

Appreciating Linguistics: A typological approach
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Lecture - 13
Word formation rules and neologism – Part 1

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Derivational Morphology
(word formation rules)

- Compounds and Compounding:
 - i. Noun+Noun (landlord)
 - ii. Adj+Noun (high chair)
 - iii. Preposition+Noun (overdose)
 - iv. Verb+Noun (go-cart)
 - v. Adj+Adj (red-hot)
 - vi. Noun+Adj (sky-blue)
 - vii. Preposition+Verb (oversee)
- Are Compound words limited to two words?
- Headless compound words???



Hello hi everyone, welcome to this session of my NPTEL course Appreciating Linguistics: A typological approach. We are discussing morphology and considering words are one of the most rudimentary units of any given sentence in any language of the world, we are spending a bit more time to understand how morphology works and when we move to morphological typology in the next session, we should be able to know how different types can be decided on the basis of the types of morphemes that we in hand.

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Changing the meaning of a word

- Change in grammatical category: 'to ponytail her hair'
- Domain extension of vocabulary/ Metaphorical extension: 'ship', 'captain'
- Broadening: 'cool'
- Narrowing: 'girl' 'art'
- Semantic drift: 'lady' = 'half' / 'bread' + 'dighe'/'kneader'
- Reversals: 'square deal' (1930's and 40's) vs. 'square one' (1950's)



So, in the previous session, I was talking about what are the different ways by which neologism works. *Neologism* works in two ways. First, when you create new words and you contribute to the addition of new words in the lexicon. Otherwise when you are also trying to change the meaning like when the speech community, because of the use of these words in the speech community, when the meaning gets changed, that is also part of neologism. So, two things, new words can be added, second the meaning of already existing words can be changed.

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Neologism

- Finite vocabulary for potentially infinite world:
 - i. New words can be added
 - ii. The meaning of already existing words can be changed
- Coined words: 'geek'
- Acronyms: 'LAN'
- Alphabetic abbreviations: 'HTML'
- Clippings: 'Dr.'
- Blends: 'infotainment'
- Generified words: 'Xerox'
- Proper nouns: 'Guillotine'
- Direct borrowing: 'kindergarten'
- Indirect borrowing: 'firewater'/'alcohol' 'iron horse' / railroad train (Native American)



Then we have discussed what are the different processes by which we can add new words. We did talk about how the speech community, the native speakers of a particular language coin new words, how they do acronymization, how they also do the alphabetic abbreviation process, they do clipping, blending, generifying words, using proper nouns as common nouns, then there is direct borrowing and then finally, indirect borrowing. So, these are some of the ways. The list is not exhaustive. You might find out more information if you explore the literature more. However, these are the most commonly found ways by which you can actually create new words. So, that is the part of neologism.

Then the second thing is how neologism works when you are trying to change the meaning of the word. When you change the meaning, it also happens at different domains or different layers. So, what are the different domains? One such domain is change in the grammatical category. In the grammatical category means here I have given you an example, to ponytail her hair. So, in this construction, ponytail as a word, in most of the cases, we use it as a noun. We do not really use it as an infinitival phrase or a verbal phrase in that sense.

Since by default the basic use of ponytail is a noun, but when we are trying to extend to use it as an infinitival or a verb, the grammatical category changes. So, when I say I ponytailed my daughter's hair, that means, you are using it as a verb, which is not a very common

phenomenon in English lexicon. But this is also part of neologism, because ponytail as a unit, it has changed its grammatical category in the recent days.

Then there is also the other thing that we discussed, how the *domain of a vocabulary gets extended*, some times to the metaphorical extension, sometimes to the literal extension also. Let us compare ship and captain. There was a time when in English, ship was the only way where you can use captain. So, the profession named captainship was reserved only for the ship.

But now you can see, captain can be used in multiple domains. You can say the captain of the team, let us say the corporate training is going on, there is a corporate team and you can say that this is the captain of the team. You can also see in a metaphorical sense, my father is the captain of our house or at our home. So, in that case if I say my father is the captain; that means, he is the one who is taking care of the primary responsibility. If she says my mother is the captain of my house; that means, she is the one who is taking care of the house. They are not really driving the house or they are not really riding the house, but rather they have taken the responsibility. So, the metaphor, the domain of extension that we see or the vocabulary has been extended to various domains and captain does not remain restricted only to ship.

Then there is something called *semantic broadening*. When we say broadening, earlier it had a very limited scope of the meaning, now it has been widened enough. Let us say 'cool'. Cool as a word does not restrict itself to only the meaning related to dipping of the temperature. Rather cool as a word, it has extended its meaning or it has broadened its meaning to everything that is pleasant. Let us say if the house is cool; that means, the house is wonderful, very nice, great. When you say the course is cool; that means, the course is an interesting one or you find it interesting to study this particular program. Or the place is cool; the place is cool does not mean that it must be a hill station or where the temperature is really low. You can also go to a desert like go to a very dry desert place and then you can say that the place is cool. So, that does not mean that like its temperature has been low, rather the place itself it looks great, it feels great or it is a good experience to be there.

So, the meaning of cool has been broadened that includes all sorts of positive information or the positive meaning: wonderful, great, beautiful, quiet, calm, everything has come under the domain of cool. That is why we would consider it as a part of semantic broadening.

Then we have *semantic narrowing*. When we say narrowing, that means, the meaning was wide before, now it has become shortened or it has become narrowed down. So, an example I will give that is girl. When you say girl, in the earlier days, in the good old English like in the good old days, in English, girl could actually mean any female gender starting from a young 10 year old or a 5 year old to an old woman. Anyone who belongs to the female gender can be considered as girl. But now, in the recent days, in the contemporary time, this meaning has been a little restricted, this meaning has been become little narrowed down. When we say girl, we primarily refer to younger girls, girls who belong to the younger generation. So, this is an instance where we would say it has been narrowed down.

Same is the case with art. Art used to be associated with science, commerce, technology, everything. But now, art is primarily related to the aesthetic sense of it. So, the meaning of art has also been narrowed down. This is called semantic narrowing. Then the next thing what we have already discussed, I am just reiterating; you can recall what we were talking about yesterday, there is something called *semantic drift*.

When I say semantic drift, let us compare the meaning of a lady. Lady, primarily was comprising of two words, one is half, the other one is dighe. This means kneading the bread. So, kneading the bread, the bread kneader would be called a lady in the old days. Somebody who would knead bread would be called as a lady or the other way round. If you are a lady, all that you are supposed to do to take care of the household work, the household chores, in that sense.

But if you see the meaning of lady, it has become elevated. We address lady only to people who belong to the elite community or the rich people, privileged people, or you can say, the women who belong to the aristocratic society. So, there has been a semantic drift; from having a less privileged meaning, it has come to a more privileged meaning. So, there has been a sharp change in the semantics of lady.

Ladies nowadays, are not supposed to be only the bread kneaders. They are not at all supposed to be bread kneaders in that sense. Generally they would belong to a privileged section of the society. Then, the final thing related to changing the meaning of the word, you can explore more about it if you read more. Literature might have some other information also but from whatever I am going to discuss, this is the last one.

So, when I say the reversals, how the same meaning, it has become changed as far as usage is concerned. When they say square deal, it was used in the 1930s and 1940s, but now in the 1950s the same thing is going to be used like the similar set of information is related to square one. So, from square deal to square one, there has been a reversal in the meaning.

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So, that is what I would say about neologism. Whether you are going to change the meaning of the word; like there are two ways, two dimensions or two domains in that sense how neologism works. In one way neologism is related to addition and creating of new words, the other side a neologism also includes the change in the meaning of the existing words.

With this information we move to derivational morphology. What are the word formation rules? This also we discussed briefly yesterday, but then I am going to elaborate on this a bit more and I did ask two questions and I wanted you to think about them, you might get them

as an assignment. So, there are different ways by which you can compound or you can actually create new words.

Let me help you to recall in the initial classes, when I was talking about morphology, I did discuss there are three different kinds of words, three different categories of words. There are simple words, compound words and complex words. If you could help me recall what would be a simple word? How many morphemes would be there?

A simple word would have only one morpheme, and what kind of a morpheme is that? That is a free morpheme. Why it is a free morpheme? Because it cannot afford to have a dependent morpheme or a bound morpheme. Because if there is only one morpheme and if that is a bound morpheme, it would eventually need another morpheme to stand. And then if we do not have another morpheme, is it really possible? At least it is not possible in a word like English, or theoretically also, it is not possible. How can you call something bound? That means it would need something which will bind it. And if we do not have that, then, we must have a free morpheme. So, that is the reason why a simple word will consist of only a free morpheme.

Then there is the second category which is the complex word. Complex words will have multiple morphemes. One of them must be a free morpheme, which will be the root word or which will stand as the center of it. This free morpheme will be considered as the head word or the root word and at the periphery, it might have multiple affixes which would include either a prefix or a suffix or both depending on the situation. So, that is going to be a complex word.

And the third category what we discussed is the compound word. When we say a compound word, we are mainly trying to put two free morphemes together. And in these two free morphemes, the combination of these two free morphemes, which both of them can stand alone. They do not depend on each other to have complete meaning. They do not require it. In that case, if we have two different free morphemes together, we are going to put it at the place and then we are going to call it compound words.

Now I am going to talk about a few possible combinations of different kinds of parts of speech which will result in compound words. One such example first one that we have is

noun plus noun. This is one possible combination. So, think about it. There are two words and both the words are nouns and what is the example we have here? The example is landlord. So, land is also a noun, lord is also a noun and putting it together, we get a compound word.

Similar is the case with adjective and noun. The example is highchair. What is the adjective here? Can you help me find out? The adjective should be high. And what is the noun? The noun should be chair. And then the third combination is preposition plus noun. So, when you have a preposition plus noun, over is the preposition here and dose is the noun.

Then we have verb plus noun. So, the example is go-kart. Go-karting is kind of a fun game that the kids, sometimes young adults, will also play. In go-karting, go is the verb and kart is the noun. That is the fourth way of creation of compounding words. Then you also have words like adjective plus adjective, red hot. Red hot means something which is extremely attractive, very nice, beautiful. In this case, red is also an adjective, hot is also an adjective. So, together they are they are creating a compound word.

Then you have noun plus adjective. Noun plus adjective will have sky blue. So, sky blue, sky is the noun and blue is the adjective. In the previous instance, we had an adjective plus noun, like highchair. In this case, it is noun plus adjective, sky blue. Both the combinations are possible in case of morphology. Then we have a preposition plus verb and the example I have here is oversee. Which one is the preposition here? The preposition is over and the verb is see.

So now, with these possible combinations that we have in hand, we are going to figure out the answers to these two questions. Before we move on to the questions, let us try to identify if we have a head word in all of these combinations. Do you think each of the compound words would have a head word? For that matter, do you think each of the complex words would have a head word? It is comparatively easier to identify head words in the complex words. The best example I can give teacher.

When you say teacher, how many morphemes are there? Two morphemes; one is teach, the other one is -er. And what is the head word or the root word here? Teach, obviously; because -er is a bound morphemes, so it cannot be a head word. But if we look at the compound or the

compounding words, you will find that a little tricky sometimes, to identify the head words. But let us see from the seven different combinations that we have in hand now, do they have head words in each of them?

So, let us start it from landlord. What do you think, which one is the head word here? What my intuition says, though I am not a native English speaker, but I would say landlord. Lord is going to be the head word, because lord of what? Lord of the land. So, that is why it will be considered as the head word. In case of highchair, it is mainly the chair which is the head word and high is the word which is kind of explaining or which is qualifying the head word chair.

Then we have overdose. My hunch or my non-native speaker's or you can say native-like fluency that I have in English, though I am not a native speaker, that says that dose is the head word and overdose means like the dose has become over, it is beyond the required amount. But in case of go-karting, I am not sure. I think kart should be the head word. It is like a small fun game which involves the karts like the tiny ones I think, I am not sure. So, let us think about it. My suggestion would be or my interpretation would be kart is the head word.

However, in red hot, I am not sure which one is the head word. For me, both red and hot have equal amount of importance. So, head word means the part of the word which is getting more importance than the others. In this case, in red hot, I think they have equal kind of importance.

Then you have sky blue. Sky blue is a colour. When you say sky blue, do you think blue is getting more importance than sky or sky is getting more importance than blue? Think about it. My suggestion would be blue is getting more importance, probably. And in case of oversee, I would go with what we did for overdose. So, see would be the head word for me and over is a preposition which has been associated with it.

This is how we are going to derive head words. However, my question for you would be do you think all compound words must have head words, or there are certain instances of headless compound words too? What do you think? What is your idea about it? If we have headless compound words, please give me some examples. And do think about it if we can

come up with some examples of headless compound words either in English or in your language.

If it is in your language, you have to give me the transcription because I may not be a native speaker of your language. And if we are thinking about it in English, then do come up with some suggestions where we will find compound words which are headless. On the other hand, we have compound words; here whatever examples I have given you, all of them consist of only two morphemes.

So, what is your idea about it? Do you think all the compound words will always have two morphemes or there are instances where it might involve more than two? It could have three or four morphemes together. What do you think about it and what is your idea? These are the two questions for you to think. Next time when you do some assignments or I will give some questions, you should keep that in mind.

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Suffixing

- Agentive suffix '-er' (writer, killer)
- Verbal suffix '-able' (walkable, breakable) / '-ion' (relation, dictation)
- Phonological change (addition of /abl/)
- Category change (verb to adjective)
- Semantic change (able to be X'd)
- **Can all verbs take 'able'?**
- Diminutive suffix '-y/-ie' (dad-daddy, dog-doggie)

derive → derivation
inject → ^{inject} injections
 ↓
 inflectional



Now, what we are going to do, we are going to discuss some of the affixation processes where we will see whether these affixes are suffixes or prefixes. What is the nature of these affixes? Whether they derive something or they just inflect something. So, two words you need to keep in mind. When we talk about affixes, two things you need to keep in mind. Affixes do two different kinds of work; either they derive something or they inflect

something. So, these two words you need to keep in mind. When they derive a new word, we call the process derivation and these affixes are known known as derivational morphemes.

So, from the word derive, we are getting derivation; from inflect, we are getting inflection. These affixes which are primarily prefixes or suffixes, whatever they are, they are primarily morphemes. These morphemes have two different functions. When they derive something, we call them derivational morphemes and when they are just used as the inflectors, we call them inflectional morphemes. So, remember, from inflection, we will get inflectional and from derivation, we would get derivational. It is a little clumsy. These prefixes or suffixes or infixes whatever, they would have either the derivational category or the inflectional category.

Keywords: neologism, vocabulary extension, semantic broadening, semantic narrowing, semantic drift, reversal, compounding, head words, affixation processes, derivational and inflectional morphology