

The Basic Rules of Word Formation

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What is word formation? Define the basic rules of word formation.

Word formation rules, or morphology, govern how words are created in a language. These rules determine how prefixes, suffixes, and other word parts can be combined to form new words or modify existing ones. Here are some common word formation rules:

Affixation: This rule involves adding prefixes or suffixes to base words to create new words. For example, adding the prefix "un-" to the word "happy" creates "unhappy," or adding the suffix "-er" to the word "teach" forms "teacher."

Compounding: This rule combines two or more base words to create a new word. For example, combining "rain" and "coat" creates the compound word "raincoat," or combining "sun" and "flower" forms "sunflower."

Conversion: This rule involves changing the grammatical category or part of speech of a word without adding or removing any affixes. For example, the noun "email" can be converted into a verb in a sentence like "I will email you."

Derivation: This rule involves adding derivational suffixes to change a word's meaning or grammatical category. For example, adding the suffix "-ness" to "kind" forms the noun "kindness," or adding "-ly" to "quick" creates the adverb "quickly."

Clipping: This rule involves shortening a word by removing one or more syllables. For example, "advertisement" can be clipped to "ad," or "television" can be shortened to "TV."

Blending: This rule involves combining parts of two or more words to create a new word. For example, blending "breakfast" and "lunch" from the word "brunch" or blending "motor" and "hotel" creates "motel."

Back-formation: This rule involves creating a new word by removing what appears to be an affix from an existing word. For example, "editor" was derived from "editorial," and "televise" was formed from "television."

Derivation: Derivation is one of the fundamental word formation rules in which affixes attach to the base form or root of the word. Affixes are prefixes, infixes, and suffixes. This process

changes the grammatical forms of words, from noun to verb to adjective to adverb, from verb to verb, from adjective to adjective, etc.

Examples:

- Nation – nationalize
- national – nationally.
- Appear – disappear.
- Moral – immoral.

Abbreviation:

Abbreviation means shortened forms of words or phrases. Abbreviated words are widely used for writing, but some are used in spoken as well.

Examples:

- cm - centimetre
- km - kilometre
- Dr.- Doctor
- Mr.- mister
- Jr. – junior

Acronym:

In the acronym process, an abbreviation is formed from the initial letters of several words and pronounced as a word. The difference between the abbreviation rule of word formation and the acronym rule of word formation is that acronyms cannot be written in small letters. Still, abbreviations can be written using small and capital letters.

Examples:

- UN – United Nations
- WB – World Bank
- SAARC - The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

Borrowing:

Borrowing is the process of forming words in foreign languages, in which words become assets in one language.

Examples:

- Algebra – Arabic
- Near – Sanskrit
- Murder – French

These are just a few examples of the word formation rules that exist in English. Morphology varies across languages, and different rules may apply in other contexts.

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