

## Word-Formation Processes in EVM - 3

### Shortened words (shortenings)

- ✓ clipping/truncation
- ✓ blend
- ✓ acronymy

They are highly productive word-formation processes, characterizing some specialized languages, such as the language of business, IT, medicine and warspeak.

Their purpose is to shorten words (mostly of Neolatin origin) so that they can become as more comparable as possible to the short terms, mostly of Germanic origin, belonging to the “common core” of the English language.

Such abbreviations can be a useful way to make writing and speaking more concise and less repetitive, as well as to create an international code easily and immediately understandable among both the community of scholars and learners.

#### Clipping or Truncation

It is a process by which a word is clipped, i.e. truncated or cut, at the end (back-clipping), at the beginning (fore- or front-clipping), both at the beginning and at the end (back-and-fore clipping) in the middle (middle clipping).

- ✓ Back clipping:

lab(oratory), info(rmation), rep(resentative), ad(vertisement), chimp(anzee), hippo(potamus), croc(odile), detox(ification), rehab(ilitation), sp.(ecies)<sup>1</sup>, **vet(...)**, **rev(...)**

- ✓ Fore clipping:

(tele)phone, (air)plane, (heli)copter, (para)chute, (de)fence, (rac)coon, (alli)gator

- ✓ Back-and-fore clipping:

(in)flu(enza), (re)fridge(rator)

- ✓ Middle clipping:

bike (>bicycle), vegan (>vegetarian)

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the back-clipping *spp.* stands for the plural form of *species*.

### Clipping: vet and rev

**Vet** can be the clipped form of:

- ✓ veterinarian
- ✓ veterinary
- ✓ veteran

Its full version and its meaning depend on the context it is used. Furthermore, by the process of conversion, this clipped word can become a verb (to vet, that is, to screen).

Examples:

Our **vets** offer some seasonal advice to help keep your pets happy throughout the year.

An Iraq war **vet**.

All candidates are carefully **vett**ed for security reasons.

**Rev** can be the clipped form of eight words:

1. revolution
2. revision
3. revised
4. review
5. reverse
6. revenue
7. revolving
8. Reverend

In this case too, its full version and its meaning depend on the context it is used. By the process of conversion, also this clipped word can become a verb (to rev, that is, to run quickly).

☞ **Generally speaking, clipping makes the meaning of words more opaque.**

### Blend

It is a process by which two or more words are blended, that is, joined to become one word.

- ✓ smog [> sm(oke) + (f)og]
- ✓ motel [> mot(or) + (hot)el]
- ✓ Spanglish [> Span(ish) + (En)glish]
- ✓ podcast [> pod + (broad)cast]
- ✓ hi-tech [> hi(gh) + tech(nology)]
- ✓ wi-fi [> wi(reless) + fi(delity)]
- ✓ sci-fi [> sci(ence) + fi(ction)]
- ✓ blog [> (we)b + log]

**Examples in Scientific English:**

- ✓ quasar [> quas(i) + (stell)ar]
- ✓ pulsar [> puls(ating) + (st)ar]
- ✓ formaldehyde [> form(ic) + aldehyde]
- ✓ proteomics [prote(in) + (ge)nomics]
- ✓ medicare [> medi(cal) + care]
- ✓ medicaid [> medic(al) + aid]
- ✓ permaculture [> perma(nent) + culture]
- ✓ biodegradable [> bio(logically) + degradable]
- ✓ t. gondii [> t(oxoplasma) + gondii]
- ✓ arbovirus [> ar(thropod) + bo(rne) + virus]

☞ **Generally speaking, words built by blend have a transparent meaning.**

For details on **acronymy**, please see the handout “Notes on acronymy”.

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