

MORPHOLOGICAL AND SEMANTIC FUNCTIONS OF COMPOUND NOUNS IN THE PROCESS OF NAMING

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Annotation: This article explores the morphological and semantic mechanisms through which compound nouns contribute to the naming process, emphasizing their role in linguistic creativity and lexical innovation. The study examines how combinations of individual lexemes form new lexical items that reflect cognitive, cultural, and communicative needs. From a morphological perspective, compound nouns demonstrate productive patterns of word formation that enable speakers to generate new terminology without introducing entirely new roots. Semantically, they reveal diverse conceptual relationships between their components, such as attributive, subordinate, and appositional connections, which shape meaning and categorization. The analysis also highlights the cultural and technological significance of compounding as a tool for adapting language to modern realities. Overall, the research emphasizes that compound nouns are not only structural elements of language but also reflections of human thought, creativity, and social development.

Keywords: Compound nouns, morphology, semantics, naming process, word formation

Introduction

In modern linguistics, the study of compound nouns has gained increasing importance, as they represent one of the most productive means of word formation. Compound nouns enable speakers to create new lexical items that reflect social, cultural, and technological developments. Understanding their morphological and semantic characteristics provides insight into how language users conceptualize and categorize the world around them. As naming lies at the core of linguistic activity, it allows humans to classify and conceptualize their environment. Within this framework, compound nouns — formed by combining two or more lexemes—serve as a crucial linguistic mechanism in the creation of new names. They offer an efficient way to expand vocabulary without inventing entirely new roots. For example, English compounds such as *toothbrush*, *laptop*, and *raincoat* merge familiar elements to describe new or specific entities. Similarly, in Uzbek, compounds like *kitob do'koni* (bookshop) and *yo'l harakati* (traffic) perform comparable naming functions. This productive process illustrates how language continuously evolves to meet communicative and cognitive needs.

Naming, as a fundamental linguistic activity, allows humans to classify, conceptualize, and communicate about their environment. It reflects not only linguistic structure but also cognitive and cultural perspectives. In this context, **compound nouns** - words formed by combining two or more lexemes—serve as a crucial linguistic mechanism in the creation of new names. They offer an efficient way to expand vocabulary without inventing entirely new roots. For example, English compounds such as *toothbrush*, *laptop*, and *raincoat* merge familiar elements to describe

new or specific entities. Similarly, in Uzbek, compounds like *kitob do'koni* (bookshop) and *yo'l harakati* (traffic) perform comparable naming functions. This productive process illustrates how language continuously evolves to meet communicative and cognitive needs.

Theoretical Background

The theoretical study of compounding is based on the interaction of morphology and semantics. Morphologically, a compound noun is a lexical unit consisting of two or more bases (e.g., *blackboard*, *toothbrush*). Semantically, compounds reflect relationships such as purpose (e.g., *teapot* – a pot for tea), composition (*gold ring* – a ring made of gold), or possession (*dog owner* – one who owns a dog).

According to linguists such as Marchand (1969) and Bauer (2003), compounding is one of the oldest and most systematic ways of expanding vocabulary. In Uzbek linguistics, scholars like Sh. Rahmatullaev and N. Mahmudov have emphasized the importance of compound structures in reflecting cultural and cognitive aspects of language.

Morphological Functions of Compound Nouns

Morphologically, compound nouns function as unified lexical items that follow specific patterns of word formation. They can be formed through various structural models:

- **Noun + Noun** (e.g., *sunflower*)
- **Adjective + Noun** (e.g., *blackbird*)
- **Verb + Noun** (e.g., *pickpocket*)

These patterns determine grammatical behavior such as stress placement, inflection, and syntactic function. Compound nouns also reflect morphological integration — once formed, they function as single lexical units within the grammatical system of the language. While morphology explains how compounds are formed structurally, their semantic interpretation reveals how meaning emerges from these formations.

Semantically, compound nouns reveal various conceptual relationships between their components. These relationships demonstrate how compounding serves as a bridge between form and meaning, allowing language users to express nuanced ideas in a concise and economical way. The main types of semantic relations include:

- **Attributive (modifier – head):** *coffee cup* = a cup for coffee
- **Subordinate (verb – object):** *truck driver* = one who drives a truck
- **Appositional (co-referential):** *singer-songwriter* = a person who is both a singer and a songwriter

The semantic aspect of compound nouns involves analyzing how the meanings of individual components interact to produce a unified concept. Compounds can express different kinds of semantic relations, such as:

- **Compositional**, where the meaning is literal and transparent (e.g., *headache* — a pain in

the head)

- **Metaphorical**, where the meaning is figurative (e.g., *black market* — illegal trade)
- **Idiomatic**, where the overall meaning is non-transparent and cannot be directly inferred from the components (e.g., *red tape* — excessive bureaucracy)

The degree of semantic transparency often varies depending on cultural and contextual factors. In both English and Uzbek, compounding reflects how speakers conceptualize objects, actions, and social roles through the naming process. For instance, Uzbek compounds such as *ko'kyo'l* ('blue road', meaning 'sky') and *dilbar* ('heart-pleasing', meaning 'beloved') demonstrate how metaphorical associations contribute to the creation of expressive and culturally meaningful names.

In many languages, including English and Uzbek, compounding serves as an efficient means of creating terminology, expressing cultural specificity, and adapting to social change. Modern technological and scientific developments often rely on compound naming, such as *smartphone*, *webpage*, or *database*.

Conclusion. The study of compound nouns reveals their central role in the naming process as both linguistic and cognitive tools. Morphologically, compounds exhibit systematic and productive patterns of word formation. Semantically, they express a wide range of conceptual relationships, reflecting how humans organize and interpret experience. Moreover, culturally and scientifically, compound nouns serve as mirrors of social progress and linguistic adaptability. Therefore, compounding not only enriches vocabulary but also illustrates the dynamic and creative nature of language, continually evolving to meet new communicative and conceptual needs. Future research could further explore how compounding interacts with other word-formation processes and how technological change continues to influence naming conventions.

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