UNIT -1
Formation of Words
1.2 Word Formation Process: Acronym, Blending, Backformation, Coinage, Borrowing, Compounding, Clipping, Conversion, Affixation (Prefixes and Suffixes), etc.

Introduction
The word-formation process is the process by which new words are produced either by modification of existing words or by complete innovation, which in turn become a part of the language. We can very quickly understand a new word in our language (a neologism) and accept the use of different forms of that new word.

The study of the origin and history of a word is known as its etymology, a term which, like many of our technical words, comes to us through Latin, but has its origins in Greek (e´tymon “original form” + logia “study of”), and is not to be confused with entomology, also from Greek (e´ntomon “insect”). When we look closely at the etymologies of less technical words, we soon discover that there are many different ways in which new words can enter the language. Here, we will explore some of the basic processes by which new words are created.

Acronyms
Acronyms are new words formed from the initial letters of a set of other words. These can be forms such as CD (“compact disk”) or VCR (“video cassette recorder”) where the pronunciation consists of saying each separate letter. But, More typically, acronyms are pronounced as new single words, as in NATO, NASA or UNESCO. These examples have kept their capital letters, but many acronyms simply become everyday terms such as LASER (“light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation”), RADAR (“radio detecting and ranging”), SCUBA (“self-contained underwater breathing apparatus”) and ZIP (“zone improvement plan”) code.

Names for organizations are often designed to have their acronym represent an appropriate term, as in “mothers against drunk driving” (MADD) and “women against rape” (WAR). Some new acronyms come into general use so quickly that many speakers do not think of their component meanings. Innovations such as the ATM (“automatic teller machine”) and the required PIN (“personal identification number”) are regularly used with one of their elements repeated, as in I sometimes forget my PIN number when I go to the ATM machine.

Blending
The combination of two separate forms to produce a single new term is also present in the process called blending. However, blending is typically accomplished by taking only the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of the other word.

Gasoline+alcohol=gasohol.
Smoke+Fog=Smog.
Smoke + haze= smaze.
Smoke + murk= smurk.
Binary+digit=bit.
Breakfast+lunch= brunch.
Motor+hotel)= motel.
Television+broadcast= telecast.
Information+entertainment= infotainment, etc.

Backformation
A very specialized type of reduction process is known as backformation. Typically, a word of one type (usually a noun) is reduced to form a word of another type (usually a verb). A good example of backformation is the process whereby the noun television first came into use and
then the verb televise was created from it. Other examples of words created by this process are:
Donate from “donation”
Emote from “emotion”
Enthuse from “enthusiasm”
Liaise from “liaison”
Babysit from “babysitter”
Opt from “option”
Lab from “laboratory”
Gym from “gymnasium”, etc.

Coinage
Coinage is one of the least common processes of word formation in English is coinage. Simply, it means the invention of totally new terms. The most typical sources are invented trade names for commercial products that become general terms (usually without capital letters) for any version of that product. The (older) examples are as follows: aspirin, nylon, vaseline and zipper; more recent examples are granola, kleenex, teflon and xerox.
The most salient contemporary example of coinage is the word google. Originally a misspelling for the word googol (= the number 1 followed by 100 zeros), in the creation of the word Googleplex, which later became the name of a company (Google), the term google (without a capital letter) has become a widely used expression meaning “to use the internet to find information.” New products and concepts (ebay) and new activities (“Have you tried ebaying it?”) are the usual sources of coinage. One of its important type is known as eponym.

Eponyms: New words based on the name of a person or a place are called eponyms. When we talked about a hoover (or even a spangler), we were using an eponym. Other common eponyms are sandwich (from the eighteenth-century Earl of Sandwich who first insisted on having his bread and meat together while gambling) and jeans (from the Italian city of Genoa where the type of cloth was first made). Some eponyms are technical terms, based on the names of those who first discovered or invented things, such as fahrenheit (from the German, Gabriel Fahrenheit), volt (from the Italian, Alessandro Volta) and watt (from the Scottish inventor, James Watt).

Borrowing
One of the most common sources of new words in English is the process simply labeled borrowing. It is the process where we take over words from other languages or simply we borrow words from other languages. (Technically, it’s more than just borrowing because English doesn’t give them back.) Throughout its history, the English language has adopted a vast number of words from other languages, including:
Croissant- French
Dope- Dutch
Lilac- Persian
Piano- Italian
Pretzel- German
Sofa- Arabic
Tattoo- Tahitian,
Tycoon- Japanese
Yogurt- Turkish
Zebra- Bantu, etc.
Other languages, of course, borrow terms from English, as in the Japanese use of suupaa or suupamaaketto (“supermarket”) and taipuraitaa (“typewriter”), Hungarians talking about sport, klub and futbal, or the French discussing problems of le stress, over a glass of le whisky, during le weekend. In some cases, the borrowed words may be used with quite different meanings, as in
the contemporary German use of the English words partner and look in the phrase im Partner look to describe two people who are together and are wearing similar clothing. There is no equivalent use of this expression in English.

**Loan-translation or calque:**
A special type of borrowing is described as loan-translation or calque (/kælk/). In this process, there is a direct translation of the elements of a word into the borrowing language. Interesting examples are the French term gratte-ciel, which literally translates as “scrape-sky,” the Dutch wolkenkrabber (“cloud scratcher”) or the German Wolkenkratzer (“cloud scraper”), all of which were calques for the English skyscraper.

**Compounding**
When we conjoin or join two separate words to produce a single form, it is called compounding. Thus, Lehn and Wort are combined to produce Lehnwort in German. This combining process, technically known as compounding, is very common in languages such as German and English, but much less common in languages such as French and Spanish. Common English compounds are:

- Book+case= bookcase
- Door+knob= doorknob,
- Finger+print= fingerprint,
- Sun+burn= sunburn
- Text+book= textbook
- Wall+paper= wallpaper
- Waste+basket= wastebasket
- Water+bed= waterbed

All these examples are nouns, but we can also create compound adjectives:
- Good+looking= good-looking
- Low+paid= low-paid

Compounds of adjective(fast) plus noun (food) as in a fast-food.

**Reduplication:**
It is a special kind of compounding. Reduplication is a morphological process in which the root or stem of a word or part of it is repeated exactly or with a minor change. It is used to show plurality, distribution, repetition, customary activity, increase of size, added intensity, continuance etc. It is found in many languages, though its level of linguistic productivity varies from language to language. This is a process of repeating a syllable or the word as a whole (sometimes with a vowel change) and putting it together to form a new word. For example: byebye (exact reduplication), super-duper (rhyming reduplication) or chitchat, pitter-patter, zigzag, tick-tock, flipflop.

**Clipping**
The element of reduction that is noticeable in blending is even more apparent in the process described as clipping. This occurs when a word of more than one syllable (facsimile) is reduced to a shorter form (fax), usually beginning in casual speech. The term gasoline is still used, but most people talk about gas, using the clipped form. Other common examples:

- Ad- advertisement
- Bra- brassiere
- Cab- cabriolet
- Ondo- condominium
- Fan- fanatic
- Flu- influenza
- Perm- permanent wave
- Pub- public house, etc
Conversion
A change in the function of a word, as for example when a noun comes to be used as a verb (without any reduction), is generally known as conversion. A number of nouns such as bottle, butter, chair and vacation have come to be used, through conversion, as verbs:
1. We bottled the home-brew last night.
2. Have you buttered the toast?
3. Someone has to chair the meeting.
4. They’re vacationing in Florida.

Derivation
In our list so far, we have not dealt with what is by far the most common wordformation process to be found in the production of new English words. This process is called derivation and it is accomplished by means of a large number of small “bits” of the English language which are not usually given separate listings in dictionaries. These small “bits” are generally described as affixes. Some familiar examples are the elements un-, mis-, pre-, -ful, -less, -ish, -ism and -ness which appear in words like unhappy, misrepresent, prejudge, joyful, careless, boyish, terrorism and sadness.

Affixation: Attaching prefix or suffix or both into the Root Word is called Affixation. For example,
Un (prefix)- Unbound
Ly (Suffix)- Lovely
So, it is divided mainly into Prefix, Suffix and Infix.

Prefixes and suffixes
Looking more closely at the preceding group of words, we can see that some affixes have to be added to the beginning of the word (e.g. un-, mis-). These are called prefixes. Other affixes have to be added to the end of the word (e.g. -less, -ish) and are called suffixes. All English words formed by this derivational process have either prefixes or suffixes, or both. Thus, mislead has a prefix, disrespectful has both a prefix and a suffix, and foolishness has two suffixes.

Infixes
There is a third type of affix, not normally used in English, but found in some other languages. This is called an infix and, as the term suggests, it is an affix that is incorporated inside another word. It is possible to see the general principle at work in certain expressions, occasionally used in fortuitous or aggravating circumstances by emotionally aroused English speakers: Hallebloodylujah!, Absogoddamlutely!. In the film Wish You Were Here, the main character expresses her aggravation (at another character who keeps trying to contact her) by screaming Tell him I’ve gone to Singabloodypore!. The expletive may even have an infixed element, as in godtripledammit!.

Exercise
1. Identify the process of word formation responsible for each of the following words. Try to determine the process before you consult a dictionary, though it may be necessary for you to do so.
a. curio, b. (to) laze, c. (to) network,
d. (to) cohere, e. sitcom, f. (the) muppets,
g. (a) what-not, h. margarine, i. dystopia,
j. serendipity, k. diesel, l. ha-ha,
m. (to) make up, n. (to) total, o. (the) hereafter,
p. amphetamine, q. (a) construct, r. (the) chunnel,
s. guestimate, t. canary, u. brain-gain,
v. boojum, w. gaffe-slack, x. psycho,
y. walkie-talkie, z. bonfire
2. The words in column A have been created from the corresponding words in column B. Indicate the word formation process responsible for the creation of each word in column A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. stagflation</td>
<td>stagnation + inflation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. nostril</td>
<td>nosu + thyrl ‘hole’ (in Old English)</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. bookie</td>
<td>bookmaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. van</td>
<td>caravan</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Amerindian</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. CD</td>
<td>compact disc</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. RAM</td>
<td>random access memory</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. televise</td>
<td>television</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. xerox</td>
<td>xeroxography</td>
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<tr>
<td>j. telathon</td>
<td>television + marathon</td>
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<tr>
<td>k. sci-fi</td>
<td>science fiction</td>
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<tr>
<td>l. elect</td>
<td>election</td>
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<tr>
<td>m. deli</td>
<td>delicatessen</td>
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<tr>
<td>n. scuba</td>
<td>self-contained underwater breathing apparatus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. scavenge</td>
<td>scavenger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p. hazmat</td>
<td>hazardous material</td>
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</tbody>
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