

# **Types of Forming Words. Affixation.**

Lecture 10

# 1. TYPES OF FORMING WORDS

- **Word-formation** is the system of derivational 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.
- *Driver* = v+-*er* (a verbal stem + the noun-forming suffix -*er*).
- The meaning of the derived noun *driver* - the meaning of the stem *drive*- 'to direct the course of a vehicle' and the suffix -*er* meaning 'an active agent': *a driver* is 'one who drives' (*a carriage, motorcar, railway engine*, etc.).

# 1.1. Main Types of Forming Words

I. **Word-derivation** in morphology is a word-formation process by which a new word is built from a stem with the addition of an affix that changes the word class and / or basic meaning of the word.

The basic ways of forming words in word-derivation are:

- 1. **Affixation** is the formation of a new word with the help of affixes: *pointless* (from *point*).
  - 2. **Conversion** is the formation of a new word by bringing a stem of this word into a different formal paradigm: *a fall* (from *to fall*), *a cut* (from *to cut*).
- II. **Word-composition** is the formation of a new word by combining two or more stems which occur in the language as free forms: *door-bell*, *house-keeper*.

# 1.2. Minor Types of Forming Words

1. **shortening** is the formation of a word by cutting off a part of the word.

**a) initial** (or aphaesis): *fend (v) < defend, phone < telephone;*

**b) medial** (or syncope): *specs < spectacles, fancy < fantasy;*

**c) final** (or apocope): *lab - laboratory, exam - examination;*

**d) both initial and final:** *flu < influenza, fridge < refrigerator;*

2. **blending** is the formation of a new word by combining parts of two words:
- a) additive type: *smog* – *sm(oke)* and *(f)og*;
  - b) restrictive type: *telecast* – *television* + *broadcast*.
3. **acronymy (or graphical abbreviation)** is the formation of a word from the initial letters of a word combination. :
- a) acronyms which are read as ordinary English words: *UNESCO* – [ju:'neskəu] *the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization*;
  - b) acronyms with the alphabetic reading: *BBC* – [,bi:bi:'si:] *the British Broadcasting Corporation*;

4. **sound-interchange** is the formation of a word due to an alteration in the phonetic composition of its root. Sound-interchange falls into 3 groups:

- a) **vowel-interchange (or ablaut)**: *full – to fill, blood – to bleed, food – to feed*. In some cases vowel-interchange is combined with suffixation: *long – length, strong – strength, broad – breadth*;
- b) **consonant-interchange**: *advice – to advise*.
- c) **combined forms**: *life – to live*;

Particular cases of sound-interchange:

[k] — [tʃ]: *to speak — speech*,

[s] — [d]: *defence — to defend; offence — to offend*;

[s] — [t]: *evidence — evident, importance — important,*

etc

5. **sound imitation** (or **onomatopoeia**) is the naming of an action or a thing by a more or less exact reproduction of the sound associated with it, cf.: *cock-a-doodle-do* (English) – *ку-ка-ре-ку* (Russian).

Groups:

- a) words denoting sounds produced by human being in the process of communication or expressing their feelings: *mumble, babble*;
- b) words denoting sounds produced by animals, birds, insects: *mew, croak, buzz*;
- c) words imitation the sound of water, the noise of metallic things, a forceful motion, movement: *splash, clink, bang*.

6. **back-formation** is the formation of a new word by subtracting a real or supposed suffix from the existing words. The process is based on analogy: the word *to butle* ‘to act or serve as a butler’ is derived by subtraction of *-er* from a supposedly verbal stem in the noun *butler*;
7. **distinctive stress** is the formation of a new word by means of the shift of the stress in the source word, cf.: *export* (n) — *to ex´port*;  
*´import* (n) — *to im´port*; ‘



## 2. Word-formation as the Subject of Study

- is that branch of Lexicology which studies the derivative structure of existing words and the patterns on which the English language, builds new words.

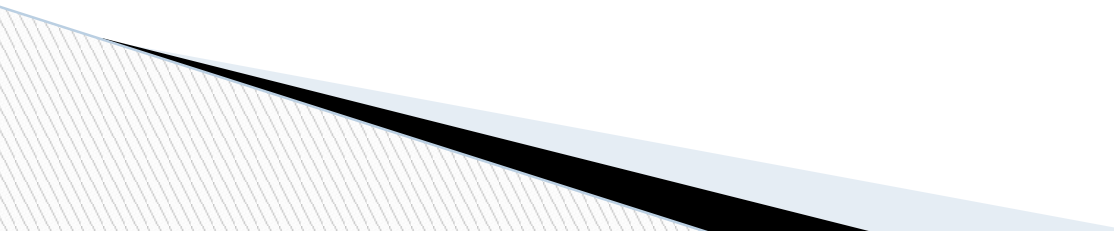
Word-formation can deal only with words which are analysable both structurally and semantically, i.e. with all types of Complexes.

# Word-formation may be studied:

1. **Synchronically** – investigation of the existing system of the types of word-formation. The derived word is regarded as having a more complex structure than its correlated word regardless of the fact whether it was derived from a simpler base or a more complex base;
2. **Diachronically** – chronological order of formation of one word from some other word that is relevant.

- In the history of the English language there are cases when a word structurally more complex served as the original element from which a simpler word was derived =>  
**back-formation** (or back-derivation) :
- cf. *beggar* — *to beg*; *editor* — *to edit*;  
*chauffeur* — *to chauff*
- The fact that historically the verbs *to beg*, *to edit*, etc. were derived from the corresponding agent-nouns is of no synchronous relevance.

# 3. AFFIXATION

- **Affixation** is the formation of words by adding derivational affixes to different types of bases.
  - **An affix** is not-root or a bound morpheme that modifies the meaning and / or syntactic category of the stem in some way.
  - Affixes are classified into prefixes and suffixes.
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# Degrees of Derivation

1. Zero - degree of derivation is ascribed to simple words, i.e. words whose stem is homonymous with a word-form and often with a root-morpheme, e.g. *atom, haste, devote, anxious, horror*, etc.
2. First - derived words whose bases are built on simple stems and thus are formed by the application of one derivational affix, e.g. *atomic, hasty, devotion*, etc.
3. Second - derived words formed by two consecutive stages of coining, e.g. *atomical, hastily, devotional*, etc.

# Affixation=suffixation+prefixation

- Distinction is naturally made between prefixal and suffixal derivatives according to the last stage of derivation, which determines the nature of the ICs of the pattern that signals the relationship of the derived word with its motivating source unit, cf.
  - **unjust** (*un-+just*),
  - **justify**, (*just++ -ify*),
  - **arrangement** (*arrange + -ment*),
  - **non-smoker** (*non- + smoker*).

**Affixation** is subdivided into **suffixation** and **prefixation**.

Distinction is naturally made between prefixal and suffixal derivatives according to the last stage of derivation, which determines the nature of the ICs of the pattern that signals the relationship of the derived word with its motivating source unit, cf.

*unjust (un-+just),*

***justify, (just++ -ify),***

***arrangement (arrange + -ment),***

***non-smoker (non- + smoker).***

# Prefixal-suffixal derivatives:

***reappearance, unreasonable,  
denationalise***

This qualification is relevant only in terms of the constituent morphemes such words are made up of, i.e. from the angle of morphemic analysis.

From the point of view of derivational analysis such words are mostly either suffixal or prefixal derivatives, e.g.

***sub-atomic = sub- + (atom + + -ic),***

***unreasonable = un- + (reason + -able),***

***denationalise = de- + + (national + -ize),***

***discouragement = (dis- + courage) + -ment.***



**Suffixation** is mostly characteristic of noun and adjective formation.

**Prefixation** is mostly typical of verb formation.

The distinction also rests on the role different types of meaning play in the semantic structure of the suffix and the prefix.

The **part-of-speech meaning** has a much greater significance in suffixes as compared to prefixes which possess it in a lesser degree.

**A prefix** may be confined to one part of speech, e.g. *enslave, encage, unbutton* or may function in more than one part of speech as, e.g., *over-* in *overkind* a, *to overfeed* v, *overestimation* n

**Suffixes** as a rule function in any one part of speech often forming a derived stem of a different part of speech as compared with that of the base, e.g. *careless* a — cf. *care* n; *suitable* a — cf. *suit* v, etc.

A suffix closely knit together with a base forms a fusion retaining less of its independence than a prefix which is as a general rule more independent semantically, cf. *reading* — ‘the act of one who reads’; ‘ability to read’; and *to re-read* — ‘to read again.’

# 3.1. SUFFIXATION.

## CLASSIFICATION OF SUFFIXES

**Suffixation** is the formation of words with the help of suffixes, which usually modify the lexical meaning of the base and transfer words to a different part of speech.

Some suffixes do not shift words from one part of speech into another, but usually transfer a word into a different semantic group, e.g. a concrete noun becomes an abstract one, e.g. *child* — *childhood*, *friend* — *friendship*, etc.

**A suffix** is a derivational morpheme following the root and forming a new derivative in a different word class (*-en*, *-y*, *-less* in *heart-en*, *heart-y*, *heart-less*).

# Suffixes can be classified into different types in accordance with different principles:

1. According to the lexical-grammatical character of the base suffixes are usually added to, they may be:
  - a) **deverbal suffixes** (those added to the verbal base): *-er (builder); -ing (writing);*
  - b) **denominal suffixes** (those added to the nominal base): *-less (timeless); -ful (hopeful); -ist (scientist); -some (troublesome);*
  - c) **dejectival suffixes** (those added to the adjectival base): *-en (widen); -ly (friendly); -ish (whitish); -ness (brightness).*

2. According to the part of speech formed  
suffixes fall into several groups:
- a) **noun-forming suffixes**: -age (*breakage, bondage*);  
-ance/-ence (*assistance, reference*); -dom (*freedom, kingdom*);  
-er (*teacher, baker*); -ess (*actress, hostess*); -ing (*building, wasing*);
  - b) **adjective-forming suffixes**: -able/-ible/-uble  
(*favourable, incredible, soluble*); -al (*formal, official*);  
-ic (*dynamic*); -ant/-ent (*repentant, dependent*);
  - c) **numeral-forming suffixes**: -fold (*twofold*); -teen  
(*fourteen*); -th (*sixth*); -ty (*thirty*);
  - d) **verb-forming suffixes**: -ate (*activate*); -er  
(*glimmer*); -fy/-ify (*terrify, specify*); -ize (*minimize*);  
-ish (*establish*);
  - e) **adverb-forming suffixes**: -ly (*quickly, coldly*);  
-ward/-wards (*backward, northwards*); -wise  
(*likewise*).

3. Semantically suffixes fall into:

- a) **Monosemantic:** the suffix -ess has only one meaning 'female' – *tigress, tailoress*;
- b) **Polysemantic:** the suffix -hood has two meanings:
  - 1) 'condition or quality' – *falsehood, womanhood*;
  - 2) 'collection or group' – *brotherhood*.

4. According to their generalizing denotational meaning suffixes may fall into several groups. E.g., noun-suffixes fall into those denoting:

- a) the agent of the action: -er (*baker*); -ant (*accountant*);
- b) appurtenance: -an/-ian (*Victorian, Russian*); -ese (*Chinese*);
- c) collectivity: -dom (*officialdom*); -ry (*pleasantry*);
- d) Diminutiveness: -ie (*birdie*); -let (*cloudlet*); -ling (*wolfing*).

5. According to their stylistic reference suffixes may be classified into:
- a) those characterized by neutral stylistic reference: **-able** (*agreeable*); **-er** (*writer*); **-ing** (*meeting*);
  - b) those having a certain stylistic value: **-oid** (*asteroid*); **-tron** (*cyclotron*).

These suffixes occur usually in terms and are bookish.



## 3.2. PREFIXATION. CLASSIFICATION OF PREFIXES.

- ▣ **Prefixation** is the formation of words with the help of prefixes, which are derivational morphemes, affixed before the derivational base.
- ▣ **A prefix** is a derivational morpheme preceding the root-morpheme and modifying its meaning (*understand* – mis-*understand*, *correct* – in-*correct*).

# Prefixes can be classified according to different principles.

1. According to the lexico-grammatical character of the base prefixes are usually added to, they may be:
  - a) **deverbal** (those added to the verbal base): re- (*rewrite*); over- (*overdo*); out- (*outstay*);
  - b) **denominal** (those added to the nominal base): - (*unbutton*); de- (*detrain*); ex- (*ex-president*);
  - c) **deadjectival** (those added to the adjectival base): un- (*uneasy*); bi- (*biannual*).
  - d) **deadverbial** (those added to the adverbial base): un- (*unfortunately*); in- (*independently*).

2. According to the class of words they preferably form prefixes are divided into:

- a) **verb-forming prefixes:** en-/em- (*enclose, embed*); be- (*befriend*); de- (*dethrone*);
- b) **noun-forming prefixes:** non- (*non-smoker*); sub- (*sub-committee*); ex- (*ex-husband*)
- c) **adjective-forming prefixes:** un- (*unfair*); il- (*illiterate*); ir- (*irregular*);
- d) **adverb-forming prefixes:** un- (*unfortunately*); up- (*uphill*).

3. Semantically prefixes fall into:
- a) **Monosemantic:** the prefix ex- has only one meaning 'former' – *ex-boxer*;
  - b) **Polysemantic;** the prefix dis- has four meanings:
    - 1) 'not' (*disadvantage*);
    - 2) 'reversal or absence of an action or state' (*diseconomy, disaffirm*);
    - 3) 'removal of' (*to disbranch*);
    - 4) 'completeness or intensification of an unpleasant action' (*disgruntled*).

4. According to their generalizing denotational meaning prefixes fall into:
- a) **negative prefixes:** un- (*ungrateful*); non- (*non-political*); in- (*incorrect*); dis- (*disloyal*); a- (*amoral*);
  - b) **reversative prefixes:** un<sub>2</sub>- (*untie*); de- (*decentralize*); dis<sub>2</sub>- (*disconnect*);
  - c) **pejorative prefixes:** mis- (*mispronounce*); mal- (*maltreat*); pseudo- (*pseudo-scientific*);
  - d) **prefixes of time and order:** fore- (*foretell*); pre- (*pre-war*); post- (*post-war*), ex- (*ex-president*);
  - e) **prefix of repetition:** re- (*rebuild, rewrite*);
  - f) **locative prefixes:** super- (*superstructure*), sub- (*subway*), inter- (*inter-continental*), trans- (*transatlantic*).

5. According to their stylistic reference  
prefixes fall into:

- a) those characterized by neutral stylistic reference: over- (*oversee*); under- (*underestimate*); un- (*unknown*);
- b) those possessing quite a definite stylistic value: pseudo- (*pseudo-classical*); super- (*superstructure*); ultra- (*ultraviolet*); uni- (*unilateral*); bi- (*bifocal*).

These prefixes are of a literary-bookish character.

## 4. PRODUCTIVE AND NON-PRODUCTIVE AFFIXES

- The word-forming activity of affixes may change in the course of time. This raises the question of **productivity of derivational affixes**, i.e. the ability of being used to form new, occasional or potential words, which can be readily understood by the language-speakers.
- Thus, **productive affixes** are those used to form new words in this particular period of language development.

# Some productive affixes

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Noun-forming suffixes      | -er ( <i>manager</i> ), -ing ( <i>playing</i> ), -ness ( <i>darkness</i> ), -ism ( <i>materialism</i> ), -ist ( <i>parachutist</i> ), -ism ( <i>realism</i> ), -ation ( <i>automation</i> ), ( <i>impressionist</i> ), -ancy ( <i>redundancy</i> ), -ry ( <i>gimmickry</i> ), -or ( <i>reactor</i> ), -ics ( <i>cybernetics</i> ). |
| Adjective-forming suffixes | -y ( <i>tweedy</i> ), -ish ( <i>smartish</i> ), -ed ( <i>learned</i> ), -able ( <i>tolerable</i> ), -less ( <i>jobless</i> ), -ic ( <i>electronic</i> ).   |
| Adverb-forming suffixes    | -ly ( <i>equally</i> )   |
| Verb-forming suffixes      | -ize/-ise ( <i>realise</i> ), -ate ( <i>oxidate</i> ), -ify ( <i>qualify</i> ).  |
| Prefixes                   | un- ( <i>unhappy</i> ), re- ( <i>reconstruct</i> ), dis- ( <i>disappoint</i> )   |



# Some non-productive suffixes:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Noun-forming suffixes      | -th ( <i>truth</i> ),<br>-hood ( <i>sisterhood</i> ),<br>-ship ( <i>scholarship</i> ).  |
| Adjective-forming suffixes | -ly ( <i>sickly</i> ),<br>-some ( <i>tiresome</i> ),<br>-en ( <i>golden</i> ),<br>-ous ( <i>courageous</i> ),<br>-ful ( <i>careful</i> ). |
| Verb-forming suffix        | -en ( <i>strengthen</i> ).  |

- The productivity of an affix should not be confused with its frequency of occurrence that is understood as the existence in the vocabulary of a great number of words containing the affix in question.
- An affix may occur in hundreds of words, but if it is not used to form new words, it is not productive, for instance, the adjective suffix *-ful*.

# Etymology of Derivational Affixes:

Native affixes are those in the Old English period or were formed from Old English words.

The change a morpheme undergoes in the course of time may be of different kinds.

A bound morpheme, e.g. may be developed from a free one. Such are the suffixes

- *dom* ('fate, power');
- *hood* 'state';
- *-lock* 'actions or proceedings, practice';
- *-ship* 'state, conduct', and the prefixes;
- *over-* 'in excess, extra, upper';
- *out-* 'foreign, external', ect.

# Origin of Derivational Affixes

| Noun-forming affixes | Examples                       |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| -er                  | <i>Driver, painter.</i>        |
| -ness                | <i>Ugliness, coldness.</i>     |
| -ing                 | <i>Singing, playing.</i>       |
| -dom                 | <i>Freedom, kingdom.</i>       |
| -hood                | <i>Brotherhood, manhood.</i>   |
| -ship                | <i>Leadership, friendship.</i> |
| -th                  | <i>Breath, length.</i>         |
| -let                 | <i>Booklet, islet.</i>         |

# Adjective-forming affixes:

-ful

*Joyful*

-less

*Harmless*

-y

*Cozy*

-ish

*Childish*

-ly

*Lovely*

-en

*Golden*

-some

*Handsome*

-like

*Ladylike*

|                        |                             |   |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Verb-forming affixes   | -en                         | <i>Widen</i>  |
| Adverb-forming affixes | -ly<br>-wise                | <i>Rarely</i><br><i>Clockwise</i>                                     |
| Prefixes               | be-<br>mis-<br>un-<br>over- | <i>Befriend</i><br><i>Misuse</i><br><i>Unselfish</i><br><i>Overdo</i> |

**Borrowed Affixes have come to the English language from different foreign languages. The affixes of foreign origin are classified according to their source into:**

| Latin        | Examples                   |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| -able/ -ible | <i>Capable, divisible.</i> |
| -ant/-ent    | <i>Servant, student.</i>   |
| extra-       | <i>Extralinguistic.</i>    |
| pre-         | <i>Pre-election.</i>       |
| ultra-       | <i>Ultra-high.</i>         |

| Greek      | Examples        |
|------------|-----------------|
| -ist       | Artist          |
| -ism       | Marxism         |
| -ite       | Vulcanite       |
| anti-      | Anti-democratic |
| sym-/ sin- | Synthesis       |



| French       | Examples       |
|--------------|----------------|
| -age         | Percentage     |
| -ance/ -ence | Extravagance,  |
| -ard         | coherence      |
| -ate         | Wizard         |
| -ee          | Electorate     |
| -ess         | Employee       |
| en-/ em-     | Princess       |
|              | Enclose, embed |

# Hybrids

- are words that are made up of elements from two or more different languages. There are 2 basic types of forming hybrid words:
    - 1) a foreign base is combined with a native affix, e.g. *colourless, uncertain*;
    - 2) a native base is combined with a foreign affix, e.g. *drinkable, ex-wife*.
- There are also many hybrid compounds, such as *blackguard* (English + French); *schoolboy* (greek + English).

# VALENCY OF AFFIXES AND BASES

**Valency of affixes** is understood as their capability to be combined with certain bases, e.g. adjective forming suffixes are mostly attached to nominal bases. They are:

- ▣ *-en (golden),*
- ▣ *-ful (meaningful),*
- ▣ *-less (careless),*
- ▣ *-ly (soldierly),*
- ▣ *-like (childlike).*

The highly productive suffix *-able*, however, can be combined with nominal and verbal bases alike (*honorable, advisable*).

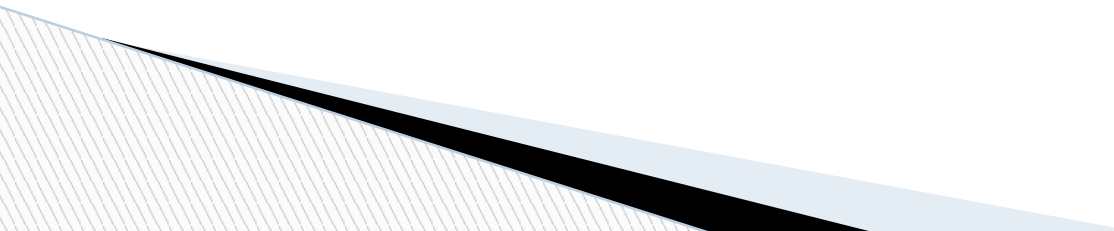
# Valency of bases


- is the possibility of a particular base to take a particular affix. The valency of bases is not unlimited, e.g., noun bases can be followed by:
  1. the noun-forming suffixes, e.g. *-eer (profiteer)*, *-ful (spoonful)*, *-ics (linguistics)*, *-let (cloudlet)*;
  2. the adjective-forming suffixes, e.g. *-al (doctoral)*, *-ary (revolutionary)*, *-ous (spacious)*, *-ic (historic)*;
  3. the verb-forming suffixes, e.g. *-en (hearten)*, *-ize (sympathize)*.

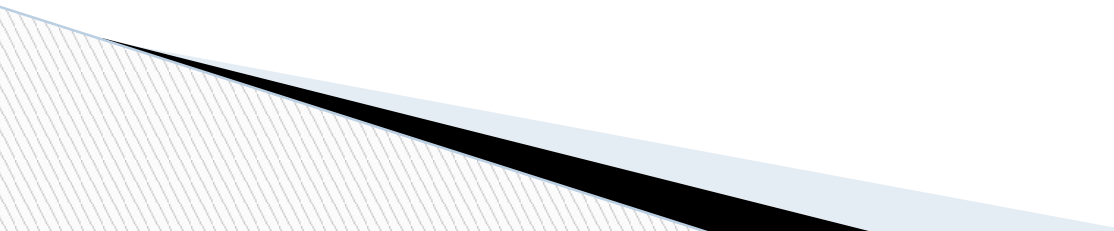
# Valency

- is very important semantically because the meaning of the derivative depends not only on the morphemes of which it is composed but also on combinations of bases and affixes that can be contrasted with it.
- Contrast is observed in the use of the same morphemes in different environment or in the use of different morphemes in the same environment, e.g., the difference in the suffixes *-ity* and *-ism* becomes clear when comparing them as combined with identical bases:
  - *formality* – *formalism*; *reality* – *realism*.
- ity* – ‘the quality of being what corresponding adjective describes, an instant or quality’;
- ism* – ‘a disposition to what the adjective describes, or a corresponding type of ideology’.

# Summary and Conclusions

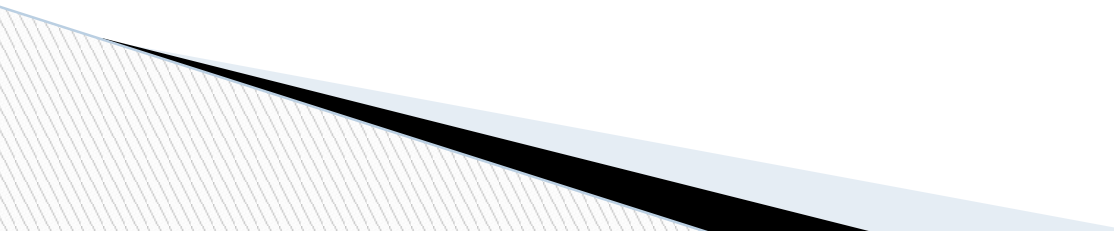
1. Word-formation is the process of creating words from the material available in the language after certain structural and semantic formulas and patterns.
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2. As a subject of study English word-formation is that branch of English Lexicology which studies the derivative structure of words and the patterns on which the English language builds new words. Like any other linguistic phenomenon, word-formation may be studied synchronically and diachronically.
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3. There are two types of word-formation in Modern English: word-derivation which is divided into affixation and conversion and word-composition. Within the types further distinction is made between the various ways and means of word-formation.
- 



4. There are minor types of word-formation: shortening, blending, acronymy (graphical abbreviation), sound-interchange, sound-imitation, back-formation and distinctive stress.

5. Affixation (prefixation and suffixation) is the formation of words by adding derivational affixes (prefixes and suffixes) to bases. One distinguishes between derived words of different degrees of derivation.
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6. There are quite a number of polysemantic, homonymous and synonymous derivational affixes in Modern English.

7. Classifications of derivational affixes are based on different principles such as:

1) the lexico-grammatical character of the stem the affix is added to,

2) the part of speech formed,

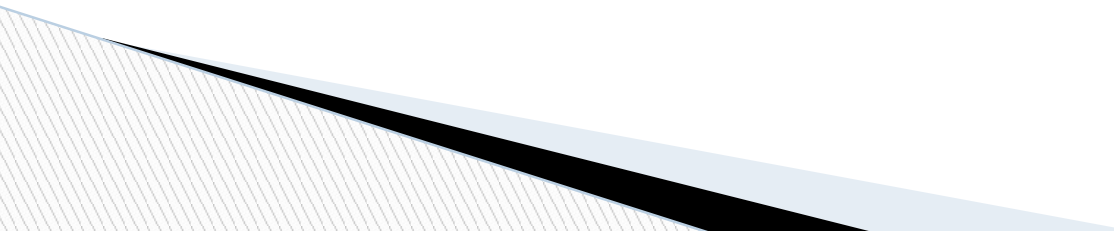
3) the meaning,

4) the generalising denotational meaning,

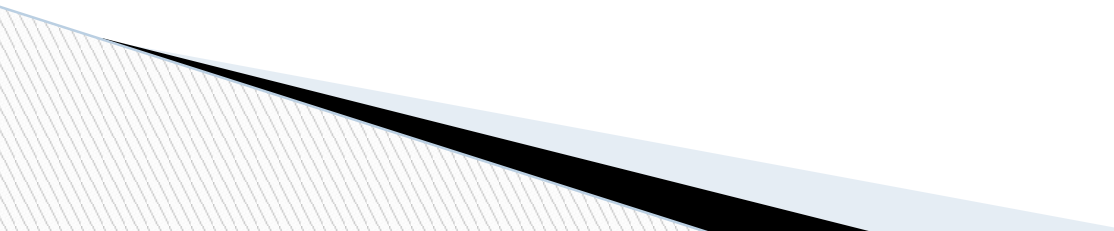
5) the stylistic reference, etc.



8. The productivity of derivational affixes is relative and conditioned by various factors.

9. Many of the Modern English derivational affixes were at one time independent words. Others have always been known as suffixes or prefixes within the history of the English vocabulary. Some of them are of international currency.
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10. The degree of productivity and factors favouring it make an important aspect of synchronic description of every derivational pattern within the two types of word-formation.

11. Three degrees of productivity are distinguished for derivational patterns and individual derivational affixes:
    - 1) highly-productive,
    - 2) productive or semi-productive,
    - 3) non-productive.
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