

CORRELATION TYPES OF COMPOUNDS

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The study of compound words within the framework of correlation with free word-groups offers a comprehensive understanding of the systemic and productive nature of English word-formation. This article focuses primarily on adjectival-nominal compounds as one of the most productive and semantically motivated categories. By analyzing their structural patterns and their semantic correspondence with syntactic constructions, the article demonstrates how such compound units are formed and function in modern English. The research highlights the role of lexical valency and semantic compatibility between components in the process of compound formation. The analysis is aimed at revealing the mechanisms behind the construction of compound adjectives and understanding their syntactic and semantic roots.

Keywords: Compound words, adjectival-nominal compounds, English word-formation, syntactic correlation, lexical valency, structural patterns

The formation of compound words is a vital aspect of English word-formation, reflecting both the synthetic capacity and semantic creativity of the language. Compounding, as a morphological process, involves the combination of two or more lexical units to create a single complex word, often with a meaning that cannot be fully predicted from the meanings of its parts. One productive approach to studying compounds is through their correlation with free word-groups, which helps uncover not only structural regularities but also deeper semantic associations. Such a method allows researchers to establish links between compound words and the syntactic constructions from which they may originate or with which they are semantically parallel.

Among the major classes of compounds distinguished by this approach are adjectival-nominal, verbal-nominal, nominal, and verb-adverb compounds. The present article concentrates on adjectival-nominal compounds as they represent a particularly diverse and semantically rich group. These compounds are traditionally divided into four subtypes, three of which are regarded as proper compounds, while one is classified as derivational in nature. All four subgroups demonstrate consistent productivity, though their formation is influenced by certain semantic and lexical

constraints, primarily associated with the head element of the construction and its combinatory potential.

The most prominent structural pattern within adjectival-nominal compounds involves the combination of a noun and an adjective. This n+a pattern gives rise to multiple compound adjectives that are semantically motivated and often resemble comparative or descriptive syntactic constructions. One of the well-known subtypes involves compounds where the second component is an adjective denoting a physical or qualitative property such as color, size, or shape. These compounds often reflect a relation of resemblance and may be semantically paralleled by phrases like "as white as snow" or "as deep as skin," resulting in compound forms such as snow-white, skin-deep, or age-long. Such formations rely on shared cultural imagery and evoke strong associative meanings.

Another variation of the noun-adjective pattern encompasses compounds in which the relationship between components is based on a range of adverbial semantics. These compounds typically echo phrases constructed with an adjective and a prepositional phrase, such as road-weary or care-free. In these cases, the noun specifies the domain or cause, while the adjective component qualifies the emotional or physical state. The phrase "weary from the road" is compressed into road-weary, showing not only morphological economy but also semantic condensation. These patterns are especially frequent in expressive and literary styles, where conciseness and vivid imagery are valued.

In addition to the n+a models, adjectival-nominal compounds also include constructions formed by combining a noun with a past participle. This n+V-en pattern is relatively monosemantic, as the resulting adjectives typically describe objects or persons subjected to a specific action. Examples include hand-made, sun-dried, and home-baked. These compounds frequently correlate with passive verb constructions such as "made by hand" or "baked at home." Their meaning is highly transparent and depends on the nature of the verb-participle component, which often refers to manual or natural processes. Because of this clarity, such compounds are widely used in advertising, cooking terminology, and descriptions of handicrafts.

Some adjectival-nominal compounds can also be formed with patterns involving an adjective as the first element and a noun as the second, for instance, high-speed, full-length, or blue-eyed. Though these patterns are somewhat less regular than the ones described above, they are nevertheless productive and easily interpreted within context. They are especially common in technical or descriptive registers, where precision is important. The semantic interpretation usually depends on attributive relations, where the adjective specifies the degree, extent, or quality of the noun's attribute.

Despite their variety, all subtypes of adjectival-nominal compounds are united by a shared tendency toward semantic motivation and morphological regularity. Their formation is closely tied to lexical valency—that is, the inherent combinatory potential of their components. Certain nouns are more likely to occur as the first element in compounds due to their semantic features, such as concrete, physical referents or strong cultural associations. Similarly, only certain adjectives and participles are likely to be used as heads of compounds because they provide the kind of qualitative information that suits attributive use.

This dynamic relationship between structure and meaning contributes to the vitality of compound formation in English. Compound adjectives are not only abundant in modern usage but also highly adaptable to new communicative needs, making them a key feature in the evolving lexical system of the language. Their study from the angle of syntactic correlation offers insight into how meaning is constructed beyond the level of the sentence, at the intersection of morphology and syntax. Understanding these mechanisms not only deepens linguistic analysis but also enhances practical knowledge for learners, translators, and language professionals.

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