

Taxonomy of Word Formation in Malayalam

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ABSTRACT

There are mainly two processes involved in the formation of words; one is inflection and another derivation. Words inflect in order to add grammatical features such as plurality, cases and tenses. Derivation is the process of forming new words from already available words or morphemes. The derivation of new words is otherwise called word formation. A language makes use of word formation process to increase its vocabulary. The formation of words can be classified based on formal and semantic criteria. Different types of word formation strategies are employed in languages for the formation of words. Compounding, affixation are the most common strategies employed in the formation of words. Apart from these conversion, backformation, clipping, blending, acronym formation and word manufacturing are also employed for word formation. Compounding and suffixation are extensively for the formation of words in Malayalam.

Keywords: Word formation, compounding, prefixation, suffixation, conversion, backformation, clipping, formation of blends, formation of acronyms, word manufacturing

1. INTRODUCTION

Word formation is the processes of forming new words mostly from the already available morphological elements. In morphology, inflection and derivation are distinguished from one another. Inflection is the process of changing word forms by adding grammatical information such as plural, case and tense.