

VARIOUS SEMANTIC ASPECTS OF ENGLISH *-SHIP* SUFFIXATION



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This paper concerns various semantic aspects of English *-ship* suffixation. Apart from having been tackled within the confines of grammaticality, i.e. in terms of pure formation as a noun-to-noun or denominal suffixation, the semantics of English *-ship* nouns can be divided into several semantic groups demonstrated in the proposed table. Such a division alongside the distinction between stage-level and individual-level predicates, which is a lexical property of the suffix *ship*, will facilitate the acquisition of English as a second language.

Key words: *-ship nouns, semantic groups, lexical properties, stage-level predicate, individual-level predicate*

NOUNS FORMED BY *-SHIP* SUFFIXATION

Personal common nouns formed by the addition of the suffix *-ship* do not change the word-class of the base. As a suffix, *ship* is generally tackled in English grammars within the confines of its formation, i.e. as a noun-to-noun or denominal suffixation semantically related to either status or condition. There is an appendix at the end of this paper with the list of *-ship* nouns that furtherly divides these nouns into several semantic groups to denote state, office, rank, skill and quality. Such an arrangement will facilitate the acquisition of ESL as a system of vocabulary learning where words, i.e. *-ship* nouns in this instance, do not come merely as isolated words but are presented "in semantic action" in this paper along with linguistic patterns in which they occur. In this respect, the distinction between stage-level and individual level-predicates (Carlson and Pelletier, 1995:21) as a lexical property of the suffix *-ship*, which will be discussed in this paper, is particularly useful. This property is a prerequisite to a better understanding of the semantics of *-ship* suffixation.

The table shows, in three columns, nouns formed by the addition of the suffix *-ship* grouped by the semantics of the base that selects the specific meanings of *-ship* nouns. It is a suffix that can also determine semantic values of the same base. *Sainthood*, for example, refers to the character, position or qualities of a saint, whereas *sainthood* refers to the status or rank of a saint. Unlike *sainthood*, *sainthood* also denotes saints considered as a group.

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Professorship denotes the office of a professor but *professordom* refers to a collective entity.

All considered, there is more to such a formal organization than meets the eye in terms of research-based dictionary work, i.e. it is not always easy to determine where these semantic groups melt or divide save for polysemy such as in *premiership*, *scholarship*, *fellowship*, *readership*, *lectureship*, etc. We are also to discern the difference between quality as condition in relation to others, hence *queenship* as the quality of a superior rank as well as the state of being a queen, *clansmanship* as the clannish quality or *boyfriendship* referring to the state and the quality of being a boyfriend (listed both under A and C to exemplify their semantic values).

A number of the lexemes to follow differ in significant ways whereby their semantic values can not be understood without taking into account a particular social setting in which they are used or physical context to which they refer to. What's more, there has been a call for clarity in the proposed table since position could be used as an "umbrella" term for a rank, profession, level, status and office. We have, therefore, opted for state as a condition or a way of being at a particular time, whereas condition is used as the particular state that someone is in under A. Hence, the proposed table will serve the purpose of being instrumental in getting to grips with the semantic classification of the said nouns.

For example, the offices of Christian officials are listed under B (*canonship*, *cardinalship*, *chaplainship*, *precentorship*, *primateship*, *priorship*, *proctorship*, *vicarship*, *wardenship*) for they refer to the position or office, whereas *apostleship* or *discipleship*, pertaining to the teachings of the Disciples, is rather a state of being or quality than an official position in a structured and highly formalized contemporary society and therefore listed under A and C. In actual fact, all the anointed kings and priests were messiahs in Jewish tradition appertaining thus to an official position under B. *Apostleship* and *discipleship* under C are used figuratively, e.g. *apostle(ship) of democracy/liberty/peace* and *disciple(ship) of Freud's self-analysis*. *Messiahship* under A is always capitalized to refer to the state of a unique Messiah while *messiahship* under C denotes character (quality), i.e. any savior or liberator of a people or a country – that is to say a messiah-like figure.

Certain "ship" activities are listed both under A (*apprenticeship*, *traineeship*, *cadetship*, *internship*) as they can denote not only the state of a person in training, with the implication of professional "neutrality" since trainees obtain practical experience of the work involved under supervision as parts of *apprenticeship*, *traineeship* or *internship* programs in order to fully qualify but also under B for their status is indicative of the ranks in the areas in question. In dictionaries *apprenticeship* is sometimes entered as dated, which is partly true. Indeed, it would have been used to denote on-the-job experience of all of the many trades and crafts of old, but the term has retained the same semantic value and is synonymous with *traineeship* and *internship* – save for non-linguistic, i.e. technical subtleties – as temporary positions covering a sizeable range of subjects from monasticism (trainee monk), medicine and law to engineering. *Mastership* is, however, listed under A, B and C for it denotes the state of being a master, the position, office and duties of a master as well as an expert skill and knowledge.



NEOLOGISMS

As lexis is an open system, it is a breeding ground for neologisms, *-ship* nouns included. Some of these nouns are formed through the processes of blending such as *comradership* (good will between friends), *misleadership* (art of misleading people), *sexationship* (a temporary relationship, longer than a one-night stand, that is based solely on physical attraction and sex), blending and clipping combined such as *e-upmanship* (the act of showing up another person by claiming to receive more e-mail messages per day than he/she does), by analogy such as *chumpionship* (a type of championship, just among less good teams) and affixation such as *onedownmanship* (sometimes hyphenated and written as *one-downmanship*) that denotes the practice of outdoing another in a more negative way – that is boasting of the hard luck or misfortunes with the speaker at the receiving end. *One-downmanship* and *one-upmanship* are antonymous.



KLANSMANSHIP AND CLANSMANSHIP

A particularly interesting example is the semantics of *clansmanship* and *Klansmanship*. It should be viewed in terms of their conceptual (linguistic) and associative meanings alike. “The divisive“ capitalized k in the latter points to the literal meaning of the word that is historically loaded with connotations such as racism, hate, intolerance, intimidation, etc. The term has been coined by combining the Greek word *kuklos*, meaning circle – as an alliterative version, i.e. by repeating the same consonant (k) at the beginning of each word, hence KKK and *Klansmanship* – and the English word *clan* which is, on the other hand, primarily associated with family-related values, bonds, loyalty and a sense of identity.

As a relation to group, *clansmanship* has only recently extended its semantic value to denote an in-grouper involved in tribal warfare among London’s East End skinheads.

TIME PROPERTIES OF -SHIP SUFFIXATION

The suffix’s sensitivity to the distinction between stage-level and individual-level predicates, as its lexical property, is not merely semantic but also plays an important role in the grammar of a language. Some sentences containing a clause introduced by *if* or *when* are well formed only when both clauses meet a “stage-level“ requirement (Aronoff and Cho, 2001:167). In current linguistic semantics, a predicate is an expression that can be true of something. In this respect, a stage-level predicate is true of transient stages or properties whilst an individual-level predicate is true of perpetual properties without regard to time. Namely, Aronoff and Cho’s well-argued squib, addressing the condition for *-ship* suffixation, explains that such a derivation depends on the type of predicate of the base, showing that *ship* can only occur with stage-level predicates since this derivation can never denote enduring properties, e.g. *ship* does not attach to woman to form womanship or child to form childship. In a sentence, “*they are our sponsors*“, in other words, “*those who are our sponsors at a particular point of time*“ “*sponsors*“ involves a stage-level property that occurs at a specific

time and *sponsorship* is thus well formed as opposed to, for instance, “*my father*“, i.e. “*he who is my father regardless which particular point of time we consider*“. In this instance “*is my father*“ should be taken as an individual-level predicate since it expresses enduring properties of individuals. Hence fatherhood in lieu of *fathership*. Accordingly, personal common nouns expressing lasting properties can be formed by adding another suffix, e.g. *childhood, fatherhood, parenthood*.

There is a separate, often capitalized, group of *-ship* nouns: the eternal *Kingship* of God, the *Queenship* of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Queen of Heaven (as a consequence of the Council of Ephesus), the *Messiahship* of Jesus, contrary to the pre-existing Jewish context where Jesus is perceived as mortal, and the doctrine of the eternal *Sonship* of God (according to Trinitarians). The usage of these nouns in Christian Science should be addressed in terms of Zeno Vendler’s aspectual classes (Vendler, 1957), i.e. as stative predicates where states are presented as static with no endpoint (e.g. “*Jesus is the Son*“), i.e. unbounded in time and therefore beyond the temporal extent of a specified state. *Kingship, Queenship, Messiahship* and *Sonship* are therefore irrespective of time in linguistic semantics as to the aforementioned context.

A	B	C
condition state	office rank	skill quality
academicsmanship	abbotship	airmanship
acquaintanceship	academicsmanship	apostleship
apostleship	accountantship	authorship
apprenticeship	administratorship	brink(s)manship
bachelorship	admiralship	captainship
boyfriendship	apprenticeship	ensorship
conservatorship	assistantship	championship
courtesanship	authorship	citizenship
directorship	butlership	clansmanship
discipleship	cadetship	coachmanship
cadetship	canonship	co-leadership
captainship	captainship	cousinship
championship	cardinalship	craftsmanship
chumpionship	ensorship	discipleship
churchmanship	chairmanship	entrepreneurship
citizenship	chancellorship	firemanship
clansmanship	chaplainship	frontiersmanship
clerkship	chieftainship	gamesmanship
colleagueship	clerkship	godship
companionship	collectorship	goddess-ship
comradeship	colonelship	grantsmanship
comradership	comptrollership	horsemanship



co-partnership courtship cousinship creatorship dictatorship eldership fathership fellowship friendship governorship hardship internship interrelationship kinship klansmanship laureateship leadership ladyship lordship kingship mastership mateship mentorship Messiahship partnership precentorship premiership proprietorship queenship relationship receivership rulership scholarship sexationship sonship sponsorship studentship survivorship township tribesmanship	constablenesship controllership counsellorship curatorship custodianship dealership dictatorship directorship distributorship draughtsmanship eldership entrepreneurship fellowship governorship guardianship headmastership headmistress-ship headship hostess-ship internship judgeship kingship laureateship lecturership major-generalship managership mastership messiahship premiership presidentship primateship priorship proctorship professorship protectorship questorship rangership readership regentship rulership	hostess-ship e-upmanship leadership listenership marksmanship mastership messiahship misleadership musicianship nonpartisanship one-downmanship one-upmanship partisanship penmanship queenship quippmanship readership saintship salesmanship seamanship scholarship self-censorship showmanship sportsmanship statesmanship stewardship trenchermanship swordsmanship viewership
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twinship	sainthood secretaryship senatorship sergeantship stadholdership stewardship sultanship surveyorship treasureship tribuneship trusteeship	
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RAZNI SEMANTIČKI ASPEKTI ENGLESKOGA DOMETKA *SHIP*

Ovaj članak analizira različite semantičke aspekte imenica koje se tvore dometkom *-ship*, a koje se uglavnom obrađuju u okviru same gramatičke tvorbe, tj. kao denominalna sufiksalna tvorba. Ove se imenice mogu podijeliti u nekoliko semantičkih grupa koje su prikazane u predloženoj tabeli. Takva će podjela, zajedno s prepoznavanjem razlika između iterativnoga i durativnoga aspekta imenskoga predikata kao leksičkoga svojstva dometka *-ship*, olakšati usvajanje engleskoga kao drugoga jezika.

Ključne riječi: imenice s dometkom *-ship*, semantičke grupe, leksička svojstva, iterativni imenski predikat, durativni imenski predikat