



IIT Madras
ONLINE DEGREE



BUILDING VOCABULARY

WHAT ARE THESE WORDS & PHRASES?

unhappy
multicultural
overwork
cyberspace
supermarket

Measurement

Inflatable

Woolen

Beautiful

Flexible

a see-through
material

living room

ice cream

full moon

high school

to appear

→

appearance

effective

→

effectiveness

to improve

→

improvement

difficult

→

difficulty



Prefixes



Suffixes



Conversion



Compounds

DEVELOPING VOCABULARY THROUGH WORD FORMATION

There are four main
kinds of word
formation

PREFIXES

We add prefixes before the base or stem of a word.



monorail, monolingual

multipurpose, multicultural

post-war, postgraduate

unusual, undemocratic

mono- means 'one'

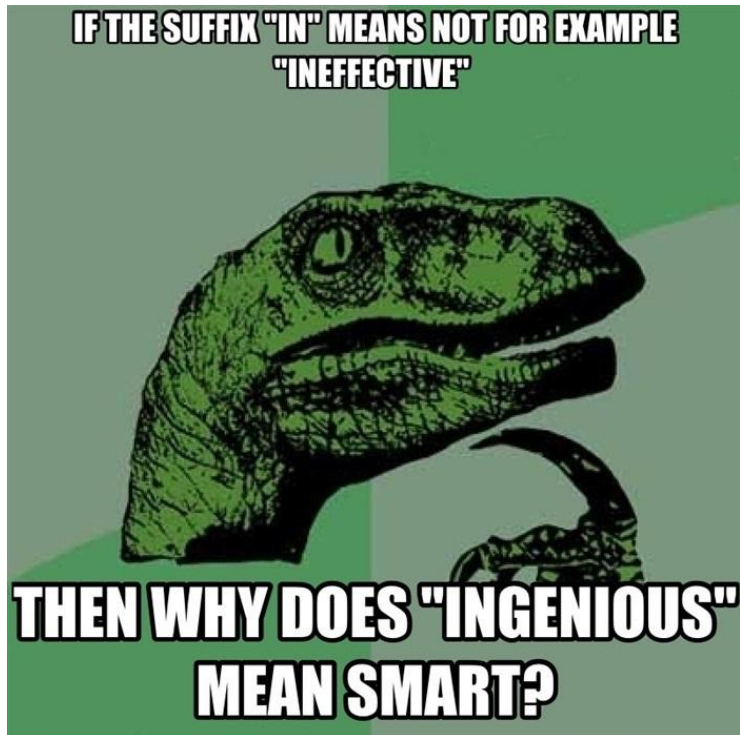
multi- means 'many'

post- means 'after'

un- means 'not' or
'opposite to'

SUFFIXES

We add suffixes after the base or stem of a word. The main purpose of a suffix is to show what class of word it is (e.g. noun or adjective).



terrorism, sexis

-ism and *-dom* are used to form nouns

employer, actor

-er and *-or* are used to form nouns to describe people who do things

widen, simplify

-en and *-ify* are used to form verbs

reasonable, unprofitable

-able is used to form adjectives

unhappily, naturally

-ly is a common suffix used to form adverbs

Conversion

involves the change of a word from one word class to another.

For example, the verbs *to email* and *to microwave* are formed from the nouns *email* and *microwave*

GOOGLE → GOOGLE THE
INFORMATION

SEE THROUGH → SEE THROUGH
FABRIC

STAND UP → STAND UP COMEDIAN



COMMON CONVERSIONS

*Can you **text** her?* (verb from noun *text*, meaning *to send a text-message*)

*They are always **jetting** somewhere.* (verb from noun *jet*)

*If you're not careful, some **downloads** can damage your computer.* (noun from verb *download*)

*OK, so the meeting's on Tuesday. That's a **definite**.* (noun from adjective)

*It's a very big **if** and I'm not at all sure we can afford it.* (noun from conjunction, meaning 'it's not at all certain')

*All companies have their **ups and downs**.* (nouns from prepositions)

We also use conversion when we change a proper noun into a common noun:

*Has anybody seen my **Dickens**?* (copy of a book by Dickens)

COMPOUNDING

When we use compounding, we link together two or more bases to create a new word.

Nouns: *car park, rock band*

Adjectives: *heartbreaking, sugar-free*

Verbs: *baby-sit, chain-smoke*

Adverbs: *good-naturedly, nevertheless*





BUILDING VOCABULARY

DENOTATION & CONNOTATION

“I know what you said, but what did you mean?”

In order to use words more effectively and accurately, you must be aware that there is more to a word than just its dictionary meaning. Native speakers are aware of this distinction and use it quite unconsciously, non-native speakers have difficulty in this area.



Denotation

The dictionary definition



ROSE

Love, passion, romance,
death, duality.

Connotation

The deeper meaning -
what we associate with
the word.

Words do not have single,
simple meanings.
Traditionally, grammarians
have referred to the
meanings of words in two
parts:

Denotation

A literal meaning of the
word

Dictionary meaning
Explicit meaning
Definition

Connotation

An association (emotional
or otherwise) which the
word evokes

Suggestive meaning

Positive Connotation	Neutral Connotation	Negative Connotation
thrifty	economical	miserly
economical	inexpensive	cheap
exceptional	unusual	strange
youthful	young	childish
illustrious	famous	notorious
slender	thin	skinny
prudent	timid	cowardly
laid-back	inactive	lethargic
persevering	persistent	stubborn
overwrought	nervous	high-strung
up-to-date	new	newfangled
visionary	inventor	dreamer
save	store	hoard
hilarious	laughable	ludicrous
assertive	aggressive	pushy
employment	work	drudgery
strategy	plan	scheme
fragrance	smell	stench

CONNOTATIONS CAN BE

+ POSITIVE

Thrifty: Jay is very careful about spending money. He is very thrifty.

- NEGATIVE

Miserly: Jay's boss is miserly. He doesn't share profits with the team.

= NEUTRAL

Economical: Jay moved to a smaller apartment as it was more economical in the long run.

Rank the words in order from positive to negative

Thin, slim, lanky, skinny, gaunt, slender

Aggressive, assertive, domineering, dynamic, pushy, forceful

Shrewd, egghead, bright, clever, brilliant, cunning, smart, intelligent, brainy