

# WORD FORMATION PROCESSES IN PRINT AND BROADCAST ADVERTISING

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SVEUČILIŠTE U SPLITU  
FILOZOFSKI FAKULTET  
Odsjek za engleski jezik i književnost

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ADVERTISING**

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Split, 2023.

UNIVERSITY OF SPLIT  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
Department of English Language and Literature

**WORD FORMATION PROCESSES IN PRINT AND BROADCAST  
ADVERTISING**  
BA Thesis

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Split, 2023

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# INTRODUCTION

With modernization and globalization of the world around us, it is becoming more and more obvious that the language as a principal method of human communication is alive and constantly changing. It is following trends, adapting to different social environments and delivering messages, opinions and attitudes through different means of communication.

The aim of this paper is to closely observe what changes and innovations language undergoes, specifically in different forms of advertising, through various word formation processes. Advertisements have developed into a powerful medium of exchanging ideas, displaying a range of unique language traits. Advertising compromises accepted grammatical and linguistic practices; above all, it is the language that sells. With the pace of contemporary time language comes across the challenge of adapting to modern society's needs. Furthermore, the more specific the field of conversation is, the more specific the adaptation will need to be. Forming new words and expressions is the fastest and easiest way to cause language change.

The first part of the paper will theoretically present the main word formation processes and some key linguistic terms and elements regarding them. It will also briefly explain the nature of advertising via three different modes i.e., broadcast (including television and radio commercials) and paper advertisements. The second part of the paper will present the results of a small research in which the formation of the words used in numerous different advertisements is analyzed. The results lead to conclusions regarding which word formation process is most present in what mode of advertising and why. Similarities and differences through modes of advertising regarding the usage of specific processes are observed and explained. The paper is completed with a conclusion recapitulating the key information gathered, along with a brief summary.

# 1. WORD FORMATION PROCESSES

## 1.1. Introduction to word formation

According to Rosa and Wahyuni (2013) a vital part of our daily life is communication, which language provides as a tool. Humans are capable of conveying messages, feelings, and thoughts through language. One may argue that language is one of the fundamental requirements that serves as a regulator of the motion of life itself.

Yule (2010) defined language as the systematic, conventional use of sounds, signs, or written symbols in a human society for communication and self-expression. Yule approached language from several different aspects as mentioned in this definition. However, for the purpose of this paper, the aspects of language as a great part of the human society and most essential mean of communication and self-expression are the most interesting ones. According to Yule (2010), language is a social phenomenon, used by humans to communicate and interact with one another within a society. It serves the dual purpose of enabling communication between individuals and allowing individuals to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

Overall, Yule's discussion of word formation emphasizes language's dynamic and creative nature, highlighting how language speakers can manipulate its components to generate new lexical items and adapt to evolving communicative needs. His work contributes to our understanding of how languages evolve and how speakers continually innovate in their use of language.

There are more communication media accessible today than ever before, and many previous means of message transmission have been replaced, upgraded, or adjusted for use in the twenty-first century by mankind. Numerous brand-new, different possibilities for engaging in communication have emerged during the course of human existence. It goes without saying that human social and intellectual growth drives the expansion of the range of communication media. Humanity's history has a long-lasting effect on people's lives, but historical evolution may also be seen in how people use language. People continue to grow and change, and as a result, so does language (Plescher, 2010). According to Crystal (2003), the most important reason why people create new words is that there are no proper words in the language for what speakers want to say, so they create new terms in order to name their invention, and to cover new concepts, new materials, and abstract phenomena.

Plescher (2010) also states that word formation processes perform a vital part in the further development of the human linguistic system since it is important to name and define new (mental) concepts and to make explicit references to some brand-new element in the natural world. There are many such word formation processes, and people use a variety of effective strategies to allude to cutting-edge aspects and ideas in the outside world. People create, modify, and combine words in their native tongues, or even take specific words from other languages.

Further in the paper the most frequently used word formation processes will be introduced and explained, along with some examples. The main roles relevant for the paper topic and the importance of word formation processes will be elaborated.

## **1.2. Types of word formation processes**

Throughout the history of language study, particularly in more recent times, many linguists and language experts have suggested ways in which new words are being created. Trask (1997) defined word formation process as a method of creating new words from previously existing components. Hacken and Thomas (2013) described the word creation process as a method through which new words are created based on a set of rules. One more definition is suggested by Plag (2003), and it claims that word formation process creates new words from already existing ones. Most of them agree on the standard, proven ways of word formation, yet there are always slight differences in whether or not something new should be added, in defining the processes and naming them.

Yule (2010) states that word formation refers to the process by which new words are created in a language, either by combining the existing elements or by modifying them. Yule emphasizes that word formation involves both the creation of entirely new words and the modification of existing words to convey different meanings or functions. He discusses various morphological processes through which word formation occurs.

Since multiple authors are referring to the concept of the word formation processes, as previously indicated, the following part of the paper will present and be guided by Yule's definitions and his understanding of word formation. According to Yule (2010), there are 9 word formation processes: coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, clipping, back-formation, conversion, acronymy and derivation.



## Coinage

Coinage is one of the least frequent methods of word formation in English. It implies the creation of entirely new terms deliberately or accidentally without using any other word formation process. By using the name of a widely used item, a new word is created through the process of coinage. Societies make use of the product's name often and it distributes among more people. Coinage refers to extension of a name of a product from a very specific reference to a more general one. This way the meaning of the words is broadened.

Some examples of coinage are: *Aspirin, Kleenex, Frisbee, Band-Aid, Zipper* etc. As stated by Carter and McCarthy (2006) words can be formed even from proper names. Examples of this are: *braille, caesarian, platonic, sadist, sandwich* etc.

## Borrowing

Borrowing is the process of exchanging words from one language to another. It is one of the most common sources of new words in English language. Language borrowings occur in the event of contact of different ethnic groups speaking different languages due to social, political, economic, or cultural reasons (Sapir, 2014). The purpose of it is to gain new vocabulary of language. An important conclusion is suggested by an analysis of cultural and historical instances of language changes. Language borrowing is one example of a linguistic shift that may occur when two languages interact (Sapir, 2014). English has borrowed hundreds of words from other languages during continuous cultural and historical contact.

Some examples of borrowed words are: *ballet, captain, cigar* (originated from French and Spanish), *basic* (originated from German), *humorous* (originated from Portuguese) etc.

## Compounding

Compounding refers to conjoining or joining two separate free forms to create a single new word. Most of the time, compounding creates a word or a phrase that means something different than the meanings of the words used to create the new word. According to Carter and McCarthy (2006), although compounds can be found in all word classes, compounds that entered language more recently tend to be either nouns, verbs or adjectives. It is one of the most common word formation processes.

Some examples of compounding are: *daydream* (day + dream; to dream during the day), *rainfall* (rain + fall; a rain that is falling), *royal-blue*, *English-speaking*, *bitter-sweet*, *fingertip* (finger + tip; the tip of the finger).

## Blending

Blending is a process of combining two or more words into a new word by removing syllables from one or both source words. In most cases blending is accomplished by taking the first syllable of one word which is then joined to the last syllable of the second word. Words can also be blended by using only the first syllables of both words, for example in the word *cyborg* that is a blend of the words cybernetic and organism.

Some of the oldest and most common examples of word blends are: *brunch* (breakfast + lunch), *motel* (motor + hotel), *smog* (smoke + fog), *electrocute* (electric + execute). With the arrival of the modern times, more modern blends came along such as: *bromance* (brother + romance), *fantabulous* (fantastic + fabulous), *Spanglish* (Spanish + English), *spork* (spoon + fork) etc.

## Clipping

Clipping is the process of reducing a word of more than one syllable to a shorter form, usually used in casual speech. This is one of the more popular new word formation processes. While clipping, the meaning of the originated word remains unchanged. Depending on which part of the word the syllable is removed from, there are three types of clipping: back-clipping, fore-clipping and mid-clipping. In the process of back-clipping the last syllables of the word are removed (e.g. *math* from mathematics), while in the process of fore-clipping the first few syllables of the word are the ones that are left out (e.g. *phone* from telephone). Lastly, when mid-clipping, the syllables from the middle of the word are removed (e.g. *jams* from pyamas).

Some examples of clipping include: *ad* (from advertisement), *gator* (from alligator), *flu* (from influenza), *photo* (from photograph), *gas* (from gasoline) etc.

## Back-formation

Back-formation is a specialized type of reduction process. It is essentially the changing of the grammatical category of a word, or words originated in nouns and reducing them to form a different grammatical category. In this process, a word of one type (usually a noun) is reduced to form a word of another type (usually a verb). Back-formation is often a result of overgeneralization of derivational suffixes.

Some examples of back-formation are: **obsess** (from obsessive), **donate** (from donation), **gamble** (from gambler), **televise** (from television), **enthuse** (from enthusiasm), etc.

## Conversion

Conversion is a word formation process which changes a specific English word into a noun, verb, adverb or adjective without any reduction. Most examples involve the conversion of verbs into nouns or nouns into verbs. Conversion is a process which continues to produce new forms constantly. Although noun to verb conversion and vice versa is the most productive type, other types are possible as well such as adjectives being converted into verbs, nouns converted into adjectives, proper nouns into common nouns and even a whole phrase being converted into mostly adjective compound.

Some examples of above-mentioned conversion types are:

*a cure/to cure, a laugh/to laugh, a run/to run, an alert/to alert, a hope/ to hope* (n. → v.)

*to email/an email, to group/a group, to fool/a fool, to name/ a name* (v. → n.)

*to clean/clean, to empty/empty, to better/better, to faint/faint, to smooth/ smooth* (v. → adj.)

## Acronymy

Acronyms are new words formed by taking only the initial letters of few words and putting them together. The initial letters are combined and read as one word. The use of acronyms became more frequent and widespread during the 20th century.

Some of the best-known acronyms are: **NASA** (National Aeronautics and Space Administration), **OED** (Oxford English Dictionary), **UNIVAC** (Universal Automatic Computer), **VIP** (Very Important Person), **NATO** (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) etc.

## Derivation

Derivation is one of word formation processes that creates new words by adding affixes (prefixes and suffixes). All affixes are bound morphemes. A prefix is a letter or group of letters which is added to the beginning of a word in order to form a different word. A suffix is a letter, or a group of letters added at the end of a word to form a derivative. Some common affixes are un-, dis-, mis-, pre-, -full, -ish, extra-, auto-, over-, and -ness.

Some examples of derived words are: *extraordinary*, *halfway*, *sweeten*, *overeat*, *identify*, *misunderstand*, *disregard*, *undo*, *workable*, etc.

### 1.3. The role of word formation processes

As many linguists state, the constant enrichment of the language is necessary, and it is a completely natural and spontaneous process due to the constant need of humans to adapt their linguistic expression to follow the pace of their everchanging lifestyle. According to renowned English philologist Crystal (2003), there is no task more crucial than examining how certain words interact with one another in the language's vocabulary. Humans' social and intellectual growth drives the expansion of the range of communication media.

As Plescher (2010) states word formation processes significantly influence human language (usage) by enabling humans to designate for components of some extralinguistic reality. It goes without saying that changes in extralinguistic reality also affect the lexicon. Since the lexicon, or all the language categories, must evolve to reflect changes in living reality, the vocabulary must be repeatedly expanded. People must develop new lexical items to meet the requirement for a shift in the extralinguistic reality. These lexemes serve as names for certain elements in the world and carry out the primary task of word formation. To put it another way, these brand-new lexical items are created to offer names to brand-new components of extralinguistic reality. A change in the language does not, however, just result from a shift in reality. Insofar as public demand for the replacement of already existing lexical items can also lead to the creation of new lexemes, word formation is relevant not just when new notions in the world need names.

Furthermore, Plescher (2010) also referred to the close connection of formation of the new words and advertising. She emphasized that the creative and frequently persuasive use of specific terms in a given advertisement can have a significant impact on the success of the

associated firm in influencing consumers' purchasing decisions. Copywriters' linguistic decisions are made with the intention of altering the reader's mindset in order to encourage them to purchase a particular product from a particular company. Without a question, creative language can help to bring attention to a particular commercial and, consequently, to a product promoted.

These perspectives collectively underline the multidimensional role of language, including word formation, in advertising. Linguists recognize that advertising is not just about conveying information; it's about crafting persuasive and engaging messages that connect with consumers on cognitive, emotional, and cultural levels. Word formation techniques are an essential part of this linguistic toolkit that advertisers use to create effective and impactful campaigns.

As humans, our attention will naturally be drawn to something that we have never seen or heard before. In the world of advertising there is not much room for such drastic measures since, after all, every mode of advertising is limited in a certain way; radio broadcasts only to sound, printed advertisements only to written word and TV commercials, even though they have the power of sounds, visuals and spoken words, are still time limited.

For these modes, i.e., print and broadcast advertising, to grab ones' attention the great power lies in the specific words used. There is a huge variety in the field of advertising, from professional to children-aimed, and language has the power to adapt to and enrich each and every one. Spoken and written words follow societies and world's needs, it changes and upgrades in order to fit the ever-changing reality, and all of that is being achieved through formation of the new words. Therefore, the more innovative, inventive and alternative the vocabulary gets, the more effective the process of advertising will be.

## 2. MODES OF ADVERTISING

Modes of advertising refer to the various methods or channels through which promotional messages, information, or content are delivered to a target audience.<sup>1</sup> These modes are used by advertisers to communicate with consumers and promote products, services, or ideas. Advertisements appear in the form of print and broadcast advertising.<sup>2</sup> The choice of advertising mode depends on factors such as the target audience, budget, campaign goals, and the nature of the message being conveyed.

Language is the primary tool for communicating information, ideas, and emotions in advertising.<sup>3</sup> It allows advertisers to craft compelling narratives, describe product features, and present persuasive arguments to best present the value of a product or service. It follows that language can be considered a crucial factor of the advertising process.

The primary aim of advertising, a relatively modern industry, is to attract viewers and persuade them to buy specific products or services.<sup>4</sup> Regardless of the purpose of advertising, it's widely acknowledged that language plays a crucial role. Even the most carefully crafted advertisements will only succeed if they capture the attention of potential customers, and the easiest way to do it is by the language used to promote it.

Considering all the points mentioned above, language serves as a versatile and influential tool within the advertising industry. Its capacity to convey information, evoke emotions, and prompt action makes it a fundamental component of successful advertising campaigns. Advertisers who grasp the subtleties of language and use it strategically can formulate compelling messages that deeply resonate with their intended audience.

In the following chapters of the paper, the main features of print and broadcast advertising will be presented. The importance and different approaches to language in each mode of advertising will be highlighted.

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<sup>1</sup> See Feedough from <https://www.feedough.com/>

<sup>2</sup> See Bussines Jargons from <https://businessjargons.com/broadcast-advertising.html>

<sup>3</sup> See Formation media from <https://formationmedia.co.uk/>

<sup>4</sup> See Bussines Jargons from <https://businessjargons.com/broadcast-advertising.html>

## 2.1. Print advertising

According to Management Study Guide<sup>5</sup> print advertising is a widely employed mode of advertising. These adverts are featured in newspapers or magazines and are occasionally distributed as brochures or flyers. Any content presented in print media with the aim of capturing the attention of a specific target audience falls within the domain of print advertising. While perusing newspapers and other periodicals, many individuals tend to peruse the print ads they come across. The decision to purchase the product might not be immediate, but it embeds itself in their subconsciousness. Subsequently encountering the product in the market often triggers a temptation to purchase it. What also contributes to this is strategically used language that evokes any sort of emotion. Word formation processes broaden those strategies by creating impactful and memorable, yet short messages as can be seen in Figure 1.

An advertisement placed on the main page instantly captures the reader's focus, more so than one on subsequent pages. Similarly, a larger ad space tends to garner greater attention. This is the exact reason why choice of language is important when it comes to printed advertising. With limited formats, sometimes a short, well thought, catchy phrase can convey an attractive message in a single line, as can be seen in Figure 2. A strong choice of words such as, in this case, a "*chemical weapon*" that usually implies something intimidating or even negative, is used to refer to something as simple as a ballpoint pen.

Mailers represent another variant of print ads. These can range from well-designed postcards to basic paper leaflets. Typically delivered by postal workers directly to people's mailboxes, these mailers are often disregarded or discarded.

To counteract this tendency, companies sometimes resort to using fliers. These paper ads are handed out to individuals in person. The underlying idea is that when an ad is personally given to people, they are more likely to give it heightened attention, a notion that holds true to a certain extent.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/print-advertising.htm>



Figure 1 *An example of a printed advert*



Figure 2 *An example of a printed advert*



As claimed by Management Study Guide<sup>6</sup> another significant method of printed advertising is outdoor advertising. This form of advertising conveys messages to the general public via highway billboards, transit posters, and comparable mediums. Outdoor advertising holds considerable significance as the advertisements are substantial in size and accessible to a wide audience. An essential aspect of this advertising approach is the necessity for the conveyed message to be concise and focused. While images may be employed, their excessive use is cautioned against. This underscores the renewed importance of selecting the right words. Since the usage of images is limited, words used must be catchy and innovative to be able to grasp the reader's attention as can be seen in Figure 3 where that effect was achieved by using compounding.



Figure 3 *An outdoor printed advertisement*

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

## **2.2. Broadcast advertising**

Broadcast advertising is a mode of advertising that employs electronic media to convey a message to an extensive audience.<sup>7</sup> It utilizes airwaves as the channel for transmitting the content to reach a broad spectrum of viewers. Broadcast media guarantees wide coverage with brief exposure of the company's offerings. This advertising form holds a significant global influence and efficacy. Its extensive reach derives from the ability to access it from home, the workplace, or even while traveling. The immediate and widespread nature is a key characteristic when defining broadcast advertising. Notably, it extends into remote areas inaccessible to newspapers and magazines. This method encompasses various techniques like spot announcements and sponsored programs. Broadcast media presents an array of advertising slots and rates based on advertisement duration and airing schedule. Notably, prime time advertisements attract the highest viewership or listenership.

Since broadcast advertising is mainly focused on the spoken word, language comes into place as one of the key factors in its efficiency. In this case word formation serves as a tool to refresh and upgrade this mode of advertising in order to attract the wanted audience.

Radio, which can be also referred to as Frequency Modulation, and television are the two main forms of broadcast media.<sup>8</sup> These two modes allow consumers to watch or listen to advertising campaigns at specific times each day wherever they are.

### *2.2.1. Television advertising*

Television is an audio and visual medium that has a more profound psychological effect than any other type of media.<sup>9</sup> It serves as an opening to the world outside. It enables simultaneously reaching an extremely large number of audiences. It used to be referred to as the foundation of advertising. However, since the internet and social media have become more prevalent, its significance has somewhat diminished.

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<sup>7</sup> See Business Jargons from <https://businessjargons.com/broadcast-advertising.html>

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

Additionally, television advertising is appropriate for goods that need to be demonstrated. It combines spoken word with visual representation, and in that way increases the effectiveness of both. Its benefits include broad coverage, adaptability, etc.

### *2.2.2. TV commercials*

Television commercials, also known as TV ads or TV advertisements, are brief videos usually lasting around 30 seconds, broadcasted on television during interruptions in programming.<sup>10</sup> These commercials serve as a means of advertising that enable brands to showcase their offerings on television, presented during intermissions in programming. Television advertising can yield remarkable results, as it grants businesses access to a large viewership for their message. Although producing TV commercials can be costly, the investment is often justified when they contribute to business sales and brand recognition. TV advertising encompasses various formats, ranging from traditional commercials to contemporary product placements.

Despite being the most comprehensive advertising mode due to its combined auditory and visual components, the choice of language remains crucial for its efficiency. Language holds the ultimate influence in advertising.<sup>11</sup> A compelling company name and tagline can either make or break a product. People are consistently engaged in textual content on social media, albeit in a non-traditional manner. As this text-driven form of media prevails, advertising's role and integration into our lives have evolved.

### *2.2.3. Radio advertising*

Radio started to be employed in advertising in 1920.<sup>12</sup> Radio advertising has been a viable method for promotion for more than 80 years. Radio advertisements have adopted innovative advertising strategies by utilizing music, songs, and entertainment programming.

Radio can be used for advertising by both regional and national companies. It is one of the most popular forms of advertising across the globe. The benefits of radio advertising include

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

its affordability, adaptability, practicality, mobility, etc. It is a broadcast medium that is relatively portable. In general, people listen to the radio in their automobiles, homes, businesses, etc.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. The sample**

This part of the paper will deliver a small research conducted by gaining materials through printed adverts, live and archived TV commercials and radio adverts. The visual, audio-visual and audio materials were observed in order to capture words and phrases that had undergone some kind of word formation process. The materials were gained in the period from June 1<sup>st</sup> to July 1<sup>st</sup>. They were mostly collected using internet sources such as Google, Google images and YouTube. TV and radio commercials were collected by watching compilations of archived and on-air commercials via YouTube. Printed adverts were collected by browsing through internet websites and images of printed formats in advertising. The products that were advertised noticeably vary, from food, to clothing, to cosmetics, to different sorts of gears etc.

Printed advertisements covered were mostly flyers or outdoor banners. The average length of a TV commercial observed was around one and a half minutes. Words extracted were mainly mentioned in the first introductory sentence or are a part of the main tag line. Radio commercials lasted around 30 seconds on average, with the shortest one lasting only 14 seconds. None of the adverts were gender or age divided. The whole research presents 80 examples in total; 25 of them being printed, 30 of them television and 25 radio advertisements.

#### **3.2. The analysis of word formation processes in print and broadcast advertisements**

The following parts of this paper will look into the specific word formation processes prevalent in both print and broadcast advertisements. Each section will offer isolated examples and analyses, drawing attention to the processes that help in shaping the advertising scene. Isolated examples are shown in tables and divided through specific word formation processes followed by transcripts of the full sentences or expressions from advertisements. Examples are then analyzed from a linguistic perspective and their potential role in advertisement is investigated.

Table 1 Print advertising

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| COINAGE        | automac, nutellable, sharpie, dazzling  |
| BORROWING      | /   |
| COMPOUNDING    | streeteasy, coffee-break, caveman, anywhere, automac, built-in, milkshake, waterproof |
| BLENDING       | brunch  |
| CLIPPING       | app, ad, wi-fi  |
| BACK-FORMATION | donate  |
| CONVERSION     | must, sign, shape, breeze   |
| ACRONYM        | Q&A, FAQ, AM/PM   |
| DERIVATION     | powerful, painful, unleash, nutellable,   |

## Examples of printed adverts

“Streeteasy – find your place.”

“Donate now.”

“An app that you know is a must.”

“For free trial sign up now.”

“Give yourself a coffee-break!”

“So easy a caveman could do it!”

“Concerns answered in Q&A below!”

“Here are some FAQs answered!”

“Today’s brunch offer:”

“Shape your body today.”

“The world’s most powerful chemical weapon.”

“Are you ready for weightlifting?”

“Don’t look anywhere else.”

“This is an AD for men.”

“The secret to a dazzling smile.”

“Automac, all night open.”

“Free Wi-Fi served at all restaurants.”

“Makes cleaning a breeze.”

“Built-in image stabilization.”

“Staying awake will never be this painful anymore.”

“Unleash the chaos.”

“The real milkshake.”

“100% waterproof.”

“That’s nutellable.”

“It all started with a sharpie.”

In the case of printed advertisements, it is noticeable that the most used word formation process is compounding standing at 29% of the total sum as shown in Figure 4. The second most used processes are conversion and derivation with 15% both. Slightly less represented at 11% are acronyms, clipping and coinage. The least used are back-formation and blending standing at 4%. There are no borrowed words recorded.

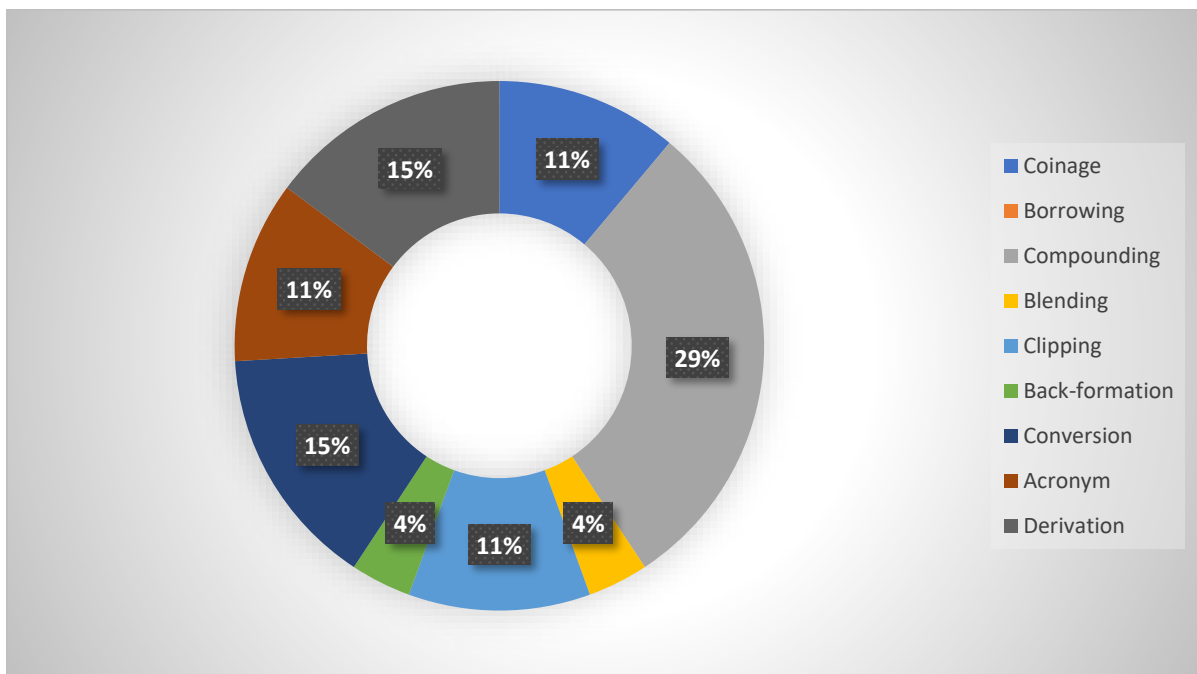


Figure 4 *The distribution of word formation processes in print advertising*

The prevalence of compounds in print advertising shows a tendency towards eye-catching and effective vocabulary. As can be seen in the examples of print adverts, i.e., “*So easy a **caveman** could do it!*” and “*Are you ready for **weightlifting**?*”, compounds can be created by combining two nouns (cave + man) as in the first sentence or by combining a noun with a verb (weight + lifting) thus creating an attention-grabbing phrase.

Conversion from noun to verbal form further emphasizes the impactful descriptive function of printed advertisement as shown in the example “*For free trial **sign up** now*”. Noun

to verb conversions like a shape → to shape, from the example “*Shape your body today!*” take the role of sending concrete messages in this advertising medium limited only to the printed format.

Derivation may give advertising the capacity to communicate complex details elegantly since it can enrich terminology and add variety, and this is once again shown through the usage of adjectives gained by derivation from the noun power + suffix full as can be seen in the example “*The world’s most **powerful** chemical weapon.*”

In printed samples acronyms reach their full potential. Due to their limited surface structure i.e., being rather short, acronyms such as **Q&A** as in “*Concerns answered in **Q&A** below!*” or **FAQ** as in “*Here are some **FAQs** answered*” are an ideal linguistic solution for this format of advertising. Namely, instead of using full expressions such as “question and answer” or “frequently asked questions”, their shortened versions ensure better space distribution of advertising surface, thus being effective.

The lack of frequency when using back-formation is consistent with print advertising’s practical nature. Due to the importance of immediate comprehension and understanding, back-formation may be somewhat uncommon in print which was shown in research holding only a single example of it: “***Donate** now.*” (from the word donation).



*Table 2 Broadcast advertising (TV commercials)*

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| COINAGE        | foam, Kleenex, Vanish, fitfluencer, Carefree   |
| BORROWING      | best-seller, replace, zero   |
| COMPOUNDING    | best-seller, sky-high, heavy-duty, head-on, whatever, endless, nobody, full-size, groundbreaking, top-rated, mind-blowing, antioxidant |
| BLENDING       | foam, romcom   |
| CLIPPING       | flu  |
| BACK-FORMATION | addict, custom-make, decadent  |
| CONVERSION     | look, love   |
| ACRONYM        | PB and C, TV, HP   |
| DERIVATION     | huggable, unpredictable, kindness  |

## **Transcripts of TV commercials**

“Introducing our best-seller product!”

“Floam it!”

“Grab Kleenex!”

“Make the stains Vanish!”

“Take your look to paradise.”

“Lash impact goes sky-high!”

“This heavy-duty mop will not disappoint.”

“Head-on, apply directly to the forehead.”

“Whatever the choice just keep it smart.”

“Flu stops with you!”

“That is what makes a fitfluencer.”

“If you love it, buy it.”

“Otto Greenpoint: endless amenities.”

“HP: nobody’s watching.”

“Replace your old habits.”

“Coca-cola zero: zero sugar alert.”

“Pillow pets: cute, huggable pets that pop open into full-size pillows.”

“PB and C is what I’m thinking of.”

“Predict the unpredictable.”

“Kindness is free.”

“Live your life Carefree.”

“Revolve: for all fashion addicts.”

“Custom-make your own pet!”

“Enjoy a luster, decadent smell.”

“Groundbreaking formula of pesticides.”

“Visit us at our top-rated stores.”

“Costumers have reported mind-blowing results.”

“Need someone to watch a romcom?”

“Bai, an antioxidant infusion.”

“Get rid of cable and upgrade to direct TV.”

Having analyzed TV commercials, compounding remains the most used word formation process, standing at 37% of the whole, as seen in Figure 5. Coinage is the second most frequently used word formation process (12%). The following four processes share the same representation of 9% of the whole: back-formation, acronyms, derivation and borrowing. The second to last used processes were conversion and blending with 6%. The least represented process was clipping with only 3% of the analyzed sample.

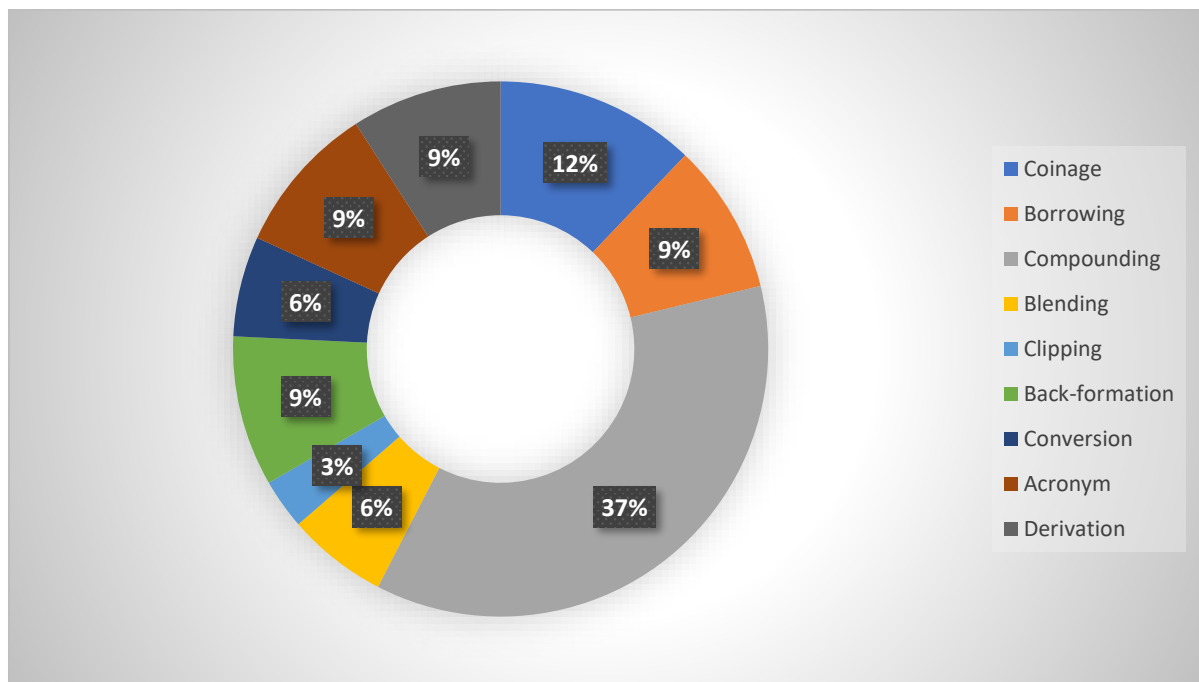


Figure 5 *The distribution of word formation processes in TV commercials*

Compounds are an effective way to create something new by using something familiar. As shown in this research, compounds used are the main focus of the sentence, as can be seen in the following examples: “*Introducing our **best-seller** product!*”, “***Groundbreaking** formula of pesticides*”. Most of the compounded words analyzed in this research have an adjectival function as the following examples show: “*This **heavy-duty** mop will not disappoint.*”, “*Lash impact goes **sky-high!***”, “*Visit us at our **top-rated** stores.*” They are mostly formed by combining adjectives and nouns (heavy + duty) or the other way around (sky + high, top + rated). There are lesser examples of noun and verb combination (ground + breaking).

Coinage demonstrates creativity and willingness to step outside conventional linguistic boundaries. Newly coined words found in this research are the ones people naturally use in place of a specific product that has been going under that name for a long time, such as a toiletry or cleaning product. These examples found in the transcripts include “*Grab **Kleenex!***”, “*Make the stains **Vanish!***”. Some newly invented terms consist of already known words such as fit and influencer, creating the term fitfluencer as shown in the example “*That is what makes a **fitfluencer.***” As can be seen, some terms like the one previously explained host more than one-word formation process (that is blending) but that will be more broadly elaborated further in the paper.

Words created by back-formation vary from nouns (an addict from the noun an addiction) to adjectives (decadent from the noun a decadence) to verbs (to custom-make from adjective custom-made), as shown in the transcript: “*Revolve: for all fashion **addicts.***”, “*Enjoy a luster, **decadent** smell.*”, “***Custom-make** your own pet!*”

In case of TV commercials, acronyms serve the purpose of shortening nouns: “***PB** and **C** is what I’m thinking of.*” (PB being short for peanut butter, C being short for chocolate) or last names “***HP: nobody’s watching.***” (HP being short for Hewlett-Packard).

The usage of derivation to create adjectives persists in TV advertising as transcripts show: “*Pillow pets: cute, **huggable** pets that pop open into full-size pillows.*” (verb to hug + suffix -able), “*Predict the **unpredictable.***” (prefix un- + verb to predict + suffix -able).

The examples of borrowed words originate from Norwegian (English *replace* from Norwegian *replassere*) visible in the example “***Replace** your old habits.*” and Arabic (“*Coca-cola **zero: zero** sugar alert*”).

Converted words are either from nouns to verbs as can be seen in the transcript “*If you **love** it, buy it.*” (noun love → verb to love) or the other way around as the following example shows: “*Take your **look** to paradise.*” (verb to look → noun a look).

The present study showed that in the case of TV commercials, blending is mostly used to combine adjectives and nouns as in “***Floam** it!*” (flexible + foam) or “*Need someone to watch a **romcom**?*” (romantic + comedy).

A single example of clipping is shown in the line “***Flu** stops with you!*” and it is an excellent example of middle clipping (in-**flu**-enza).

*Table 3 Broadcast advertising (Radio commercials)*

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| COINAGE        | fillet-o-fish, boogie  |
| BORROWING      | /  |
| COMPOUNDING    | nobody, all-American, fillet-o-fish, not-quite-meal, horsepower, worry-free, antioxidant |
| BLENDING       | clash  |
| CLIPPING       | combo, fave, act   |
| BACK-FORMATION | hustle, isolate  |
| CONVERSION     | use, smoke, fuel   |
| ACRONYM        | BRB  |
| DERIVATION     | affordable, proven, exceptional, freshly   |

## **Transcripts of radio commercials**

“Geico: there’s an easier way to say it.”

“Nobody beats Townfair tire.”

“Shop affordable at H&M!”

“Taste an all-American pizza sauce.”

“Oh look, a fillet-o-fish being all delicious.”

“Plumbing powder proven to work.”

“Meet the king with the not-quite-meal.”

“The kind of deal that makes you boogie.”

“Enjoy the exceptional taste of Starbucks at home.”

“Whatever you do, don’t eat it alone.”

“Buy a sourdough Jack combo!”

“There is no problem a little horsepower can’t solve!”

“Worry-free, call legal shield.”

“Choose a freshly baked bread, meat or veggies.”

“All of your favorites clashed into one.”

“Keep up the hustle!”

“Isolate yourself!”

“Excess put to good use.”

“Protective antioxidants from RealTtea.”

“Get your fave stuff at your local Walmart.”

“Whatever the situation, take a bite.”

“The smoke from the greatest house.”

“BRB with the best prices!”

“Do all ads sound boringly same?”

“Fuel up and feel good.”

The analysis of radio commercials showed that compounding remains the most used word formation process in advertising standing at 31% as can be seen in Figure 6. Derivation is the second most used word formation process taking up 17% of the whole. Clipping and conversion share the same percentage of 13% of the word formation processes. Back-formation and coinage both represent 9% of the commercials researched. Acronyms and blended words are not in abundance when it comes to purely auditive advertising with their representation being only 4%. This part of the research showed no visible representation of borrowed words from other languages, at least not in the parts of the adverts that were aimed at grasping the attention of the consumer.

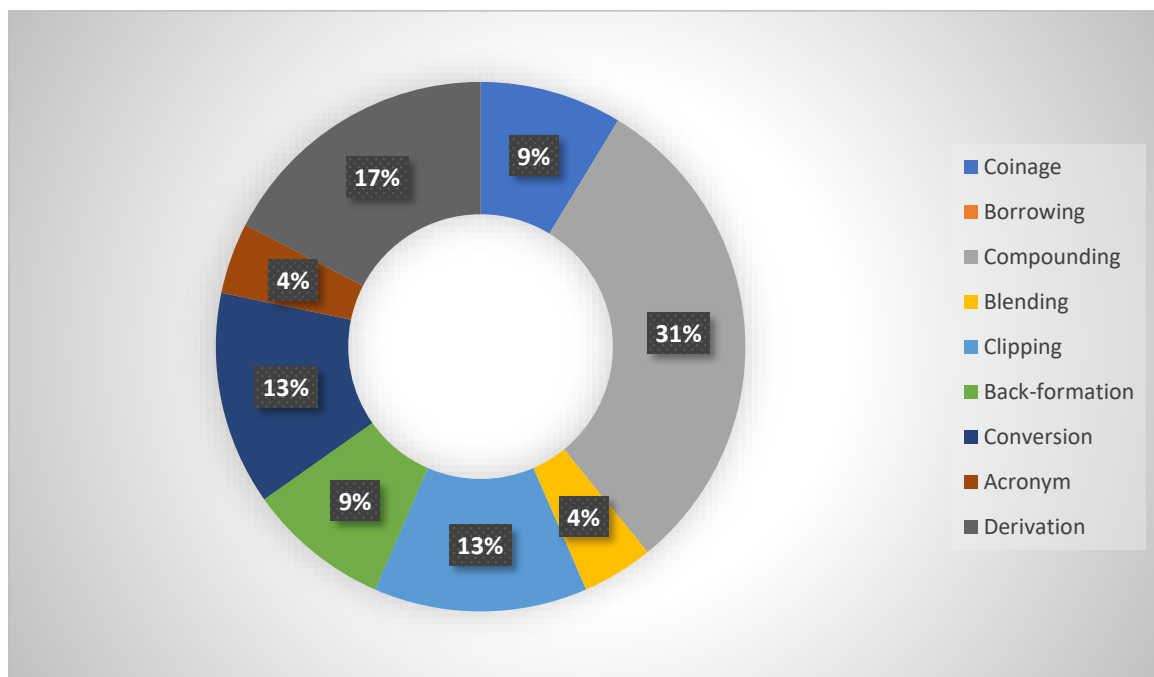


Figure 6 *The distribution of word formation processes in radio commercials*

Compound words are frequently used in radio advertising showing a tendency towards interesting, rarely heard compounds such as these: “Taste an **all-American** pizza sauce.”, “Oh look, a **fillet-o-fish** being all delicious.”, “Meet the king with the **not-quite-meal**.”. Most words



combined are nouns (fillet, fish, meal) and adjectives (American) with determiners (all) or adverbs (quite).

Derived expressions from the research usually serve as adjectives. As can be seen in the transcripts “Enjoy the **exceptional** taste of Starbucks at home.”, “Shop **affordable** at H&M!” these expressions are usually derived from nouns (noun exception + suffix -al) or verbs (verb to afford + suffix -able).

Clipped words from this research are mostly formed by back clipping: “Buy a *sourdough* Jack **combo!**” (combo from combination).

The adaptability and versatility of language in auditory advertising can be enhanced through conversion, which involves shifting words from one grammatical category to another what examples from the transcript show: “**Fuel** up and feel good.”, “The **smoke** from the greatest house.”. Words from the examples are converted from nouns to verbs (a fuel → to fuel) or other way around (to smoke → the smoke).

As shown in this research, radio commercials host a small number of verbs and nouns gained through backformation: “Keep up the **hustle!**” (a hustler → a hustle), “**Isolate** yourself!” (an isolation → to isolate).

Coined words in this form of advertising once again showcase an expression that people embraced to represent a specific habit as illustrated in: “The kind of deal that makes you **boogie.**” (to boogie usually refers to a sort of dance).

Acronyms and blended words are represented in radio advertising through a single example each: “**BRB** with the best prices!” (BRB being an acronym for “be right back”) and “All of your favorites **clashed** into one.” (to clash, a blend formed by clap + crash).

### 3.3. Discussion

As can be seen in Figures 4-6 presented in the research, compounding has been shown to be the most represented word formation process throughout all three advertising modes. This process is most used in TV commercials (37%) and least used in print advertising (29%) where other processes reach their full potential. Throughout all three modes of advertising compounded words have mostly an adjectival function and are usually a noun combined with another word (mostly verb or adjective) e.g. *groundbreaking, mind-blowing, horsepower, milkshake.*

Although its recorded percentage was decent in printed advertisement (15%), usage of conversion drastically decreases in TV commercials (6%), then it rises again in the radio commercial format (13%). In printed advertisement words gained through conversion have mostly adjectival function and are nouns converted to verbs (a sign → *to sign*, a shape → *to shape*). In TV and radio commercials noun to verb conversion is the most common one as well, however verb to noun conversion is also present (*to use* → *a use*).

Derivation is the second most used process both in print advertising (18%) and radio commercials (17%). Its recorded percentage in TV commercials is somewhat smaller (9%). In all three advertising modes, derived words have an adjectival function. They are mostly formed by adding suffixes, which can be seen in print and radio advertising (*affordable*, *powerful*), and in some cases adding both prefixes and suffixes as shown in TV commercials (*unpredictable*).

The use of acronyms decreased as the mode of advertising shifted from printed advertisements, where it is most recorded (11%), to radio commercials, where their usage is noticeably lower (4%). Acronyms, while potentially memorable, might require a degree of prior knowledge to be fully effective, whether it be generational or professional, possibly limiting their effectiveness. They are more successful in grasping attention when being read, rather than heard; thus their percentage being highest in printed format. Acronyms used in printed format shortened whole expressions (*Q&A* for question and answer), while in TV commercials they were used to shorten simple nouns (*C* for chocolate).

Clipping is most represented in radio advertising, which is fitting considering the format that is only audible and clipped words that have the best effect of being perceived as interesting and different when heard. The usage of clipping decreases when it comes to TV commercials (3%), but in the case of printed advertisement it is significantly higher (11%).

Coinage was a moderately used process in printed advertisements (11%). Its usage rises in TV advertising, where it is most recorded (12%), then drops in radio commercials, where it was last recorded (9%). This once again proves the effectiveness of new vocabulary primarily when being heard.

Back-formation is least represented in printed advertisements (4%). Its usage rises in TV and radio advertisement where its recorded percentage is the same (9%). Words gained through back-formation usually serve as verbs or nouns in all three advertising modes (*to isolate*, *an addict*).

Forming words by blending is not used in abundance in advertising, at least as shown in this research where its usage was well below 10% in all modes of advertising presented. Rather than appearing on its own, blending accompanies other word formation processes, as can be seen in the example of a word *fitfluencer* where a newly coined word was created by blending two words together (fit + influencer).

Lastly, borrowed words were recorded only in TV advertisements where they do not carry an overwhelming percentage of 9%, but still decent in comparison to their absence in other advertising formats. It is known that English has an abundance of borrowed words, but through the course of this research, it was not recorded as a primary source for creating new words, which leaves room for further research and improvement.

Some expressions even contain both compounding and one other word formation process, such as borrowing or derivation, as can be seen in the example of the word *best-seller* (borrowed from Norwegian language from the word *bestselger*, and in English compounded from two words: adjective best and noun seller). There are some commercials that contain multiple processes in their lines, such as the above presented commercial for Hewlett-Packard (*HP*) where both acronymy and compounding were recorded in a single commercial.

## 4. CONCLUSION

A chosen topic of word formation processes that are employed in print and broadcast advertising has brought insight into the versatility of language used by advertisers to engage and connect with their target audience. This small research had been carried out showing that across this array of advertising platforms, the prevalence of distinct word formation processes highlights a deliberate and sophisticated approach to ways of expressing. The results of this research serve as a vivid affirmation of the dynamic nature of language – a living, evolving mechanism that is constantly adapting and everchanging. With results of the research taken into consideration, it is visible how certain processes of word formation are more common than others throughout all modes of advertising, such as compounding and derivation, and how other types gradually emerge, such as acronymy or conversion, as the mode changes. This research shows that the medium of advertising plays a crucial role in how the language of the advertising will be shaped i.e., what word formation process will best suit each mode in order to provide the best result, which is of course, a successful advert. That is why the percentage of borrowed words and acronyms drastically changed as the mode of advertising changed.

The topic of this paper could be of use to both academics in the fields of linguistics, communication, and marketing, as well as anyone working in the advertising industry. By exploring the underlying linguistic mechanisms that make advertisement creation more efficient, researching these types of linguistic relations seeks to provide valuable insights into the relationship between language and advertising. Furthermore, understanding the simplicity and/or complexity of word formation processes can empower advertisers to refine, improve and if needed change their techniques, fostering more effective content. By broadening the specter of impact of word formation processes, hopefully this study contributes to a richer understanding of the linguistic characteristics that define the ever-changing world of advertising. Through this analysis, a well thought cooperation of language and advertising emerges, displaying the creative moments in language that transform words into successfully captivating messages.

Word formation is undoubtedly a powerful tool in advertising that can help convey messages effectively and create memorable terms. It allows advertisers to explore and experience the full potential of linguistic creativity and possibilities to connect with their target audience and achieve their marketing goals.

## Summary

The main goal of this bachelor's thesis was to point out the importance and versatility of language usage throughout the processes of word formation. All of the processes were explained and exemplified. The second part of the thesis focuses on a small research that proves the importance of words used in advertising, the way they were formed and the effects they give based on the formation process they went through. The significance of this thesis goes beyond exploring the advertising world by providing insights into how language, cognition, and creativity interact. This is supported by the conclusion that researching print, TV and radio advertising showed drastic changes in the choices of word formation processes as the mode of advertising changes. Fueling the knowledge of word formation helps us better understand how strategic creativity underlies effective communication while also deepening our understanding of how language has evolved in modern culture and how it can yet evolve.

Key words: word formation process, advertisement, language, versatility, creativity.

## Sažetak

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Ključne riječi: procesi tvorbe riječi, oglašavanje, jezik, svestranost, kreativnost.

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