

Word Forming Features of English Terms in the field of Copyright

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Annotation: *This article analyzes the word formation features of English terms in the field of copyright. It explores the morphological and semantic structure of copyright-related terminology, focusing on various word-formation methods such as, affixation, compounding, abbreviation, conversion. These mechanisms play a vital role in shaping precise legal language that is both functional and adaptable. The article includes numerous examples from legal texts, international agreements, and copyright law documents to support its analysis. It also highlights challenges faced in translating such terms accurately into other languages due to their specialized and context-dependent meanings. Moreover, the research discusses the importance of copyright terms in facilitating international legal communication and standardization. Understanding how these terms are formed contributes to better comprehension and more effective use of legal English in multilingual contexts. This study will be particularly valuable for linguists, legal translators, educators, and legal professionals working with English legal discourse and terminology.*

Keywords: *Copyright terms, word-formation, affixation, compounding, abbreviation, conversion.*

Словообразовательные особенности английских терминов в области авторского права

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Аннотация: *В данной статье рассматриваются особенности словообразования английских терминов в области авторского права. Анализ охватывает морфологическую и семантическую структуру терминов, раскрывая ключевые механизмы формирования новых слов, такие как аффиксация, словосложение, аббревиация и конверсия. Эти способы способствуют созданию точной и функциональной юридической лексики, отвечающей требованиям современного права. В статье приведены конкретные примеры из нормативных актов, международных договоров и юридической практики, иллюстрирующие функционирование этих процессов. Также рассматриваются трудности перевода данных терминов на другие языки и важность контекстуального понимания. Подчеркивается*

значение таких терминов в международной правовой коммуникации и необходимость их правильного использования для обеспечения юридической точности. Статья будет полезна лингвистам, переводчикам, юристам, а также преподавателям английского языка, занимающимся юридической и профессиональной лексикой. Работа также подчеркивает важность междисциплинарного подхода к изучению языка права.

Ключевые слова: Термины авторского права, словообразование, аффиксация, сложение, аббревиатура, конверсия.

Mualliflik huquqi sohasidagi inglizcha atamalarning so‘z yasash xususiyatlari

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Ingliz tili nazariy aspektlari №3 kafedrasida

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada mualliflik huquqi sohasi atamalarining ingliz tilida so‘z yasash xususiyatlari tahlil qilingan. Tadqiqotda mualliflik huquqi terminologiyasi morfologik va semantik jihatdan o‘rganilgan bo‘lib, yangi so‘zlarning shakllanish usullari – qo‘shimchalar qo‘shish (affiksatsiya), birikmalar yaratish (kompaundlash), qisqartmalar (abbreviatsiya) va konversiya orqali so‘z yasash jarayonlari ochib berilgan. Ingliz tilidagi yuridik matnlardan va qonunchilik hujjatlaridan olingan aniq misollar yordamida tahlil kuchaytirilgan. Maqolada, shuningdek, ushbu terminlarning boshqa tillarga tarjimasida yuzaga keladigan lingvistik qiyinchiliklar ham muhokama qilinadi. Terminlar nafaqat til, balki huquqiy tushunchalarni aniq ifodalash vositasi sifatida ko‘riladi. Xalqaro huquqiy kontekstda ularning o‘rni, global standartlashtirishdagi ahamiyati yoritilgan. Ushbu maqola tilshunolar, tarjimonlar, huquqshunoslar va ingliz tili o‘qituvchilari uchun nazariy va amaliy jihatdan foydali bo‘lishi mumkin.

Kalit so‘zlar: Mualliflik huquqi atamaları, so‘z yasash, affiksatsiya, so‘z birikmasi, qisqartma, konversiya.

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving field of intellectual property, particularly copyright, language plays a crucial role in shaping legal understanding and communication. The globalization of legal discourse has brought English to the forefront as a dominant language in international copyright law. As a result, the development and analysis of English copyright terminology have become increasingly important for legal practitioners, translators, and scholars alike. This research focuses on the word formation processes that contribute to the creation and evolution of English terms in the domain of copyright. Understanding how these terms are constructed not only provides insights into their meaning and usage but also facilitates more accurate translation and interpretation across languages and legal systems. The study aims to identify and classify the morphological and lexical strategies such as affixation, compounding, blending, abbreviation, and conversion that underlie the formation of copyright-related terminology. This study aims to identify and classify the morphological and lexical strategies such as affixation, compounding, blending, abbreviation, and conversion that underlie the formation of copyright-related terminology. Scholars such as Alcaraz and Hughes (2002) emphasize the growing need for understanding legal language formation, especially in globalized legal settings.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method to analyze the word formation processes used in English copyright terminology. The research is based on a corpus of selected terms collected from authoritative legal sources, including international copyright treaties (such as the Berne Convention and WIPO documents), academic legal literature, glossaries of legal terms, and online legal databases. In addition, academic databases such as JSTOR and Westlaw were used to ensure the inclusion of peer-reviewed definitions and usages of key copyright terms. This approach aligns with the methodology proposed by Šarčević (2000) for legal terminology research.

Results

This section presents the detailed findings from the linguistic analysis of English terms in the field of copyright. The study focused on identifying the most common word-formation processes used in creating legal and technical terminology associated with copyright law. Through examination of authentic sources such as international copyright treaties, legal documents, academic literature, and institutional websites (e.g., WIPO, DMCA, Berne Convention texts), the following results were obtained. The findings are presented below with examples for clarity:

1. **Affixation (Prefixation & Suffixation)** was the most frequent process, particularly the use of suffixes such as *-ion*, *-ment*, *-er*, and *-able*, which help derive abstract nouns and agentive forms from verbs. Suffixation was particularly productive in forming nouns and adjectives, especially in the transformation of verbs into nouns to describe legal processes or actors. Affixation is often used to turn verbs into legal nouns (e.g., "assign" to "assignment") or to denote status (e.g., "liable" to "liability"). This process aids in formalizing abstract legal responsibilities.

Table 1

| Types | Example Term | Root Word | Affix Used | Meaning |
|-------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|--|
| Suffixation | Infringement | Infringe | -ment | The act of violating rights |
| Suffixation | Reproduction | Reproduce | -ion | The process of copying work |
| Prefixation | Unauthorized | Authorized | -un | Not permitted by law |
| Suffixation | Distribution | Distribute | -tion | The act of distributing |
| Suffixation | Authorization | Authorize | -tion | Official permission or approval to use copyrighted material |
| Suffixation | Licensee/Licensor | License | -ee/-or | The person or entity that grants permission to use something/ the person or entity that receives the permission to use it |

| | | | | |
|-------------|------------|---------|--------------|--|
| Suffixation | Protection | Protect | -tion | Legal safeguarding of creative works from unauthorized use, typically under copyright law |
| Suffixation | Copier | Copy | -er | A person or device that makes copies of content; in copyright context, often refers to someone who reproduces material, potentially without permission |

These derivations are crucial in legal texts as they allow precise reference to actions, processes, or entities involved in copyright-related legal frameworks.

2. **Compounding** was also widespread, especially in forming multi-word legal terms like copyright infringement, intellectual property, and licensing agreement, which convey specific legal meanings through word combinations. Both open compounds (e.g., intellectual property, license agreement) and hyphenated/closed compounds (e.g., copycat, file-sharing) were identified. Compounds serve to condense complex legal ideas into concise, understandable expressions.

Table 2

| Compound Term | Components | Meaning |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Copyright Holder | Copyright + Holder | Person/Entity owning Copyright |
| Fair Use | Fair + Use | Legal use of Copyrighted content |
| Intellectual Property | Intellectual + Property | Creations of the mind that have legal rights |

Legal compound terms often follow the "modifier + head" structure, as in "public domain" or "moral rights", where the second term defines the legal category (Kristiansen & Mattila, 2011).

3. **Abbreviations & Acronyms** (e.g., DMCA, IP, WIPO) were found to be common, simplifying lengthy legal concepts while maintaining institutional recognition in international contexts.

Table 3

| Term | Full Form | Context Usage |
|------|----------------------------------|------------------|
| DMCA | Digital Millennium Copyright Act | US copyright law |

| | | |
|------|---|--|
| WIPO | World Intellectual Property Organization | International legal body |
| DRM | Digital Rights Management | Technology to protect digital content |
| IP | Intellectual Property | Legal rights protect mind creations |
| RIAA | Recording Industry Association of America | Trade organization focuses on protecting and promoting the interests of recording industry, concerning copyright enforcement |
| CC | Creative Commons | Nonprofit organization offers free license |

Acronyms and abbreviations are prevalent in legal drafting to reduce redundancy. For instance, “TPM” (technological protection measures) appears frequently in WTO and WIPO discussions on digital copyright enforcement (WIPO, 2016).

4. **Conversion (Zero derivation)**, or functional shift, appeared in terms where a noun is used as a verb or vice versa (e.g., license → to license), showing the flexibility of legal terminology.

Table 4

| Word | Part of Speech (Before-After) | Example Use |
|----------|-------------------------------|--|
| License | Noun-Verb | “They licence their music online” |
| Copy | Noun-Verb | “You cannot copy this material” |
| File | Noun-Verb | “The lawyer will file the documents tomorrow” |
| Register | Noun-Verb | “You must register your Copyright with the office” |

5. **Blending.** Blended terms are created by merging parts of two or more words into a single new term. Examples relevant to the copyright domain include:

Table 5

| Blended Term | Source Words | Meaning |
|--------------|----------------------------|--|
| Netiquette | Internet+ Etiquette | Rules for acceptable Internet behaviour |
| Copyleft | Copyright+ Left | Open-source licensing model |
| Infotainment | Information+ Entertainment | Used in media texts involving content that may be subject to copyright |

Though rare, blending signals the increasing interaction between law and digital culture. For example, “infomediary” (information + intermediary) has gained traction in describing platforms managing content access (Reed, 2012).

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal valuable insights into how English copyright terminology is constructed through diverse word-formation processes. The prevalence of affixation, compounding, abbreviation, and conversion, as identified in the results, is not coincidental; rather, it reflects deeper linguistic, functional, and pragmatic motivations underlying the formation of legal language in the domain of copyright. This section explores the significance of these processes and situates them within broader linguistic and legal frameworks.

1. Functional Purpose of Word-Formation in Legal Language

One of the primary functions of legal language is to maintain precision, consistency, and clarity. In the field of copyright, where legal interpretations can significantly impact intellectual property rights and commercial interests, the need for a standardized and transparent terminology is critical. Word-formation processes serve this function by:

- Enabling the concise expression of complex legal ideas (e.g., copyright infringement, public domain);
- Facilitating the creation of terminology that is both descriptive and prescriptive;
- Supporting the evolution of language in response to new technologies and legal phenomena (e.g., file-sharing, copyleft).

Thus, word-formation is not merely a linguistic activity, but a legal-communicative necessity.

2. Affixation as a Means of Legal Specificity

The dominance of affixation in the corpus can be attributed to its role in forming clear, unambiguous legal terms. For instance, suffixes like -tion, -ment, and -ance typically denote abstract processes or results (e.g., registration, agreement, compliance), which are foundational concepts in legal documentation. Furthermore, affixation allows the creation of related lexical families that facilitate legal drafting and comprehension. For example, from the root “license,” we derive licensor, licensee, licensing, and licensed, all of which are essential to the licensing framework in copyright. This morphological productivity enhances cohesion and comprehensibility within legal texts.

3. Compounding and the Economy of Legal Expression

Compounding provides the necessary economy of language often demanded in legal and bureaucratic writing. Through noun-noun or adjective-noun combinations, new and specialized concepts are formed without needing lengthy definitions. For example:

- Intellectual property unifies two broad concepts to denote a distinct legal domain.
- Moral rights encapsulates the non-economic rights of creators.
- Royalty-free license conveys a licensing type in a compact structure.

Such compounds are often institutionalized, meaning they are accepted and understood globally in legal systems without requiring translation or explanation.

4. Abbreviations: The Influence of Institutional Discourse

The rise of abbreviations and acronyms in copyright language reflects the institutional nature of the field. As organizations like WIPO, UNESCO, and WTO work toward the standardization of copyright law, their documents and communications increasingly adopt abbreviated terminology for efficiency. Abbreviations like DMCA or DRM are not just linguistic shortcuts; they represent legal instruments and technological mechanisms that hold specific connotations and legal implications. For instance, the DMCA implies a set of American digital copyright laws, while DRM refers to technological methods of enforcing copyright protection. Therefore, these terms are semiotic signs – their form carries immediate legal significance, and their use reflects familiarity with international legal practice. For non-native speakers and translators, understanding these abbreviations becomes essential for competent engagement with legal texts.

5. Conversion and the Dynamic Nature of Legal English The use of conversion in copyright terms demonstrates the flexibility and adaptability of legal English. Legal language often prefers shorter, more direct expressions, and conversion allows for this by transforming nouns into verbs (e.g., copyright → to copyright) or vice versa (to license → a license), thereby supporting diverse syntactic needs without requiring new morphological forms. This process is particularly useful in contracts and regulations, where repetitive use of legal actions is necessary, and linguistic brevity is beneficial. It reflects the functional economy and pragmatic orientation of legal drafting, especially in copyright, where procedures like registering, licensing, and distributing content must be described precisely and efficiently.

6. Blending: The Impact of Technology and Informality

Although blending is less common in formal legal documents, its presence in technology-influenced copyright language is noteworthy. Terms like copyleft, netizen, and infotainment reflect the fusion of digital culture with legal terminology. These terms often originate from informal, grassroots discussions but eventually enter semi-formal or academic use due to their conceptual clarity. The term copyleft, for instance, was born from a counter-cultural movement against copyright monopolies. While it remains informal in tone, it has gained recognition in academic and even legal discourse as a concept opposing traditional copyright. This highlights how new word-formation mechanisms signal socio-legal shifts, especially in an era where laws must evolve to accommodate open-source software, digital content sharing, and online education.

The findings of this study demonstrate that English copyright terminology is shaped by a variety of word formation processes, each serving a specific communicative and legal function. Among these, affixation and compounding are the most dominant, reflecting the need for precision and clarity in legal language.

In summary, word formation is not a peripheral aspect of copyright language – it is central to its clarity, function, and evolution. Whether through affixation or abbreviation, the formation of terms in English copyright discourse reflects both legal needs and linguistic creativity. As the copyright landscape becomes increasingly digital and global, continued analysis of terminological development will be essential for ensuring effective communication and legal understanding in the 21st century.

Conclusion

The study of word forming features in English copyright terminology reveals that language plays a vital role in structuring and expressing complex legal concepts. Through the analysis, it became clear that affixation, compounding, abbreviation, conversion, and though to a lesser extent blending are key strategies in the creation of legal terms within this domain.

Affixation emerged as the most productive process, enabling the formation of abstract nouns and agentive forms essential for legal precision. Compounding served to create multi-word terms that concisely convey complex ideas. The presence of abbreviations and acronyms reflected the global and institutional nature of copyright law, contributing to standardization across jurisdictions. Conversion highlighted the functional versatility of legal vocabulary, while blending represented innovation influenced by digital culture.

To conclude, these word formation strategies are not only linguistic tools but also mechanisms that serve the needs of legal clarity, efficiency, and international communication. Understanding how such terms are formed provides valuable insight for legal practitioners, translators, linguists, and educators working with English legal texts.

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