

# Introduction to Linguistics – LANE 321

CHAPTER 6 – WORDS & WORD-FORMATION PROCESSES

## Etymology



Hamburger >>>



<<<Hamburg, Germany

## Etymology



**Etymology:** The study of the origin & history of words

## Word-formation processes



- Coinage
- Borrowing
- Compounding
- Blending
- Clipping
- Backformation
- Conversion
- Acronyms
- Derivation

## Coinage (Neologism)

**Coinage:** The Invention of totally new terms

Types of coinage:

1. Invented trade names for commercial products that become general terms for any version of that product.

e.g. *Kleenex*, xerox, google



## Coinage (Neologism)

2. **Eponyms:** words derived from the name of a person or a place.

e.g.

- sandwich (The 4th Earl of Sandwich (1718-1792))
- jeans (The Italian city, Genoa)



**Technical terms:**

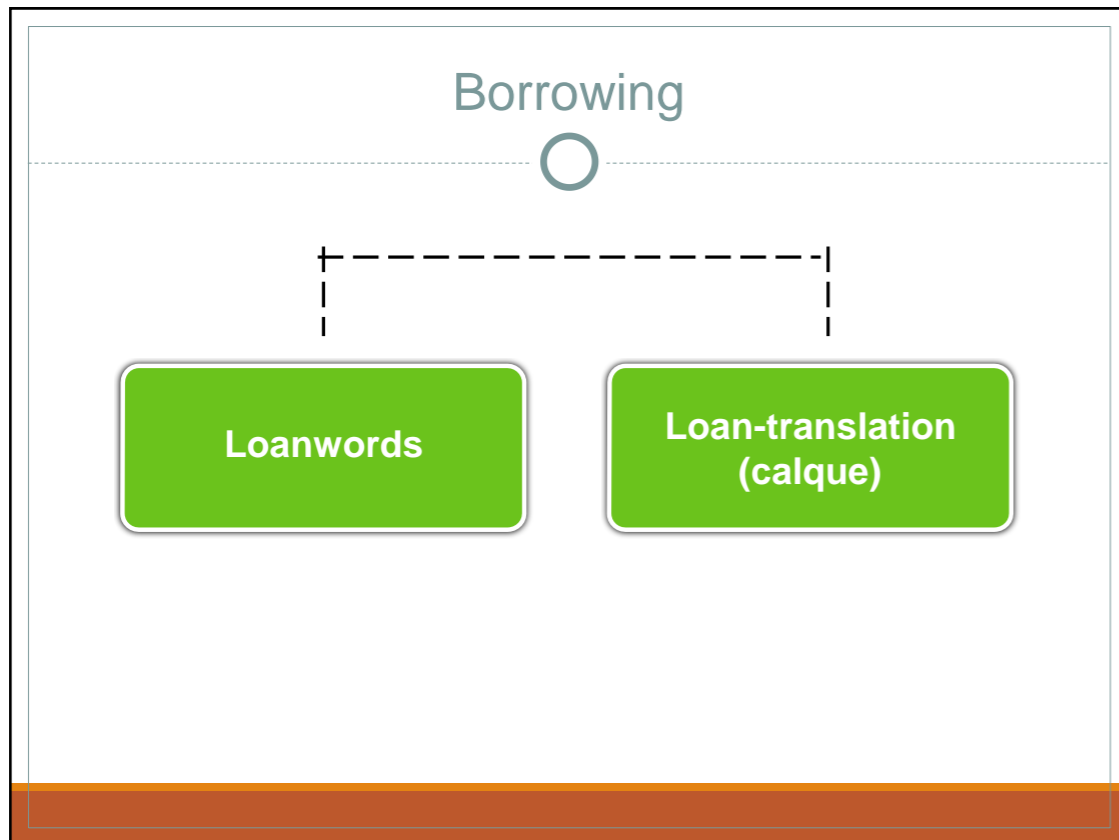
- Fahrenheit (The German, Gabriel Fahrenheit)
- Volt (The Italian, Alessandro Volta)
- Watt (The Scottish, James Watt)



Alessandro Volta  
(1746-1827)



James Watt  
(1736-1819)



Borrowing (Loanwords)

**Borrowing: the taking over of words from other languages**

English borrows form other languages:

Examples:

Café	Saffron, monsoon, camphor, jasmine
• French	• Arabic
Croissant	Pajamas
• French	• Hindustani
Satan	Yogurt
• Arabic	• Turkish
	Piano
	• Italian

## Borrowing (Loanwords)

Other languages borrow from English

### Examples:

- Arabic
  - اوتوبيس
  - بطارية
- Japanese
  - suupaamaaketto, taipuraitaa
- Hungarian
  - klub, sport, futbal
- French
  - Le stress, le weekend

## Borrowing (Loan translation/ Calque)

In loan translation, it is the **meaning** or idiom that is borrowed rather than the lexical item itself.

### Example:

**"Skyscraper"** [edit]

An example in the opposite direction, from English to French, shows how a compound word may be calqued by first breaking it down into its component roots. The French "gratte-ciel" is a word-coinage inspired by the English "skyscraper" — "grate" means "to scrape", and "ciel" means "sky". Many languages have constructed their own calques:

• Azerbaijani: "göydələr" ("sky-piercer")	• Italian: "grattacieli" ("scrapes-sky")
• Afrikaans: "wolkraabber" ("clouds-scraaper")	• Japanese: "摩天楼" (matenrou, "sky-scraping tower")
• Arabic: "مُكشِّعُ السَّمَاءِ" (mukshshī' al-samā', "clouds-rammer")	• Latvian: "debesskrāpītis" ("sky-scraaper")
• Armenian: "լեռնալուսկեր" (yerg-n-a-ker, "sky-scraper")	• Lithuanian: "dangoraužis" ("sky-scraaper")
• Bengali: "আকাশ জাহাজ" (akash jahaj, "sky-sweeper")	• Macedonian: "odnoskoper" (obtekođer, "cloud-scraaper")
• Bosnian: "neboder" (neboder, "sky-ripper")	• Norwegian: "skyskraper" ("cloud-scraaper")
• Bulgarian: "небостъргач" (nebstǎrgač, "sky-scraaper")	• Persian: "آسمانخراش" (âsmānkhraš, "sky-scraaper")
• Catalan: "gratacel" ("scrapes-skies")	• Polish: "drapacz chmur" ("cloud-scraaper")
• Chinese: "摩天大厦" (mótiān dàxià, "sky-scraping big building")	• Portuguese: "arranha-céu" ("scrapes-sky")
• Croatian: "neboder" ("sky-ripper"; from "derati nebo", "to rip the sky")	• Romanian: "zgârie-nor" ("scrapes-clouds")
• Czech and Slovak: "mrakodrap" ("cloud-scraaper")	• Russian: "небоскрёб" (neboskrëb, "sky-scraaper")
• Danish: "skyskraber" ("cloud-scraaper")	• Serbian: "небоскоп" (neboskop, "sky-ripper")
• Dutch: "wolkenkrabber" ("clouds-scraaper")	• Slovene: "nebotičnik" ("sky-rubber-toucher")
• Estonian: "pilvelõhkujad" ("cloud-breaker")	• Spanish: "rascacielos" ("scrapes-skies")
• Finnish: "pilvenpilittäjä" ("cloud-sketcher")	• Swedish: "skyskrapa" ("sky-scraaper")
• French: "gratte-ciel" ("scrapes-sky")	• Tamil: "அமைச்சு" ("sky-reaching")
• German: "Wolkenkratzer" ("cloud-scraaper")	• Thai: "เม้าส์" ("sky-scraping building")
• Greek: "ουρανοξύστης" (uranoxystis, "sky-scraaper")	• Turkish: "gökdelen" ("sky-piercer")
• Hebrew: "גורד שמיים" (gor'd s'haim, "scraaper of skies")	• Ukrainian: "хмарочос" (hmaročos, "cloud-scraper")
• Hindi: "मेग़ी" (pagan-chumbi, "kissing the sky")	• Vietnamese: "nhà chọc trời" ("sky-poking building")
• Hungarian: "felhőkarcoló" ("cloud-scraaper")	
• Icelandic: "skýjakvillur" ("cloud-spiller")	
• Indonesian and Malay: "pencakar langit" ("scraaper-sky")	

## Borrowing (Loan translation/ Calque)



In loan translation, it is the **meaning** or idiom that is borrowed rather than the lexical item itself.

### Examples:

- The Arabic وجهة نظر, the English *Point of view*, the French *point de vue*
- The English *an eye for an eye*, the Hebrew תחת יע. תחת יע., *ayin tahat ayin*, the Arabic العين بالعين
- The English *wisdom tooth*, the Latin *dēns sapientiae*
- The Arabic لفظة, the English *mouse*
- The Spanish *perros calientes* (literally “dogs hot”), the English *hot dogs*.
- *boyfriend* (English) = *boyifurendo* (Japanese - loanword) = *nan pengyu* (Chinese as “male friend” - calque)

## Compounding



**Compounding:** Forming new words by combining or putting together old words

- The meanings of the words interrelate in such a way that a new meaning comes out which is different from the meanings of the words in isolation.
- very common in English & German
- Less common in French & Spanish.

## Compounding



### Examples:

#### Compound nouns:

- bookcase, doorknob, fingerprint, sunburn, textbook, wallpaper, wastebasket, waterbed, lunchbox.

#### Compound adjectives:

- Good-looking, handmade, low-paid, full-time, part-time, fast-food
- stay-at-home (e.g. a stay-at-home mom)
- well-to-do (e.g. a well-to-do businessman)

## Blending



### Examples:

- motel = motor + hotel
- brunch = breakfast + lunch
- sitcom = situation + comedy
- telethon = telephone + marathon

**Blending:** Combining two separate forms to produce a single new term.

- **Blending** is similar to **compounding**, but in blending only parts of the words are combined.

## Clipping



**Clipping:** Shortening a word by deleting one or more syllables

### Examples:

- Facsimile >> fax
- Hamburger >> burger
- Gasoline >> gas
- Advertisement >> ad
- Influenza >> flu
- telephone >> phone
- airplane >> plane

## Clipping



### Examples (Education):

- Examination >> Exam
- Gymnasium >> Gym
- Laboratory >> Lab
- Mathematics >> Math
- Professor >> Prof

English speakers like to clip each other's names (nicknames):

e.g. Al, Ed, Liz, Mike, Ron, Sue, Tom



## Clipping (hypocorism)

- A particular type of reduction, favored in Australian and British English, produces forms technically known as *hypocorisms*.
- In this process, a longer word is reduced to a single syllable, then -y or -ie is added to the end.

### Examples:

- **movie** (moving pictures)
- **telly** (television)
- **Aussie** (Australian)
- **hankie** (handkerchief)

### Examples (nicknames):

- **Lizzie, Tony, Susie, Gabby**

## Backformation

**Backformation:** reducing a word of one type (usually a noun) to form a word of another type (usually a verb).

### Examples:

- Television (n.) **televise** (v.)
- Donation (n.) **donate** (v.)
- One of the regular sources of backformed verbs in English is based on the pattern **worker – work**
- If there is a noun ending in **-er** then we can create a verb for what the noun **-er** does.
  - Editor (n.) **edit** (v.)
  - babysitter (n.) **babysit** (v.)
  - sculptor (n.) **sculpt** (v.)
  - option (n.) **opt** (v.)

## Conversion



**Conversion:** the process of changing the function of a word, such as a noun to a verb (without any reduction), as a way of forming new words

- category change / functional shift

### Examples:

butter (n.)	(v.)	<i>she buttered the bread</i>
permit (v.)	(n.)	<i>You can't park here unless you have a permit</i>
empty (adj.)	(v.)	<i>Paul emptied the glass and washed it</i>
must (v.)	(n.)	<i>Doing your homework is a must</i>
vacation (n.)	(v.)	<i>They are vacationing in Florida</i>
print out (v.)	(n.)	<i>You need to take a printout of this page</i>
microwave (v.)	(v.)	<i>The pizza should be microwaved first for 15 seconds</i>

## Acronyms



**Acronym:** A word formed from the initial letters of other words

### Examples:

Some acronyms are pronounced by saying each separate letter:

- CD = compact disk
- USA = The United States of America
- US = the United States
- UN = The United Nations
- KAU = King Abdulaziz University
- ATM = automatic teller machine

Some acronyms are pronounced as new single words:

- UNICEF = United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
- UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
- NASA = National Aeronautics and Space Agency
- NATO, North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- PIN: personal identification number

## Acronyms



- The previous examples have kept their capital letters.
- Many acronyms simply become everyday terms

### Examples:

- *laser* = light **a**mplification by **s**timulated **e**mission of **r**adiation
- *radar* = radio **d**etecting and **r**anging
- *scuba* = **s**elf-**c**ontained **u**nderwater **b**reathing **a**pparatus
- Innovations such as the ATM and the required PIN are regularly used with one of their elements repeated
  - e.g. *I sometimes forget my PIN number when I go to the ATM machine*

## Derivation



- The most common word formation process in English.

**Derivation:** the process of forming new words by adding affixes

- Affixes (**prefixes**, **suffixes**, & infixes)

e.g.

*un-, mis-, pre-, -tul, -less, -ish, -ism, -ness.*

*unhappy, misrepresent, prejudge, joytul, careless, boyish, terrorism, sadness.*

- *mislead*
- *disrespecttul*
- *toolishness*
- *lead, respect, tool* are called **stem**

## Derivation



- There is a 3<sup>rd</sup> type of affix but it is not normally used in English.
- An **infix** is an affix inserted inside a stem (an existing word)
  - *Tell him I've gone to Sing**bloody**pore!*
  - *abs**bloody**lutely*
  - *God**triple**dammit*

## Multiple Processes



The creation of a particular word might involve more than one formation process.

*Example:*

- *Delicatessen (German)*
  1. *Delicatessen (English) loanword – borrowing*
  2. *Deli (English) Clipping*

## References

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Thank you