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COMPOUND NOUNS AND THEIR USE IN THE MEDIA

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Abstract: This research paper analyses the use of compound words, in particular, compound nouns, also known as compound nominals, in a news article from the official BBC website entitled "Luna Luna: Artist funfair revealed in New York City". The analysis is based on a theoretical framework of compounds, focusing on their semantic structure, meaning, spelling and usage in the context of a BBC article, with the objective of gaining a better understanding of the types of compounds and their practical application. Limiting the scope of the data, the focus lies on compound nouns as different combinations of elements which lead to the formation of a compound word. The research conducted in this paper demonstrates the predominance of compound nouns in the English language, specifically, the high frequency of endocentric compound nouns and how the use of compound nouns contributes to an efficient, convenient and creative use of language._

Introduction

Based on a combination of grammatical, lexical and phonological systems, language, as a tool of communication, is created in order to express meaning (Nunan, 2013). In order to accommodate speakers' needs and societal developments, language undergoes changes over time, with new words being added and obsolete ones being excluded from usage gradually. Morphology, as defined by Akmajian et al. (2010), is a linguistic discipline which focuses on words, their formation and structure, and investigates the various processes through which new words are invented in a language. Abbreviation, acronyms, affixation, back-formation, borrowing, blending, clipping and compounding are some of the word formation processes common in the English language. All of these processes allow language users to develop lexical items in order to keep up to date with societal and technological developments. One of the most creative word formation processes in English is compounding. Through the combination of words, a compound becomes an effective way of conveying a specific idea. For example, the compound 'super-spreader', with the definition of "an individual who is highly contagious and capable of transmitting a communicable disease to an unusually large number of uninfected individuals" or "an event or

location at which a significant number of people contract the same communicable disease" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), conveys a particular meaning, which was especially practical in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional compounds such as 'brainstorm', 'healthcare' and 'skyscraper' are well-established words in dictionaries. Compound words such as these are convenient, as they concisely convey a complete idea. Furthermore, the group of compound words is an open word class which allows for the creation of new words. Combinations of words which are considered to be noun phrases and collocations can, over time, gain the status of a compound word, provided the frequency of their use increases. The nature of compounds also allows for creativity and invention.

The media, as a central provider of information on the latest events across the world, has the responsibility of composing comprehensive but succinct news reports. The writing style employed has to reflect the requirements of a well-structured and comprehensible piece of news. Therefore, compounds are an effective way of communicating meaning, especially in writing, where their usage contributes to greater engagement and creativity.

Based on these considerations, this research paper focuses on two main questions:

1. 1. What type of compound nouns are to be found in the official BBC article entitled "Luna Luna: Artist funfair revealed in New York City"?
2. How are these compound nouns used and what effect do they have in the context of the article?

Literature review

The process of creating compound words or compounds is known as compounding. "Compounding is usually defined, perhaps rather loosely, as the creation of words made up of two independent words" (Bauer, 2009, p.343). For example, in combining the individual words 'week' and 'end' through the process of compounding, a new compound word 'weekend' is created, with a new meaning: "the end of the week" or "the period between the close of one work or school week and the start of the next" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). However, the meaning of some compound words is not necessarily immediately apparent, such as the compound 'bluebird'. In this case, a 'bluebird' is not simply a bird which is blue, but a specific species of bird.

As illustrated by the examples of 'weekend' and 'bluebird', a compound word consists of two elements. A compound is defined as "the formation of a new lexeme by adjoining two or more lexemes" (Bauer, 2003, as cited in Lieber and Štekauer, 2009, p.4) or "when two or more words are combined into a morphological unit, we speak of a compound" (Marchand, 1960, as cited in in Lieber and Štekauer, 2009, p.5). Additionally, "a compound word contains at least two bases which are both words, or at any rate, root morphemes" (Katamba, 1993, p.54). However, the relation between the bases forming a compound is not always well-defined, as in the previous

examples of 'weekend' and 'bluebird'. Criticizing the incompleteness of the research conducted by Li (1971), Lee (1960) and Levi (1973, 1974, 1975), Downing (1997) concludes that "the semantic relationship that holds between the members of these compound cannot be characterized in terms of a finite list of 'appropriate compounding relationship" (p. 810). Downing bases her study on an experimental task in which participants were asked to interpret existing and create new nominal compounds. An example provided from her experimental task to illustrate the various relationships which a compound noun can exemplifying is the possible interpretations which participants provided for the compound 'bullet hole'. Some of those interpretations are the following: "a hole made by a hole made by a bullet; a hole made by a bullet shot from a gun; a hole shaped like a bullet; a pointed hole; a fast-moving hole" (p. 820), among other possibilities.

The various potential explanations pertaining to the meaning of one compound word, in this case of 'bullet hole', serve to illustrate the wide range of possible interpretations of a single compound. Most frequently, it is the most used and established meaning which a compound word adopts as its definition. In this instance, a 'bullet hole' is "hole made by a bullet" (Collins Dictionary, n.d.).

Benczes (2006) observes that while there are some compounds with a well-established meaning, dictionary entries and frequent use, there are also certain compounds which may be unfamiliar to most English speakers, although they exist. In addition, there are other compounds which have been created spontaneously, for a specific use on a particular occasion. They are called nonce words, in this case compounds, and they usually do not enter the English dictionary.

In order to be better equipped for the analysis of compound words, their classification is necessary.

The classification of compound words is a controversial issue as outlined by Bauer (1983). The approaches of classification taken according to the compounds' syntactic or semantic function seem to be incomplete. Bauer's approach is in terms of their semantic function, classifying them according to their part of speech.

According to Bauer (1983), the typology of compound nouns is as follows:
- noun + noun
ex. adventure playground, bullet train
- verb + noun
ex. cut-throat, pickpocket
- noun + verb
ex. nosebleed, sunshine
- adjective + noun
ex. fast-food, software
- particle + noun
ex. overkill, afterheat

- adverb + noun

ex. now generation

- verb + particle

ex. cop-out, drawback

Additionally, phrase compounds belong to compound nouns.

ex. lady-in-waiting, son-in-law (pp. 202-206)

Bauer (1983) highlights the possibility of uncertainty in defining the part of speech a word might belong to, providing the following example: "In a compound like rattlesnake, for example, rattle might be a verb (the snake rattles) or a noun (the snake has a rattle)" (p. 202).

Katamba (1993) describes compound words as most commonly formed by base roots, as is the case with 'weekend', and as sometimes involving a base which has an affixed form, as is the case with "hairdresser":

"[hair]$_N$ [[dress]v -er]$_N$ - [hairdresser]$_N$" (p. 54)

The rule which Katamba deduces states that a compound noun is formed through the combination of a noun, verb, adjective or a preposition and a noun. Some examples provided by Katamba are: bookcase (noun + noun), hothouse (adjective + noun), undergraduate (preposition + noun).

In terms of the formation of compound nouns, Katamba provides the following structure:

$$N \Rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{c} N \\ V \\ A \\ Prep \end{array} \right] N$$
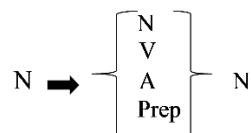
"The Phrase Structure Rule" (p. 305)

The various combination possibilities for the formation of compound nouns suggest their large quantity in the English language. Bauer (1983) notes that compound nouns are predominant in the English language, going so far as to state that this claim is true for compounds consisting of more than two elements, which are most likely nonce formations. Carstairs-McCarthy (2002) confirms the prevalence of compound nouns in the English language, as opposed to the other types of compounds.

In addition to their internal structure, the notion of 'headedness' is also crucial to the understanding of compounds. Using the same basis for determining the head of syntax phrases, according to which the head of a noun phrase is a noun and the head of an adjective phrase is an adjective, Katamba (1993) suggests the same analysis for compound words. A compound would belong to the same part of speech as its head.

One of the constituents of a compound is considered as the main element called the head. The criteria which Katamba names for the classification of compounds are

the following:

(i) whether they have a head
(ii) if they have a head,
a. the word-class of the head
b. whether the head appears at the left or at the right of the compound   (p. 304)

An additional observation in the headedness of compound words is the Righthand Head Rule or RHR, which states that the element of the compound word which is the head is usually placed at the rightmost position in a word. Therefore, "the right-hand constituent is the one whose syntactic category like (noun, verb, adjective) percolates to the entire compound word" (Katamba, p. 311). Essentially, the word class of the compound's head determines the word class of the compound as a complete word.

However, it is important to note that the RHR is not applicable to all compound words in English, as example words like mother-in-law and passer-by have a head in the left position. However, this, Katamba notes, is only a small group of compounds which contain "a left-hand head".

Based on the elements comprising a compound noun and their headedness, a further classification of compound words is available.

Katamba (1993) provides a classification of endocentric, exocentric and copulative compound words.

Endocentric compound words contain a head positioned at the right side of the word. The majority of English compounds fall into this category, with the head element adhering to the right-hand head rule.
ex. water bottle – "a small bottle containing water for drinking" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

In contrast to endocentric compounds, exocentric compounds are considered to be headless or, alternatively, to have their 'center' as outside of the word itself. They are often referred to "by their Sanskrit name of bahuvrihi" (Katamba, 1993, p. 319). Words such as 'greenhouse' and 'lazy-bones' are compounds formed by joining an adjective and a noun. As Katamba explains, the elements of these compound noun do not have a head-modifier. A 'greenhouse' is not a house which is green, nor is 'lazy-bones' a type of bones, but rather a lazy person. The same applies to a compound such as 'butterfingers' which is created by joining two nouns 'butter' and 'fingers'. However, the compound itself is neither a type of fingers, nor a type of butter, but a clumsy person.

According to Bauer (2009), the exocentric type of compounds "are not hyponyms of either element of the compound" (p. 351).
ex. pickpocket – "a thief who picks pockets" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.)

The meaning of exocentric compound words, as with idioms, is not readily available. One cannot glean the meaning of a compound by analyzing the sum of its elements. That is the reason why, as Katamba (1993) suggests, there are less exocentric than endocentric compounds. However, Benczes (2006) argues that the viewpoint that "exocentric or left-headed compounds are regarded as exception cases in the sense that there are not too many of them" is mistaken. The suggestion provided is that many newly created compounds "were left-headed, as in the case of compound premodifiers whose second element was *-only*, as in *dry-clean-only* [labels] or *singles-only* [karaoke]" (p. 9).

Copulative compounds derive their name from the couple of words they contain. They are also known as "dvandva" compounds. The two elements are considered to be of equal status, so that there is no head. For example: boyfriend, north-west, Harper-Collins. In these cases, both elements carry equal meaning.

Sanchez-Stockhammer (2018) provides an overview of additional types of compound words: phrase compound and genitive compounds. A phrase compound is a compound type which is formed with a phrase, as the compound 'easy-to-read'. Genitive compounds include an element in the genitive, such as 'bull's-eye' and 'mama's boy'.

Neo-classical compounds are formed by using word elements which have origins in classical languages such as Latin and Greek. The term 'neo-classical' used to name this type of compounds is itself a compound word, specifically a hyphenated adjective. 'Neo' is a Greek prefix meaning "new, recent". Other productive affixes in neo-classical compounds are the prefixes megalo- ("large: of giant size"), mega- ("vast"), micro- ("small, minute") and suffixes –phobia ("exaggerated fear of"), -logy ("doctrine, theory, science") (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Neo-classical compounds originate in English through the process of compounding. As Bauer (1983) explains, "the ancient Greeks never needed the word telephone although it is made up of Greek elements" (p. 216). In order to create a word suitable for use in English, the two elements of telephone were combined by English speakers. An additional example is the word 'television', which is a combination of the Greek 'tele' meaning "distant" and the Latin 'vision' meaning "sight" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Therefore, the term used for these compound nouns is not classical compounds, but neo-classical compounds, as they are formed in a third language from elements of a classical language.

Although the process of forming neo-classical compounds is not straightforward, as some word such as 'psycholinguistics' are difficult to ascribe to neo-classical compounds or derivatives, it is nevertheless a productive word-formation process in English.

Methodology
Research materials
The material used for this study is an article from the official BBC website entitled "Luna Luna: Artist funfair revealed in New York City", written by Ottilie Mitchell and published on December 23, 2024. The article was chosen as suitable for the analysis of compound nouns owing to the fact that it reports on the discovery of the world's first art funfair, with attractions and rides created by some of the world's greatest artists. The nature of the subject matter lends the article a descriptive tone and allows for the use of a variety of compound words, especially compound nominals. Furthermore, the official article from the BBC, the UK's public service broadcaster, reflects the contemporary use of the English language for a well-organized and efficient delivery of news to the general public.

Procedure
The analysis in this paper is descriptive qualitative research focusing on the types of compound nouns which are used within the context of the article. With a view of understanding how compound nominals are used in an official article by the BBC, the text is used as a representative article.
In analyzing the data collected for this paper, the scope for compound analysis was restricted, focusing only on compound nouns as one category of compound words. Firstly, the compound nominals were identified and selected from the news article
Then followed their organization in a separate table, analysis and classification according to the theory on compound words and compound nouns. The selected words were further discussed in terms of their internal structure with an examination of specific cases.

COMPOUND WORD	TYPE OF COMPOUND WORD	CONSTITUENTS (PARTS OF SPEECH)	RELATIONS
funfair	compound noun	noun + noun (adjective + noun)	endocentric compound
Ferris wheel	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
rap star	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
fun dome	compound noun	noun + noun (adjective + noun)	endocentric compound
artwork	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
handlebar	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
floorboards	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
biography	compound noun	prefix + suffix	neo-classical compound
carnival technician	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
art lovers	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
exhibition-goers	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
popcorn	compound noun	verb + noun	endocentric compound
soundtrack	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
swing ride	compound noun	noun + noun (verb + noun)	endocentric compound
microphones	compound noun	prefix + suffix	neo-classical compound
performance artists	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound
weekend	compound noun	noun + noun	endocentric compound

Results and discussion

Table 1. Analysis of compound nouns from the article in order of use
Based on the analysis presented in Table 1, there is a total of seventeen compound nouns used throughout the article. The dominant type is a compound noun, which confirms the claim by Carstairs-McCarthy (2002) that they are the most common type of compounds in English. The compound nouns in the article are a combination of two nouns, with five exceptions: 'funfair', 'fun dome', 'swing ride', 'biography' and 'microphone'. These cases display an ambiguity in their internal structure, with the first two examples, 'funfair' and 'fun dome', containing 'fun' as a possible noun or adjective. 'Swing ride' demonstrates the same ambivalence, however in this case, the first element has the possibility of being a verb or a noun. Belonging to the category of neo-classical compounds, 'biography', and 'microphone', consist of a prefix and a suffix. Additionally, the article uses the compound word 'biographer', which is not listed in the table above, as it is derivation from 'biography'.

In regards to the relations between the compound elements, out of seventeen compound nouns, there are fifteen endocentric, which proves the suggestion by Katamba (1993) that they are the most frequent type of compound words. The remaining two compound nouns belong to the category of neo-classical compounds. In terms of headedness, the article uses compound nouns which have a right head with no cases of left headedness. One instance, of left-headedness, in an adjective compound however, is present in the word 'display-only', which proves the claim made by Benzes (2006).

Reporting on the discovery of a long-lost amusement park, the article makes use of compound nouns in order to provide accurate and creative descriptions of the objects found there. Being uncommon creations, the various devices in amusement parks are termed with compound nouns such as 'fun dome' and 'Ferris wheel' among others. Although without a specific definition because of its infrequent use, the combination of 'fun' and 'dome' suggests a compound word. 'Fun dome', within the context of the article, is comprehensible as it describes a part of the funfair and can be synonymously exchanged with another compound - 'fun house'. 'Ferris wheel', in particular, is named after its inventor George Washington Gale Ferris. According to Bauer (1983), it belongs to the group of endocentric compound nouns which have a proper noun as an element. Throughout the article, 'Ferris wheel' is used a total of three time, in one instance being modified by a genitive: 'Basquiat's Ferris wheel'. This demonstrates its existence as a compound word which can be further modified.

Additionally, commonplace compound nouns are used, namely 'soundtrack', 'microphone', 'popcorn' and 'weekend'. The compound nouns themselves are further modified in some cases, one particular instance is the nonce compound adjective 'toffee-apple-red', which is used to describe the compound 'handlebar'.

The adjective compound is, in turn, composed of the compound noun 'toffee-apple', which confirms the statement by Bauer (1983) that longer compounds usually consist of elements which can be further analyzed into additional compound words.

Conclusion

The analysis conducted demonstrates the variety of compounds words which can be found in writing for a more refined and nuanced language expression. The compound nouns used throughout the BBC article "Luna Luna: Artist funfair revealed in New York City" reflect not only the use of everyday compounds, but also of inventive compositions such as nonce words.

Compounding, as one of the word formation processes in morphology, provides a deeper understanding of how language works and the means by which new words are created to meet the demands of the time. The patterns of parts of speech, the notion of headedness and orthography of compound words are relevant to an appropriate and inventive use of language. Knowledge of compounds allows language users not only to recognize and use compounding patterns and semantic relationships, but also to improve their own language expression.

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