

[Confixal word-formation rows with the suffix *-ment*]

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[Abstract] *This article presents a detailed analysis of the structure of five confixal word-formation rows with the suffix -ment from the synchronous point of view and with the help of the applicative generative model. The confixal word-formation rows are studied in terms of their homogeneity and heterogeneity, complexity and depth. Some theoretical notions such as “word-formation row”, “confix”, “circumfix”, “derivational suffix” and “applicative generative model” are discussed. The paper outlines different interpretations of the origin of the suffix -ment. The article is mainly aimed at analyzing the structure of confixal word-formation rows rather than describing their semantic features.*

[Keywords] *word-formation row; applicative generative model; homogeneity; heterogeneity; derivational suffix; confix*

[1] Introduction

This paper consists of the following parts:

1. Introduction: 1.1. Literature review
2. Method
3. The origin of the suffix *-ment*
4. Result and discussion
5. Conclusions

The objective of the paper is to analyze the structure of confixal word-formation rows in English. It is well-known that confixal word-formation is not very widely used in the English language. Nevertheless, while studying the structure of word-formation rows with the suffix *-ment*, five word-formation rows consisting of the prefixes *en-/em-*, *dis-*, *over-*, *non-*, *re-* and the suffix *-ment* were identified. A detailed structural analysis of English confixal word-formation rows represents the new contribution of this study. The subject of the analysis is confixal word-formation rows with the suffix *-ment*, and the research focuses on their structural peculiarities.

This article is of particular relevance due to the lack of studies of confixal word-formation rows in English.

[1.1] Literature review

The theoretical framework of this paper comprises works by *Soboleva (1972)*, Markov (2001), Shepel (2006; 2013; 2016), Evseeva (2014), Musatov (2010), Rahmayani (2013), Dalton-Puffer (1996), Plag (2003), Partridge (2006), Gräfe (2009), Booij (2018), Kriaučiūnienė (2020), and Peppler (1916).

Many attempts have been made, e.g. by Tykhonov (1991), Soboleva (1972), Heyher (1987), Hlebova (1988), Shepel (2006; 2013), to study and describe word-formation rows. Tykhonov (1991) states that “a word-formation row is a word-formation unit which lacks scientific research and this unit is still a subject of discussion” (p. 2). Heyher (1987) interprets a word-formation row as a set of derivative words of different word-formation chains which are at the same derivational stage (pp. 305–309). Heyher adds that the elements of a word-formation row are characterized by paradigmatic relations.

Hlebova (1988) considers a word-formation row to be “a hierarchically organized class of derivative words which have equal relations with basic elements” (p. 10). However, none of these definitions appear to be entirely clear. In this article, the definition suggested by Shepel (2006) is taken into consideration. Shepel states that a word-formation row is “a paradigmatic row, it is a set of derivative words combined on the basis of the variable-invariable principle: an invariable element for a row is a word-formation formant of the last derivational step and a variable element is a stem or a root of a motivated word” (pp. 134–135).

The applicative generative model was investigated by Soboleva (1972). This model is known to relate to the category of the abstract derivation system with a limited number

of original objects and rules of derivation. In this article, I deal with R_iX , where R_i may be called an operator, X an operand and R_iX an R-image of X . R-words of the applicative generative model are analogues of words in natural language (L=words). There are three relator-affixes: R_1 to denote a verb, R_2 a noun, and R_3 an adjective. The morphemic stem O serves as an initial operand, and the three relators are operators. The application process is the act of adding the function (a relator) to its argument (a morphemic stem). Derivational steps determine the application operation in the applicative generative model. The process of adding a word-forming affix to the derivative word comprises each derivative step. The word-forming structure is based on a large number of derivational steps required for word generation.

For example, the noun *management* corresponds to the R-word R_2R_1O , where R_1O is a zero derivational step and O displays the morphemic stem *manage*, and R_1 is a verb, i.e. a part of speech of the deriving stem *manage*. Then the suffix *-ment* is added to the morphemic stem to form the noun *management*, which will be written as R_2 and considered the first derivational step. It should be noted that only the present-day synchronous status of words is considered in this paper.

The concept of the depth and the complexity of a word-formation row is also of relevance to this paper. Shepel (2006) points out that the depth of a row or the degree of derivation is determined by the number of derivation steps in the longest derived word. The number of word structures included in a row comprises the row's complexity.

Confixal word-formation rows are investigated in this article, so we should define what a “confix” is. The term “confix” emerged due to Markov (2001), who stated that “each derived word distinguishes one word-forming morpheme in its composition complicating the so-called stem” (p. 104). Shepel (2016) considers that “a confix is a functionally unified two-element morpheme used to form words” (p. 54). Shepel supports the point of view that a confix as a formant is no longer perceived as a combination of prefix and suffix.

Rahmayani (2013) uses the term “derivational morpheme”, which he defines as “a prefix or a suffix for creating one word from another” (p. 2). He states that the derivational suffix usually changes both the meaning and the word class, i.e. the suffix is often added to a verb or an adjective to form a new noun with a different meaning, e.g. the noun *establishment* consists of two morphemes – the stem *establish* is a verb and the morpheme *-ment* is a suffix. Dalton-Puffer (1996) understands a bound lexical morpheme as a derivational suffix.

Gräfe (2009) states that the derivational suffix can, but need not, change the syntactic category of the generating word, e.g. the derivational suffix *-ment* can either form a noun from a verb (*develop*_v → *development*_n) or a noun from a noun, i.e. without changing the grammatical category (*rock*_n → *enrockment*_n).

Booij (2018) points out that in the English literature, the term “component of a complex word” substitutes the term “confix”. He argues that “ambix” and “confix” can be synonyms for the term “circumfix”. He suggests using “confix” for non-intrusive affixes consisting of a single phonological unit, i.e. the prefix and the suffix excluding circumfixes.

Kriauciūnienė (2020) expresses the idea that “confixes are formed from unique lexemes that can be found now in certain words, and a confix is not just a productive element of a word but it exists in word combinations” (p. 122). Evseeva (2014) considers a confix “an independent two-element morpheme and a complex word-forming formant” (p. 29). Musatov (2010) defines a confix as “a single complex joining simultaneously the generating stem or the generative word” (p. 63).

In this article, the term “confix” will be considered according to the definition given by Shepel (2013), who considers it to be “a two-suffix (or more) morpheme with a derivational function, i.e. it serves as a material and an expression of an unambiguous act of word-formation” (p. 21).

The notion of conversion also applied in this paper. For Quirk et al. (1985), conversion is “the derivational process whereby an item is adapted or converted to a new word class without the addition of an affix” (p. 1558). Bauer and Valera Hernández (2005) define conversion as “a derivational process linking lexemes of the same form but belonging to different word-classes” (p. 8). For example, the disjunction $R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1O$ (*commit_n* > *commitment_n* > *recommitment* \vee *commit_v* > *recommit_v* > *recommitment*) shows the conversion of word classes, i.e. the deriving stem *commit* in the first R-structure belongs to the noun and this word is converted into the verb in the second R-structure.

[2] Method

For this research, the sampling method used to collect words with the suffix *-ment* used the online Cambridge Dictionary, the online Collins English Dictionary, and the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. The structure of the collected words was analyzed by means of the applicative generative model (Soboleva, 1972). This model is explained in the previous section. With the help of this model and, five confixal word-formation rows were built, and they are observed in Section 3.2.

[3] The origin of the suffix *-ment*

This paper presents an analysis of word-formation rows with the suffix *-ment*. For this reason, some information related to the origin of this suffix will be given in this section.

According to Rugaiyah (2018), the suffix *-ment* is a derivational morpheme that can be added to some verbs to form nouns. Due to this suffix, the word may take on a new meaning. Plag (2003) states that there are four types of suffixes: a noun suffix, a verbal suffix, an adverbial suffix and an adjectival suffix. Plag considers the suffix *-ment* to be a noun suffix, i.e. a suffix that forms abstract nouns from verbs, adjectives and nouns. To the authoritative opinion of Plag (2003) and Rugaiyah (2018), I will add my point of view that the suffix *-ment* can create not only nouns (*payment*, *treatment*, *engagement*) but also attributive nouns (*presettlement*, *nonmanagement*, *nongovernment*, *posttreatment*), and that polysemantic words with the suffix *-ment* can also have a verbal meaning (*statement*, *com-*

pliment). Therefore, in this article, the derivational suffix *-ment* is considered as a suffix forming not only nouns but also attributive nouns and verbs.

Peppler (1916) investigated the origin of the suffix *-ment*. He states that it came from the suffixes $-\mu\alpha$, $-\mu\alpha\tau$ (Latin *-men-*, *-men-to-*, Eng. *-ment*), which were added to the verb stem to form the name of the action, namely the result of the action. A large number of such nouns were used in works by Herodotus and Hippocrates. Peppler (1916) expresses the idea that “words with the suffix *-ment* are of Ionic origin” (p. 459).

In this article, I will support the opinion of Partridge (2006), who has conducted a detailed study of the history of this suffix’s development and presented several interpretations, including the opinion that this suffix comes from the Latin suffix *-men* (*abdomen*, *acumen*, *tegmen*, *rumen*).

[4] Results and discussion

The structural analysis of five confixal word-formation rows starts with the investigation of R-words using the applicative generative model which was explained in the literature review section (1.1.). These rows will be considered in terms of their structure (whether they are homogeneous or heterogeneous), complexity and depth.

According to Shepel (2006), homogeneous rows have the same meaning of *i* at the *n* (penult) step. If the meaning of *i* at the penult derivational step does not coincide, then such structures are called heterogeneous. For example, the word-formation row with *en-* (Table 1) is heterogeneous because there are R-words R_1 and R_2 at the penult step, while the word-formation row with *non-* (Table 4) is homogeneous because there is only one R-word R_2 at the penult step.

Soboleva (1972) introduces the concept of the complexity of a row, measured by the number of R-words of the corresponding R-structure. For instance, the complexity of the word-formation row with *dis-* (Table 2) is five because five R-structures ($R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_1O$, $R_2R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_2R_1R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_1R_1O$) comprise this row.

The word-formation row with *en-* is presented in Table 1. There are two *en-* prefixes. One comes from the Latin suffix *in*, with the main meaning “in”, mainly forming verbs. It can also have the meaning “force to be” and may be represented as *in-*. The second prefix, *en-*, is of Greek origin with the meaning “in, within”. Before the letters *b* and *p*, the prefix *en-* is changed to *em-* (*embodiment*, *emplacement*).

The word-formation row with *en-* is motivated by verbs (*rage* > *enrage* > *enrage*, *title* > *entitle* > *entitlement*, *trench* > *entrenchment*), adjectives (*noble* > *ennoble* > *ennoblement*, *large* > *enlarge* > *enlargement*) and nouns (*rock* > *enrockment*, *table* > *entablement*). In the row, at the first derivational step, the prefix *en-* and the suffix *-ment* are added simultaneously (*rock* > *enrockment*, *table* > *entablement*). The disjunction $R_2R_1R_1O \vee R_2R_2O$ (*camp*_{*v*} > *encamp* > *encampment* \vee *camp*_{*n*} > *encampment*) shows that the words *encampment*, *encasement* can have both one and two derivational steps and are motivated by both a verb and a noun.

The disjunction $R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1O$ (*ravish* > *ravishment* > *enravishment* \vee *ravish* > *enravish* > *enravishment*) shows that the nouns *enravishment*, *enticement* are motivated by verbs (*ravish*, *tice*). At the first step, not only the verb but also the noun motivates words.

The disjunctions $R_2R_1R_2O \vee R_2R_1R_3O$ (*rich*_n > *enrich* > *enrichment* \vee *rich*_{adj} > *enrich* > *enrichment*) and $R_2R_1R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_3O$ (*feeble*_v > *enfeeble* > *enfeeblement* \vee *feeble*_{adj} > *enfeeble* > *enfeeblement*) show that the noun *enfeeblement* is motivated by the word *feeble* with the meaning of both the verb and the adjective. It is worth paying attention to the disjunction $R_2R_1R_1O \vee R_2R_2R_2O$ (*tangle*_v > *entangle*_v > *entanglement* \vee *tangle*_n > *entangle*_n > *entanglement*) because the noun *entanglement* can be motivated by nouns at all derivational steps.

In addition, in the confixal macro row with *en-* it is possible to identify a row R_2R_2O , $R_2R_2R_2O$ (*enrockment*, *entanglement*) with the derivatives and generating words belonging to the same part of speech – a noun – which is unusual for the English language. Due to the conversion of word classes and, as a result, to the disjunctions, the row is heterogeneous. The complexity is six (R_2R_2O , $R_2R_1R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_3O$, $R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_2O$, $R_2R_2R_2O$) and the depth is two derivational steps.

Table 1. Confixal word-formation row with *en-*

Ser. No.	Step No.	R-words	L=class=en
1	I	R_2R_2O	enrockment, entablement
2	II	$R_2R_1R_1O$ (R_2R_2O)	encampment, encasement
3	II	$R_2R_1R_3O$	ennoblement, enlargement
4	II	$R_2R_1R_1O$	engragement, entitlement, encompassment, encirclement, entrenchment, erasement, escapement
5	II	$R_2R_2R_1O$ ($R_2R_1R_1O$)	enravishment, enticement
6	II	$R_2R_1R_2O$ ($R_2R_1R_3O$)	enrichment
7	II	$R_2R_1R_1O$ ($R_2R_1R_3O$)	enfeeblement
8	II	$R_2R_1R_2O$	enrollment, enjoyment
9	II	$R_2R_1R_2O$ ($R_2R_1R_1O$)	enslavement, enslavement, enthronement, enframing, engraftment
10	II	$R_2R_1R_1O$ ($R_2R_2R_2O$)	entanglement

The word-formation confixal row with *dis-* is heterogeneous, the complexity equals five ($R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_1O$, $R_2R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_2R_1R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_1R_1O$), and the depth is three. The prefix *dis-* gives the word a negative meaning, and it is translated as “not”, e.g. *disagreement* – “a situation in which people do not have the same opinion”.

This prefix comes from the Old French prefix *des-*, which originated from the Latin prefix *dis-*, coming from the adverb *dis-*, with the meaning “separately”. The row is moti-

vated by verbs, but the generating words are both verbs and nouns at the first and second derivational steps which can be shown by the following disjunctions:

- 1) $R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1O$ (*agree_v > agreement_n > disagreement* \vee *agree_v > disagree_v > disagreement*)
- 2) $R_2R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_2R_1R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1R_1O$ (*tangle_v > tanglement_n > entanglement* $>$ *disentanglement* \vee *tangle_v > entangle_v > entanglement > disentanglement* \vee *tangle_v > entangle_v > disentangle > disentanglement*)

Table 2. Confixal word-formation row with *dis-*

Ser. No.	Step No.	R-words	L=class=dis
1	II	$R_2R_2R_1O$ ($R_2R_1R_1O$)	disagreement, disannulment, disarrangement, disarmament, disengagement
2	III	$R_2R_2R_2R_1O$ ($R_2R_2R_1R_1O$) ($R_2R_1R_1R_1O$)	disentanglement

The word-formation confixal row with *over-* (Table 3) is heterogeneous with a complexity of four ($R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_2R_2O$, $R_2R_1R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_1R_1O$) and a depth of three steps. According to Brenda (2014), the word *over* can function as a preposition, adverb, adverbial particle, prefix, adjective, noun and verb. The prefix *over* is spatial, temporal, and also metaphorical in meaning, and expresses not only “excess”.

The row is motivated by both verbs and nouns at the zero, first and second derivational steps. This can be represented by the following disjunctions:

- 1) $R_2R_2R_2O \vee R_2R_1R_1O$ (*pay_n > payment_n > overpayment* \vee *pay_v > overpay_v > overpayment*)
- 2) $R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1O$ (*treat_v > treatment_n > overtreatment* \vee *treat_v > overtreat_v > overtreatment*)
- 3) $R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1R_1O$ (*fill_v > fulfillment_n > overfulfillment* \vee *fill_v > fulfil_v > overfulfil > overfulfilment*)

Table 3. Confixal word-formation row with *over-*

Ser. No.	Step No.	R-words	L=class= over
1	II	$R_2R_2R_1O$	over-assessment
2	II	$R_2R_2R_2O$ ($R_2R_1R_1O$)	overpayment
3	II	$R_2R_2R_1O$ ($R_2R_1R_1O$)	overtreatment, overachievement, overcommitment, overexcitement, overinvestment
4	III	$R_2R_2R_1O$ ($R_2R_1R_1R_1O$)	overfulfillment, overrefinement

The word-formation confixal row with *non-* is described in Table 4. It is motivated by both verbs and nouns. Hamawand (2011) states that “the prefix *non-* has three meanings:

1) the inability to perform the action indicated by the word stem 2) not belonging to what the root of the word indicates 3) different from the quality described by the root of the word” (p. 79). Blake (2019) specifies the fact that in nouns, the prefix *non-* “denotes someone or something insignificant and that is not worth paying attention to” (p. 60).

In the above-mentioned word-formation row, there are not only nouns but also two attributive nouns – *nongovernment*, *nonmanagement*, the generating stem of which is the verb. The row is homogeneous despite the disjunction $R_2R_2R_1R_1O \vee R_2R_2R_1R_1O$ ($force_n > enforce > enforcement > nonenforcement \vee force_v > enforce > nonenforce > nonenforcement$). The complexity of the row is four and the depth is three.

Table 4. Confixal word-formation row with *non-*

Ser. No.	Step No.	R-words	L=class= non
1	II	$R_2R_2R_1O$	nonargument, nonattachment, noncommitment, nondevelopment, nonengagement, nontreatment
2	II	$R_2R_2R_1O$	nongovernment, nonmanagement
3	III	$R_2R_2R_1R_2O$ ($R_2R_2R_1R_1O$)	nonenforcement

The word-formation confixal row with *re-* is heterogeneous, the complexity equals five ($R_2R_1R_1O$, $R_2R_2R_2O$, $R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_2R_2R_1O$, $R_2R_1R_1R_1O$) and the depth is three derivational steps. This prefix expresses a repeating action. Additionally, according to Bauer (2015) and his colleagues, “the prefix *re-* is usually added to verbs with the meaning of a non-permanent (temporary) result” (p. 419).

At the zero derivational step, the part of speech of the motivating word is changed, i.e. it can be both a verb and a noun. This is shown by the disjunction $R_2R_2R_2O \vee R_2R_1R_1O$ ($pay_n > payment_n > repayment \vee pay_v > repay_v > repayment$). Changing the meaning of the motivating word is possible at the first derivational step, e.g.:

$R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1O$ ($commit_n > commitment_n > recommitment \vee commit_v > recommit_v > recommitment$).

There is a variation in the first and second steps that is shown by the disjunction $R_2R_2R_2R_1O \vee R_2R_1R_1R_1O$ ($portion_v > portionment_n > apportionment > reapportionment \vee portion_v > apportion_v > reapportion > reapportionment$).

Table 5. Confixal word-formation row with *re-*

Ser. No.	Step No.	R-words	L=class= re
1	II	$R_2R_1R_1O$	Replenishment
2	II	$R_2R_2R_2O$ ($R_2R_1R_1O$)	Repayment
3	II	$R_2R_2R_1O$ ($R_2R_1R_1O$)	recommitment, readjustment, reappointment, redevelopment, reequipment, reassignment, rearrangement, reattachment, resettlement
4	III	$R_2R_2R_2R_1O$ ($R_2R_1R_1R_1O$)	Reapportionment

[5] Conclusions

In the previous section, five confixal word-formation rows with the suffix *-ment* have been described and discussed. In terms of homogeneity and heterogeneity, four rows with *en-*, *dis-*, *re-* and *over-* are heterogeneous. This can be explained by the conversion of word classes of English words that is shown with the help of disjunctions. Only one word-formation row with *non-* is homogeneous. In general, these confixal rows are not deep; the maximum depth is three derivational steps in rows with *dis-*, *re-*, *non-*, *over-*. The most complex row is the row with *en-*, the complexity of which is six, but it is not deep – with only two derivational steps. This means that confixal rows with the suffix *-ment* may be complex but not deep. The complexity of the rows with *dis-* and *re-* is five. The complexity of the simplest rows with *non-*, *over-* equals four. The depth and the complexity of confixal rows do not coincide. The reason is that complexity means the number of words suitable for a certain R-structure, and the number of these words may vary depending on e.g. how many required words are found in a dictionary. The depth of a row is unchangeable, as it implies the number of derivation steps in every word and these steps cannot be altered. To my mind, the difference between the depth and the complexity of confixal rows can be explained by the changeable nature of complexity and the unchangeable character of depth. While analyzing the structure of confixal word-formation rows, I came to the conclusion that the suffix *-ment* is a derivational suffix, as it can be added not only to verbs, but also to nouns and attributive nouns. In this research, an attempt has been made to analyze the structure of confixal word-formation rows with *-ment*. Ultimately, this study does not investigate the phenomenon to the fullest extent, so further work will include a detailed analysis of semantic fields of English words with the suffix *-ment*.

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