

Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research

Islamic University

College of Education

Department of English Language



**Course Title: Introduction to Linguistics**

**Stage: 3rd Year**

**Tutor: Asst. Lect. Saif Hakim**

**Lecture Topic: Word formation**

**( 2022 - 2023 )**

**Etymology** is the study of the origin and history of words. It is a term that comes to us from Latin, but has its origins in Greek ( etymon “origin form” + logia “ study of.”)

**There are many different ways in which new words can enter the language.**

**1. Borrowing** is one of the most common sources of new words in English. It is taking words from other languages.

**Examples:**

1. English borrowing from other languages:

- Piano (Italian)
- Yogurt (Turkish)
- sofa (Arabic) jewel (French)

2. From English to other languages:

- Suupaamaaketto / sport/ klub/futbal

**1.1.Loan-translation (Calque).** It is a special type of borrowing, through which there is a direct translation of the element of a word into the borrowing language.

**Examples:**

- The French term **gratte-ciel**, which is literally translated as “**scrape-sky**,” is a calque for the English **skyscraper**.
- The English expression **moment of truth** is believed to be a calque from the Spanish phrase **el momento de la verdad**.

**2. Compounding.** It is process of the joining of two separate words to form a single word.

**Examples:**

- ( nouns ) bookcase, fingerprint, wallpaper wastebasket, and textbook.
- (compound adjectives )good-looking, low- paid .
- (Compounds of adjective) (fast) plus noun (food) as in a fast food, a full-time job.

**2.1. Blending.** It is the combination of two separate forms to produce a single new term. Taking the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of another.

**Examples :**

- smog (Smoke + fog).
- Brunch (breakfast + lunch )
- Motel ( motor + hotel)

**3.Clipping.** It occurs when a word of more than one syllable is reduced to a shorter form.

**Examples:**

- Exam ( examination )
- Fax ( facsimile )
- Ad ( advertisement)
- Flu ( influenza )

**3.1. Hypocorisms.** In this process, a longer word is reduced to a single syllable, then -y or -ie is added to the end.

**Examples:**

- telly (television)
- movie (moving pictures)
- bookie (book maker)
- Hankie (handkerchief)

**3.2. Backformation.** A specialized type of reduction, through which a word of one type (usually a noun) is reduced to form a word of another type (usually a verb).

**Examples:**

- donate from (donation)
- emote from (emotion)
- opt from (option)

**3. Conversion.** It indicates a change in the function of a word without any reduction, as for example when a noun comes to be used as a verb. It is also named as category change or functional shift.

**Examples:**

- dust(n.) did you dust (v.) the living room?
- referee(n.); who will referee(v.) the game.
- chair (n.): Someone has to chair (v.) the meeting.
- to cheat(v.) : he is a cheat (n.).

**5. Coinage.** It refers to an invention of totally new terms for commercial products that become general terms.

**Examples:**

- Older examples: aspirin, nylon, Vaseline
- Newer examples: Kleenex, Xerox, Google

**5.1. Eponym.** It indicates a new word based on the name of person or place.

**Examples:**

- One common eponym is sandwich (from the eighteenth-century Earl of Sandwich who first insisted on having his bread and meat together while gambling).
- Some eponyms are technical terms, based on the names of those who first discovered or invented things, such as fahrenheit (from the German, Gabriel Fahrenheit), volt (from the Italian, Alessandro Volta) and watt (from the Scottish inventor, James Watt).

**5.2. Acronym.** It is a new word formed from the initial letters of a set of other words.

**Examples:**

- CD (compact disk), ATM (automatic teller machine), etc.

- Acronyms are also pronounced as new single words, as in NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) or UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)
- Many acronyms become everyday terms such as laser (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation) and radar (radio detecting and ranging).

**6. Derivation.** It is the most common word-formation process to be found in the production of new English words. that is accomplished by means of a large number of small “bits” called affixes. **Affixes** are prefixes & suffixes & infixes.

- 1. Prefixes:** They occur at the beginning of words and change the meaning.  
(**un+happy=unhappy**).
- 2. Suffixes:** They occur at the end of words and change the word class.  
(**happy+ly=happily**).
- 3. Infixes:** They are incorporated inside another word. Expressions, occasionally used in aggravating circumstances by emotionally aroused English speakers like **absogoddamlutely!**