MORPHOPHONEMIC AND MORPHOSEMANTIC REALIZATIONS OF ENGLISH SUFFIXES IMPLYING PERSON

Dr. Uttam Ramchandra Patil,

Head,

Department of English,

Rajarshi Shahu Arts and Commerce College, Rukadi, Dist. Kolhapur [MS]

ABSTRACT:

Most of languages in the world have affixes which play a crucial role in the word- formation of a language. Language is symbolic system and the symbols in this system are linguistic signs. Traditionally these signs are usually words which are produced out of the integration of signifiers and signifieds. The latter is not the material sound, a purely physical thing, but the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses. However, traditionally affixes are not considered as the linguistic signs, as they are semantically not independent. The derivational affixes in any language bring about the majority of the word formations. They too, like words, imply the concepts like person, place, gender, state, quality, etc. These affixes may bring about some phonemic changes in the bases to which they are appended. As they are used to form new words, they cause change in the meaning of the base to which they are attached. Hence, affixes are significant from the phonemic and semantic points of view. That is how they can be treated as linguistic signs. The present paper attempts to bring togetherEnglish suffixes signifying the concept of person. It is also a humble attempt to discuss the morphophonemic and morphosemantic features of these suffixes.

Key words: affixes, suffixes, morphophonemic, morphosemantic, linguistic sign

Traditionally, word is considered to be the smallest grammatical and semantic unit of language. Words are made of morphemes. A word can be either simplex or complex. A simple word is made of a single morpheme. On the other hand, a complex word is formed by bringing together two or more morphemes.

Affixes are bound morphemes and affixation is the most common way of forming new words in the languages of the world. It is also called 'derivation' (Thakur, 1997). Affixation is a process of adding affixes to roots, bases or stems of words to derive new words. However, the term derivation excludes the inflectional suffixes, and hence, does not appear as holistic as affixation. As far as affixation is concerned, the term, 'affix' is of prime concern.

The term, affix is derived from Latin *affīxum* through French *affixe*. Its verb form, *affixare* means 'to fix, to fasten'. It is "the cover term for all bound morphemes that attach to roots" (Plag, 2003: 10). To Carstairs-McCarthy, "affix is an umbrella term for prefix and suffixes (broadly speaking, for all morphemes that are not roots)" (2002: 20).

Actually, they are the building blocks, in the words of Michael Quinion (2002) that help to form a large proportion of the words in language. The knowledge of affixes helps not just to identify and understand words of the same kind but also to compose new ones.

In the terms of definition, affix may appear simple but in terms of phonology, morphology and semantics, it is a complex phenomenon. The attachment of an affix may appear mechanical, but the affix evolves its own mechanism which comprises its phonological, orthographical and semantic features in relation to the root, it is affixed. Semantic influence of affixes is obligatory, as they bring about a change in the meaning of the word. Moreover, an affix may influence the phonological or morphological and even orthographic impression of the word. Hence, affixes become eligible to be linguistic signs. According to Ferdinand de Saussure the linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound image. (Bally, Charles and Sechehaye 1964: 66). Like words, affixes signify the concepts like person, place, gender, state, quality, etc. At the same time they have phonemic shapes that can bring about the morphophonemic change in the bases of words to which they are appended. The present paper is a humble attempt to study the morphophonemic and morphosemantic aspects the selected English suffixes implying the concept of person.

Dr. Uttam R. Patil

The suffixes of English signifying the concept of person are enlisted below:

1. **-*an*.**

   -*an* is derived from Latin and its variant –*ian* is from French (Quinion, 2002: 108). It denotes 'a person or thing belonging to a country' as in *Indian, American*, and others. It also denotes 'the style or features of the person' referred to in the base as in *Shakespearean, Wordsworthian*, and others. -*an* also refers to 'the thought or belief of …' as in *Darwinian, Freudian* and others. It means 'a person who does/works in…' as in *comedian, historian* and others. The derivatives can be nouns and adjectives or both.

   The pronunciation of -*an* is /ən/ and -*ian* ispronounced/iən/. The suffix does not normally change the stress pattern or phonemic shape of the base as it is a weak suffix. However, in -*ian* words, the stress is on the penultimate syllable and there can be vowel change /ə/→/e /, as in

   Canada / kænədə/ → Ca nadian /kə ne d ən/

   grammar / græmə/ → gra mmarian /grə me r ən/

2. **–*ant*/-ent**

   -*ant*/-*ent* has formed fairly good a number of words in English predominantly on a Latin basis of coining. These words are agent nouns ultimately going back to Latin participles in –*antem*, -*entem* used as substantives (Marchand, 1960: 195). It is attached to verbs to derive nouns like *attendant, absorbent* and many others. Generally speaking, -*ant* means 'person/thing that …'.

   The pronunciation of –ant/-ent is /ənt/. It does not cause any morphophonemic change as such.

3. **-*ard***

   -*ard* comes into English from High German through French. It is added to adjectives to form common nouns meaning 'the person having the quality referred to in the base,' as in *dullard, sluggard*, and others.

   –*ard* is pronounced /ə^{r}d/.In fact, the suffix does not bring about any morphophonemic alternation as such.However, in the case of *wizard*, the alternation takes place at both the orthographic as well as phonological level. The diphthong /a / in *wise* is substituted by a short and strong vowel / / and

letter *'s'* is replaced by *'z'*, but the pronunciation of the consonant is the same: / waɪz/ →/ wɪzəd/. Such an alternation is irregular and non-automatic.

4.-*arian*

The suffix, *-arian*is borrowed into English through just translating Latin words ending in *-arius.*Formerly it was restricted to the religious field. However, it is used in other fields too with the general meaning 'someone believing in/practicing…' as in *humani tarian, discipli narian, parliamen tarian* and others. The suffix is pronounced /eərɪən/. It is added mostly to abstract nouns to derive concrete nouns. The above examples show that the suffix always carries main stress.Morphophonemically it causes stress shift.

5. *-ee*

-ee is derived into English from Latin through French. It means 'a person affected by or concerned with…', as in *employee, divorcee, addressee* and others. The suffix derives nouns that are normally passive in nature. But e*xaminee, interviewee, trainee* are not passive nouns.

The pronunciation of –ee is /i/. It is homonymous to the Hindustani suffix, *-i* which is discussed below. *-ee* may be stressed or unstressed, e.g. ˌaddresˈsee, ˌabsenˈtee, aˌppoinˈtee,ˌdrafˈtee, ~ emˈployee, ˈtownee. Hence, in some nouns the suffix exhibits morphophonemic change at the suprasegmental level.

6. *-eer*

The suffix, *-eer* comes into English from Latin *–arius* through French *–ier*. It is denomial noun forming suffix that means 'a person concerned with …' as in *pamphleteer, sonneteer*.

The pronunciation of *–eer* is **/ɪər/.** The suffix normally carries the main stress. It changes the stress pattern of the base to which it is added, for example, ˌauctioˈneer, ˌmountaiˈneerand others.

7. -er

The origin of *-er* can be traced in Old English from German and through French from Latin. This is a very common and productive suffix.

-er is polysemous. It implies 'a person or thing that …' as in *teacher, computer*, 'a person who lives in …' as in *Londoner, New Yorker*, 'someone

Dr. Uttam R. Patil

concerned with…' as in *astronomer,* The pronunciation of *–er* is /ər/. This is an unstressed syllable. It is nominal suffix normally attached to verb bases. The suffix has homonymous relation to the comparative suffix, *-er. -ar* in *beggar, liar* and *-or* in *actor, visitor* are the spelling variants of *-er. -ar* and *–or* are Latinizing spellings.

8.-ese

The suffix,-eseis borrowed into English through French *–eis* which is based on Latin *–ensis.* -ese is pronounced /i:z/. Itnormally carries the primary stress and causes stress shift in the derivatives, e.g. *Japan ~ Japa nese, China ~ Chi nese, Burma ~ Bur mese*

In Japanese the suffix causes vowel mutation: /d əpæn/→/d æpəni:z/ (/ə/→/æ/ and /æ/→/ə/) It is applied to the remote of the far East. Some like *Japanese* and *Albanese* have deprecative tinge. While addressing seriously, they are referred to as *Londoner, Albaner* (Marchand, 1960: 226).

9. -i

*-i*is aHindustani suffix. It means 'a person belonging to/ inhabitant of/ native of…'.It is considered an English nationality forming suffix by Laurie Baure (1983). Perhaps *-i* might have been borrowed into English from Indian languages.

The suffix is pronounced /i/. It is a weak syllable. It is generally found in words like *Bengali, Pakistani, Tamili, Panjabi* and many others.

10.-ish

Thisis a native suffix added to nouns, adjectives, numerals, and adverbs from Old English. It means 'a person or thing from the country …', as in *British, English, Irish.-ish*is pronounced / / which makes a weak syllable. Hence, *-ish* is unstressed and does not affect the stress pattern of the word.

11.-ist

The suffix, *-ist* is from Greek through French *–iste* and Latin *-ista*. It is a nominal suffix that denotes a person in various shades of meaning such as 'a doer or performer' as in *violinist, guitarist*, 'a person who believes/practices' as in

Dr. Uttam R. Patil

atheist, communist, 'practitioner of profession' as in *pharmacist, dentist*, and 'a person who does …' as in *plagiarist*, and so on.

All nouns in *–ism* which denote attitudes, beliefs or theories may have counterparts in *–ist*. The pronunciation of –ist is **/** st**/.** As it is with derivatives in *–ism* , *-ist* does not alter the stress pattern of the base, if the word formation is done on the native basis, e.g.,   *novel ~   novelist,   career ~   careerist.*

If *–ist* is attached to adjectives ending in *–ic,* it results into the phonological alternation /k/ → /s/ as in: *historic* /h st r k/   ~ /h st r s st/,*public* /p bl k/ ~ /p bl s st/, and others.

And if the word formation is on the foreign basis (Marchand, 1960), the word is normally accented on the penultimate syllable, e.g.   *Baptist.*

12. *-ite*

The suffix, *-ite*is from Greek, *-ites* via Latin *-ita* through French *-ite*. It is a nominal suffix that allows derivation on both native and foreign bases. Generally it denotes a thing that is a part of something larger, or more important. Specifically, it means 'follower, devotee of …' as in *Ambedkarite, pre-Raphaelite*, 'a person belonging to … place' as in *Israelite, Sydneyite*, and chemicals like *sulphite, nitrite.*

The pronunciations of *-ite*are /a t/ and   t/. In nouns like *Ambedkarite, Israelite* and *sulphite* –ite is pronounced /a t/. *–ite*also forms adjectives when it is attached to verbs and nouns and whereby it is pronounced / t/, as in: *favour ~ favourite* / fe vər t/, *compose ~ composite* / k mpəz t/, *appose ~ apposite* / æpəz t/, *oppose ~ opposite* /   pəz t/, *hypocracy* (N) ~ *hypocrite* / h pəkr t/.

While deriving adjectives, *-ite* causes alternation in the stress pattern of the base in the selected cases as well as it exhibits /ə/→ /æ/ or / /or alternation, as in: *appose*/ə pə z/ ~ *apposite* / æpəz t/, *oppose* /ə pə z/ ~ *opposite* /   pəz t/, *compose* /kəm pə z/ ~ *composite* / k mpəz t/, and others. This is a non-automatic morphophonemic alternation.

13. *-ster*

The suffix, *-ster* is derived from Old English *–estre, -istre*. It is attached to nouns to form nouns. It means 'a person (man) who is …' as in *youngster, older*, and 'a man who is connected with…' as in *gangster, teamster*. It is also used with

derogatory sense, e.g. *poster, camster*, and others. *–ster* is pronounced /stəʳ/. Normally, the suffix is weak and can cause no morphophonemic changes in the base to which it is attached.

In addition to these suffixes, there are final combining forms that mean 'a person who…'. All these signify the concept of person.

1.-crat

This final combining form is derived from French *–crate*. It denotes 'a member or supporter of a particular form of government or rule' as *in autocrat, plutocrat, technocrat*, and others. Its pronunciation is /kræt/. Normally, *-crat* does not cause morphophonemic changes.

2. *–meister*

It is borrowed into English from German *Meister* meaning 'master'. It means 'a person skilled or prominent in a specified area of activity' as in *funk-meister, gag-meister,* etc. It is pronounced /mə stə/. Usually, this final combining form does not cause morphophonemic changes.

3. *-phile*

*-phile*comes into English Greek *philos* 'loving'. It denotes 'a person or a thing having a fondness for specified thing' as in *bibliophile, Francophile*, and others. It is pronounced /fə l/.

4. *-phobe*

This final combining form is derived from French, via Latin *–phobus* from Greek *–phobos* 'fearing', from *phobos* 'fear'. It implies 'a person who fears or dislikes a specified thing' as in *biblophobe, commitment-phobe, germ-phobe*. Its pronunciation is /fə b/.

In a nutshell, affixes play a very significant role in the making and enrichment of a language. The knowledge of affixes is very essential in interpreting the complex words semantically and morphophonemically. It is useful in the composition of new words as well as decomposition of existing words. This makes affixes linguistic signs. It is also necessary for forming new words. Consequently, research should be undertaken in this area that remains less explored.

Dr. Uttam R. Patil

REFERENCES:

1. Bauer, Laurie. (1988). *Introducing Linguistic Signs* . Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

2. Bauer, Laurie. (1983). *English Word-formation.*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

3. Carstairs-McCarthy, Andrew. (2009). *An Introduction to English Morphology: Words & their Structure.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

4. de Saussure, F. (1964). *Course in General Linguistics.*Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye. (eds).Trans. Wade Baskin. London: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

5. Marchand, Hans. (1960). *The Categories & Types of Present-day English Word-formation.*Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

6. Plag, Ingo.(2003). *Word-formation in English.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

7. Quinion, Michael. (2002). *Ologies and Isms- A Dictionary of Word Beginnings and Endings.* New York: Oxford University Press.

8. Thakur, Damodar. (1997). *Linguistics Simplified Morphology.* Patna: Bharati Bhawan.

Dr. Uttam R. Patil