. Formless : 'having no definite shape'
9. Format : 'structure, plan or arrangement for how something is presented.'

Thus, many words can be formed from one root.

- Understanding the meaning of word roots can help us to understand the meaning of new words when we come across them.
- However, meaning of the root does not always equal to the meaning of the word. For e.g., the root word 'logos' means 'speech', and 'apo'

means ‘from or off’, so if we interpret the meaning of the word ‘apology’ based on root word alone, we might think it is ‘away from speech’ which is not a good explanation for a word that is used to express regret or remorse.

- Root words can have more than one meaning when combined with affixes and sometimes words that may look similar come from different roots. For e.g. root of the word ‘transactions’ is ‘act’.
- In English language, root words are mostly derived from Latin and Greek. For e.g. Some common Latin roots are :
 1. ‘**aqua**’ means ‘water’ forms ‘*aquarium*’, ‘*aquamarine*’.
 2. ‘**aud**’ means ‘to hear’ forms ‘*audience*’, ‘*audition*’, ‘*audio visual*’.
 3. ‘**dict**’ means ‘to say’ forms ‘*dictator*’, ‘*dictation*’.

Some common Greek roots are :

1. ‘**auto**’ means ‘self’ forms ‘*autobiography*’, ‘*automatic*’.
 2. ‘**bio**’ means ‘life’ forms ‘*biology*’, ‘*biography*’
 3. ‘**chron**’ means ‘time’ forms ‘*chronological*’, ‘*chronic*’.
- The root is called the base word.

6.2.2 Stem :

After root, another important part to understand is the stem. Stem is a part of a word together with any derivational affixes (meaning of derivation explained in detail further) to which inflectional affixes (prefix and/or suffix) are added. A word has a single stem, namely the part of the word that is common to all its inflected variants.

- The stem of the word consists minimally of a root but may be analyzable into a root plus derivational morpheme. For e.g., the stem of the word ‘friendships’ is not ‘friend’ but ‘friendship’ to which an inflectional suffix ‘s’ is added.
- Stem may be root. For e.g. ‘run’ or words with derivational morphemes. For e.g. the stem of a complex english noun ‘photographer’ is ‘photographer’ but not ‘photo’.
- Understanding the Difference between Root and Stem : Root of the English verb ‘destabilized’ is ‘stabil’ ; the stem is ‘destabilize’ which includes the derivational affixes like ‘de’ and ‘-ize’ but does not include the inflectional suffix ‘(e)d’. Thus stem is that part of the word that inflectional affixes attach to.

6.3 PROCESS OF WORD FORMATION

The process of forming new words often known as word building is done through various methods :

6.3.1 Affixation :

It is a process of forming new word by adding a prefix and/or suffix to an existing base.

Prefix is an affix which is placed before the stem of a word. Adding it to the beginning of one word changes it into another word. For e.g., when we add prefix 'un' to the word 'happy', it creates a word 'unhappy'. Thus adding prefix usually changes the meaning of the word but it may not change its word class (parts of speech). For e.g. Write (verb) – 're'write (verb), smoker (verb)– 'non'smoker (verb).

- The word Prefix is itself made up of the stem 'fix' means 'to attach' and prefix 'pre' means 'before', both of which are derived from Latin roots.
- Prefixes can be used to form new verbs : e.g. : circle– encircle, large, enlarge.
- Used to show Negation or Opposition :
un– unable, unfair, unlock, untrue, unrest
dis– dislike, disagree, disrespect
a– atypical, amoral
in– informal, inexperienced
im (before b,m,p) – impossible, immoral
il(before l) – illegal, illogical, illegible
ir(before r) – irregular, irrelevant, irresponsible, irrepectable
non– nonsmoker, nondrinker
de– decode, deforest, devalue
- Used to show Repetition, making it possible :
re– rebuild, reunite, recharge, remake
en/em– enrich, enlarge, embitter, embark
- Used to show Degree, Measure or Size :
super– superhuman, supernatural, supersonic
semi– semisolid, semifinal, semiautomatic
hyper– hyperactive, hypersensitive
ultra– ultrahigh, ultrasound, ultra magnetic
over– overtime, overpopulation, over explosion
- Used to show Time, Place, Order and Relation :
post– postwar, post graduation, postpone
pre– prewar, pre independence, prehistoric
inter– international, intercontinental, intercollege
ex– ex-president, ex-student, ex-girlfriend
- Used to show Number and Numeric Relation :
bi– bilateral, bipolar, bifocal
uni– unilateral, unisex, uniform
multi– multinational, multilingual, multicoloured

- Used to show Attitude, Collaboration and Membership :
 anti– antisocial, antiwar, anticorruption
 counter– counterattack, counter revolution
 pro– pro english, pro vice chancellor
 mis– mistreat, mislead, misuse.

Suffix is an affix which is placed after the stem of the word. Suffixes can alter the grammatical form (Word class/Parts of speech) of the words. For e.g., bake (verb) – baker (noun), beauty (verb)– beautiful (adjective). Let us see more examples of suffixes :

- Noun Forming Suffixes :
 or– actor, director, visitor
 er– speaker, teacher, baker, farmer
 ist– scientist, cartoonist, artist
 ess– hostess, actress, waitress
 ty/ity– purity, cruelty, stupidity
 ure/ture– mixture, failure, exposure
 dom– kingdom, freedom, stardom
 ence/ance– appearance, preference
 hood– likelihood, brotherhood, neighbourhood
 ness– kindness, goodness, willingness, softness
 ship– friendship, courtship, partnership, membership
 ment– development, government, entertainment
- Adjective Forming Suffixes :
 able/ible– sensible, reasonable, portable
 ic/atic– atomic, heroic, systematic
 y– bloody, dirty, sunny, moody
 less– useless, harmless, homeless
 ive/ative/itive– active, creative, sensitive
 ant/ent– pleasant, different, excellent
 en– wooden, golden, maiden
 like– childlike, ladylike
 ing– amusing, interesting, charming
 ish– bookish, childish, foolish
 ly– friendly, manly, lovely
- Verb Forming Suffixes :
 ize– standardize, civilize, specialize
 ify/fy– simplify, glorify
 en– deepen, sharpen, shorten

- Adverb Forming Suffixes :
ly– formally, calmly, easily
ward/wards– homeward, afterwards, backwards
wise/ways– likewise, otherwise, sideways.

Difference between Derivation and Inflection : Derivation is a part of affixation. It produces a new word by adding prefixes or suffixes. For e.g. ‘un’–usual : adding ‘un’ produces a new word, child–ish, dis–loyal–ty etc.; whereas inflection produces grammatical variants(parts of speech) of the same word by adding affixes. For e.g., Generally every English verb adds ‘s’ for third person singular present tense. run– run’s’. ‘s’ is an inflection.

When suffix ‘er’ is added to ‘smaller’ it is an inflection, but when it is added to a verb like ‘cook’ it becomes ‘cooker’ means utensil to cook which is a derivation.

6.3.2. Compounding :

It is the process of word formation that involves the process of joining two separate words to create a new word. For e.g. ‘street’ + ‘light’ = ‘streetlight’, ‘happy’ + ‘hour’ = ‘happy hour’. It is a unit that contains more than one stem.

- A **compound word** is a combination of two simple words. E.g., ‘bedroom’, ‘basketball’.
- The meaning of the compound may be similar or different from the meanings of its components in isolation.
- The component stems of a compound may be of the same part of speech as in the word ‘footpath’, composed of two nouns, ‘foot’ and ‘path’; or they may belong to different part of speech like in the word, ‘blackbird’ composed of an adjective ‘black’ and noun ‘bird’.
- In contrast to compound words, **Complex word** is a word consisting of a base and one or more derivational elements, like an affix or suffix. For e.g., ‘unlikely’ [un(prefix)–like(base)–ly(Suffix)], ‘vitality’ (vital–ity), ‘lively’ (live–ly). There are four origins that explain the formation of complex words.
 1. Greek origins– Words are formed as a result of classical Greek and neo–Latin roots. These are the words that, when read in Greek, show a very similar structure as in English. Many medical and academic terms follow this model. For e.g.– ‘narcissism’, ‘dogmatism’, ‘magnetism’.
 2. Romance origins– Words that come from Latin origin and whose structural composition is repetitive in English, Spanish and French. For e.g. the word ‘im–possible’, is the same in all three languages and only differ slightly in spelling.
 3. Germanic origins– This is the main origin of the English language upon which most English words are based. For e.g., word ‘skapiz’ means ‘ship’. It is used as a suffix in modern English in complex words such as ‘relation–ship’, ‘fellow–ship’, ‘friend–ship’ etc. This

structure is the same in English as it is in Norse, Dutch, High German and Old Saxon.

4. Vernacular words– words with mixed native principles of Latin, French and Greek.
5. Hybrid words– The combination of every origin in one same word or two different origins that keep the same structure in English like ‘un’– words (Vernacular), ‘cre’–words (Latin). The complex word ‘un–cre–ative’ is a vernacular/Latin hybrid.

6.3.3. Blending :

Blending is combination of two or more words to create a new one, usually by taking the beginning of one word and the end of another word. for e.g. ‘telecast’ is formed from television + broadcast. Taking ‘tele’, the beginning of the first word and ‘cast’, the ending if the second one.

- In other words a blended word is one formed from parts of two or more other words. These parts are called morphemes (the smallest grammatical unit in a language). The basic difference between a full word and a morpheme is that the morpheme(as the smallest unit) may or may not stand alone. When a morpheme stands by itself, it is considered a root because it has a meaning of its own. For e.g. the word ‘cat’ is one morpheme which can stand on its own but ‘cats’ is two morphemes, ‘cat’ and ‘s’; where ‘s’ cannot stand on its own.
- Some other examples of blending are :
 - brunch = breakfast + lunch
 - smog = smoke + fog
 - Infotainment = information + entertainment
 - sitcom = situation + comedy
 - transistor = transfer + resistor
 - motel = motor + hotel

6.3.4 Conversion :

This is also called zero derivation. Conversion is a kind of word formation, which involves the creation of a word(of a new word class/ grammatical category) from an existing word (of a different word class), without any change in the form. For E.g. :

Verb derived from Noun :

1. *Butter* the bread. (butter is a noun used as a verb)
2. *Ship* the package.
3. *Button* the shirt.

Noun derived from Verb :

1. a building *permit*. (permit is a verb used as a noun)
2. a new *survey*.
3. a long *walk*.

Verb derived from Adjective :

1. *Dirty* a shirt. (dirty is an adjective used as a verb)
2. *Empty* the box.
3. *Dry* the clothes.

Verb derived from Preposition :

1. to *down* the beer. (down is a preposition used as a verb)
2. to *up* the price.

6.3.5 Acronym :

This method involves formation of a word as an abbreviation from the initial components of a word. For e.g. SCUBA is formed from **S**elf **C**ontained **U**nderwater **B**reathing **A**pparatus, LASER is formed from **L**ight **A**mplification by **S**timulated **E**mission of **R**adiation.

In English and most other languages, such abbreviations historically had limited use but they became much more common in 20th century.

Acronym use has been popularized by text messages on mobile phones with Short Message Systems (SMS). E.g. 'LOL' for laughing out loud, 'DP' for display picture and many more.

6.3.6 Initialism :

Initialisms are also formed using initial components of a word. The only difference between Initialism and Acronym is initialisms are pronounced as sequence of letters. For e.g. : ELT– English Language Training.

USA– United States of America.

6.3.7 Clipping :

This is a method of word formation which involves shortening of a poly syllabic word. It involves various subtypes like back clipping, fore clipping, middle and complex clipping. For e.g., Facsimile – 'fax'

fanatic – 'fan'

cellular – 'cell'

examination– 'exam'

laboratory – 'lab'

gymnasium – 'gym'

influenza– 'flu'

6.3.8 Onomatopoeia :

This is a special type of word that depicts the sound associated with what is named. For e.g., hiss, sizzle, bang, hush, tictac.

6.3.9 Coinage :

This word formation process involves inventing entirely new words. This method is also known as **Neologism**, (neo means 'new' and logos means 'speech'). Words here are created from scratch. This process is common in cases where the upcoming industries look for a new and