



WIDD PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH

REAL PROFESSIONALS. REAL ENGLISH.

Inflection versus Derivation

-Distinctions can be subtle. At times, it may not be clear what function an affix may have. The following criteria are often employed to determine the status of an affix:

a. Category change: (nb: king → kingdom)
(Meaning change).

b. Order: A derivational affix must combine with the base before an inflectional affix does.

Neigh + hood + s

*Neigh + s + hood

In general, the derivational affix must appear closer to the root or the stem.

c. Productivity: This refers to the relative freedom with which affixes can combine with bases of the appropriate category.

Some more morphological processes:

1. **Co -occurrence restrictions** on derivational affixes: Can we attach any derivational affix to any word?

◆ Rule Productivity:

Derivational morphemes have clear semantic content: In this sense they are like words, except that they are not words.

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| i. *dispaint | disprove |
| ii. *miseat | misquote |
| iii. *newize | modernize |

a. Restrictions on *-en* affix? Can it be added to any word?

black >blacken, fat → fatten, new → *newen, soft → soften

b. Restrictions on *-ant* affix?

⇒ **Attempt at the generalization:**

Generally, the part of speech of the whole compound is the same as the part of speech of the rightmost member of the compound, which is termed the "head" of the compound, e.g., The baby sits in the [N [ahigh[nchair]]]. (chair is a noun; it is the *head* of the compound; thus, the entire compound is a noun.

IV. Compounds are *not* limited to two words:

bathroom towel-rack, classroom metal detector.

V. In English, the spelling system does not reflect the difference between simple words and compound words in any systematic way.

Compounds can be spelled as a single word (*bathroom*), as a hyphenated word (*ape-man*), or as two separate words (*high jump*).

Some types of compounds in English:

Noun + Noun	landlord
Adjective + Noun	lowrider
Preposition + Noun	overdose
Verb + Noun	swearword
Adjective + Adjective	red-hot
Noun + Adjective	nationwide
Preposition + Adjective	ingrown
Preposition + Verb	outrun

d. What would you guess is the meaning of the compound *sidewalk-alligator laugh*?