

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, research problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of key terms, and the organization of writing. It provides the fundamental reasons and the framework for conducting this study on word formation processes in BBC Sport Online News headlines.

A. Background of the Study

Communication is important for humans because it helps us understand one another, avoid miscommunication, to share information, express ideas and emotions in everyday activities. According to Webster, language functions as the fundamental basis of communication, allowing people to convey their ideas, knowledge, and culture.¹ In this digital era, human interactions are influenced by technology, which has progressed in many aspects of society, such as culture, habits, the environment, and especially language.² It shapes the way people communicate, introduces new vocabulary, and accelerates linguistic change. As a result, language not only reflects culture but also adapts to innovations in this modern era.

Language is used not only in speaking but also in writing. Spoken or verbal language is not as complex as written language, such as online news,

¹ Noah Webster, *Dissertation on the English Language: With Notes, Historical and Critical*, 1st ed (Boston: Hudson & Goodwin, 1789), 18.

² David Crystal, *Language and the Internet*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 4–5.

because written language helps readers understand information from the writer more easily.³ In online news writers usually use interesting and easy-to-understand words because their audience comes from different social layers of society, this makes word formation important. Word formation processes can be found at work, creating and shaping new words in a language. Usually, readers can understand these new words without much difficulty, tend to recognize their different forms, and naturally add them to their vocabulary.⁴ This shows that word-formation follows certain patterns and rules, driven by our need to adopt, understand, and use new words effectively.

Language keeps changing because people use it to describe new events and ideas. One way this happens is through word formation, which is the process of creating new words.⁵ One of the most visible areas where linguistic change happens is online journalism. Online news must present information briefly and effectively for diverse readers. Journalists often need to simplify complex information into short, catchy headlines that convey meaning. Journalists employ various word-formation processes such as compounding (goal-line), blending (infotainment), clipping (ref for referee), and the use of acronyms (*FIFA*, *VAR*, *UEFA*). These morphological techniques allow journalists to create headlines that are attractive, concise, and easy to remember,

³ Wallace Chafe and Deborah Tannen, *The Relation between Written and Spoken Language* (Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews, 1987), 16:385–95, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2155877>.

⁴ Laurie Bauer, *English Word-Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 8.

⁵ Francis Katamba, *English Words: Structure, History, Usage*, English Language Series (London: Routledge, 1994), 56.

the example is “Super sub Nunez grabs 2-1 win for 10-man Liverpool against Newcastle”, this headline illustrates compounding and clipping through the term *super-sub*, which is formed by combining *super* with the clipped form *substitute*, creating a concise and expressive term commonly used in sports journalism. Morphological rules allow language users to extend vocabulary and develop new meanings.⁶

According to Aronoff, word is the main core unit of morphology, and new words are formed by applying certain rules to existing ones. The word formation process happens through the combination of morphemes into words.⁷ A morpheme is the smallest unit of language that carries meaning. Morphemes are divided into two types: free morphemes and bound morphemes. A free morpheme can stand alone as a word, but bound morphemes cannot stand by themselves and need another form, as stated by Bloomfield.⁸ For example, the word “player” has the base word “play” and the suffix -er. The suffix -er is a bound morpheme because it means “a person who does an action” and cannot stand alone, while play is a free morpheme because it can stand as a word alone. Word-formation is an effective process for creating new meanings in language through the combination of different morphemes.

The formation of new words in English is an essential process for language development. Yule classifies word formation processes into ten types:

⁶ M. A. K. Halliday and Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen, *Halliday's Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 4th ed. (Routledge, 2013), 77–79, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203431269>.

⁷ Mark Aronoff, *Word Formation in Generative Grammar* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1976), 7.

⁸ Leonard Bloomfield, *Language* (Henry Holt and Company, 1933), 161–62.

coinage, borrowing, compounding, blending, clipping, back-formation, conversion, acronyms, derivation, and multiple processes.⁹ These processes explain how new lexical items shape the language and how new words evolve over time. Katamba further describes word formation as the study of how new words are created in English.¹⁰

Word formation is especially visible in mass media and journalism, where writers often create concise, catchy, and meaningful expressions to attract readers. In news headlines, for instance, journalists frequently use creative linguistic forms such as abbreviations, blends, or compounds to convey complex ideas efficiently. Media language reflects social changes and linguistic innovation because journalists are often the first to introduce new vocabulary into public usage, as defined by Crystal.¹¹

Among the various forms of journalism, in the context of sports journalism, word formation becomes even more important. Sports headlines must be short, attractive, and creative to catch the readers' attention. In BBC Sport Online News headlines, various processes of word formation can be found, including acronyms such as "VAR" (Video Assistant Referee), as seen in "VAR Controversy Overshadows Arsenal Win" (from a 2023 Premier League match report); abbreviations like "Champ" for "Championship," as in "Champ Race Heats Up as Liverpool Clinch Title" (from a 2024 English

⁹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁰ Katamba, *English Words: Structure, History, Usage*, 138.

¹¹ David Crystal, *English as a Global Language, Second Edition*, 2nd Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 78.

Football League update); compound words like “goal-line” in “Goal-Line Drama: Last-Minute Save Seals Victory” (from a 2023 Champions League match) and “kick-off” in “Kick-Off Delayed Due to Weather Chaos” (from a 2024 FA Cup fixture).

There is also derivation such as “player” from the verb “play,” as in “Star Player's Injury Blow for Team” (from a 2023 World Cup qualifier), which shows how affixation creates new word classes and meanings; coinage, like the invented term “ghost goal” in “Ghost Goal Sparks Debate in VAR Era” (from a 2023 Premier League controversy), referring to an offside goal that wasn't awarded; borrowing, such as “hat-trick” (from cricket, meaning three goals) in “Hat-Trick Hero Saves the Day” (from a 2024 FA Cup match); blending, like “smog” (smoke + fog, but in sports context, “smoggy” as in “Smoggy Conditions Halt Training” from a 2023 winter football report, blending “smoke” and “foggy”); clipping, such as “ref” for “referee” in “Ref's Decision Stuns Fans” (from a 2024 Champions League game); backformation, such as “edit” from “editor” (though in sports, “tweet” from “tweeter” isn't direct, but “blog” from “blogger” appears in “Bloggers Slam Team Tactics” from a 2023 transfer news); conversion, such as “play” (verb to noun) in “The Play of the Season” (from a 2024 Premier League highlight); and infixes, such as “un-freakin-believable” in “Un-Freakin-Believable Comeback Win” (from a 2023 World Cup qualifier, inserting “freakin” for emphasis). These words are interesting to be analyzed in terms of how they are formed.

Interestingly, in everyday life, people are very familiar with shortened forms such as *FIFA* (*Fédération Internationale de Football Association*) or *VAR* (*Video Assistant Referee*) but do not actually know what the acronyms stand for. This phenomenon shows that readers often recognize the form but not its origin or meaning. Such words become part of common vocabulary due to frequent media exposure, even though their linguistic structure and derivation are rarely understood. This illustrates the importance of studying word formation, as it reveals how language users adopt, adapt, and sometimes lose awareness of the underlying morphological processes behind familiar words.¹²

BBC Sport Online News provides rich linguistic data for examining this phenomenon. BBC Sport Online News headlines are designed to capture attention while conveying complex information in minimal space and sports news is produced updated numerous variations of word-formation processes.¹³

As a result, the headlines often include creative morphological constructions such as clipping (*Champ* for *Champion*), compounding (*goal-line*, *kick-off*), derivation (*player*, *striker*), and acronyms (*FIFA*, *UEFA*, *VAR*). These words not only reflect linguistic efficiency but also demonstrate how the sports media contributes to the evolution of English vocabulary.

The researcher chooses BBC Sport Online News as the data source because it is one of the world's most credible and influential media platforms, known for its global reach and standard use of British English. BBC headlines

¹² Yule, *The Study of Language*, 52–61.

¹³ David Crystal, *Language Play* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998), 128, <http://archive.org/details/languageplay0000cryst>.

are widely read and trusted by international audiences, making them representative of modern English usage in professional journalism.¹⁴ Moreover, the BBC Sport section offers concise, creative, and dynamic headlines that frequently employ various word-formation processes, such as compounding (goal-line), acronym creation (*VAR*, *FIFA*), and derivation (player, striker). These headlines are designed to attract attention while maintaining clarity and accuracy, providing authentic linguistic data that reflect real-world language use.

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the word-formation processes found in BBC Sport Online News headlines and determine which types appear dominantly. By identifying these specific processes, this study captures real-world evidence of how modern English vocabulary adapts to the fast-paced nature of digital media. Determining the dominant type of word formation serves as the most critical analytical step of this research. By calculating which morphological process appears most frequently, this study uncovers the primary strategy modern journalists use to balance speed with descriptive reporting. This study focuses on analyzing word-formation processes in BBC Sport Online News headlines published during October 2025 because during this period, various tournaments such as the UEFA Champions League, Premier League, NBA season opener, Formula 1 and MotoGP take place. This provides a rich data set for examining linguistic creativity and

¹⁴ Barrie Gunter, *The BBC and the Public* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), 77–95, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-67814-1>.

morphological variation in sports journalism. The data are limited to headlines that gathered by selecting 1–5 samples per day that represent the most prominent sports events or news topic. The analysis is restricted to the ten types of word-formation processes proposed by Yule.

Several studies have examined word formation in BBC News. Kasnadevi and Utami conducted a study on 2021 selected articles, entitled “*Types of Derivational Affixes Found in BBC News Articles*”, which analyzed how derivational affixes were used to form new lexical items in general BBC News reports, Jayanti and Putra on 2024, in their study “*Derivational Suffixes Function Analysis in BBC News: War in Gaza*”, focused on seven BBC News articles on October related to the Gaza conflict. Ambara and Utami conducted a study in 2023, entitled “*Unravelling the Function of Derivational Affixes Found in BBC News ‘War in Ukraine’*”, investigated the use of derivational affixes in political conflict reporting. They discovered that suffixes such as *-ion*, *-ment*, and *-ity* were frequently used to convert verbs into abstract nouns, making political and war-related issues easier to convey.¹⁵ Their detailed morphological analysis demonstrated how derivational affixes simplify complex news content and contribute to meaning-making in journalistic language

Although these studies have significantly contributed to the understanding of morphological processes in news writing, most of them have

¹⁵ Dewa Gede Agung Ambara and Ni Putu Cahyani Putri Utami, “Unravelling The Function of Derivational Affixes Found in BBC News ‘War in Ukraine,’” *Elysian Journal : English Literature, Linguistics and Translation Studies* 3, no. 4 (November 2023): 252–61, <https://doi.org/10.36733/elysian.v3i4.7597>.

limited their analysis to derivational affixes and focused on political or international conflict news. However, no previous study has specifically analyzed the use of multiple word-formation in BBC Sport Online News headlines, on October 2025 because during this period, various tournaments such as the UEFA Champions League, Premier League, NBA season opener, Formula 1 and MotoGP take place. Therefore, there is a research gap in examining how various types of word formation are employed in BBC Sport Online News headlines, which are linguistically unique because they must be short, creative, and emotionally engaging while maintaining clarity.

This study also aims to identify which type of word formation appears and which type appears most frequently to understand dominant morphological patterns in sports journalism and their role in vocabulary development and reading comprehension. This study is expected to benefit for students and readers, because by understanding how new words or shortened forms appear in sports news, they will improve their vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Therefore, the title of this study is “Word Formation Processes in BBC Sport Online News Headlines.”

B. Research Problem

In modern journalism, particularly in sports reporting, innovative word-formation strategies are often employed to make headlines concise, engaging, and meaningful.

Consequently, this study is guided by the following research question:

1. What types of word-formation processes are found in BBC Sport Online News headlines based on Yule's theory?
2. Which types of word-formation appear most frequently in BBC Sport Online News headlines based on Yule's theory?

C. Research Objective

This study aims to identify the types of word-formation processes used in BBC Sport Online News headlines, following Yule's classification. Provide empirical support for Yule's word-formation theory by demonstrating its applicability to real-world media texts.

To achieve this aim, this study is guided by the following research objective:

1. To identify the types of word-formation processes are found in BBC Sport Online News headlines based on Yule's theory.
2. To identify the most frequent types of word-formation processes found in BBC Sport Online News headlines based on Yule's theory.

D. Significance of Study

1. Theoretical Significance

This study provides a deeper understanding of how word-formation processes are employed in modern news discourse, particularly in the sports section of BBC Online News. It contributes to the field of morphology by highlighting how new words are created, adapted, and popularized in mass media contexts. This study provides a significant contribution to morphological studies by providing specific empirical data and information within the domain of sports journalism. It extends the understanding of

English word-formation by showing how Yule's theory is adapted to meet practical communication needs and the limited space available in digital news.

Specifically, this study reveals how morphological creativity, such as the use of agent-centered labels and complex word layering serves as a strategy to define professional identities in BBC Sport Online News headlines. By offering a concrete empirical foundation, this study clarifies how the sports register acts as a site for linguistic innovation, providing a clear framework for how language remains short yet technically precise in a modern sports journalism context.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, for readers, this study enables readers to better recognize how new words are constructed in digital media, allowing them to interpret sports news headlines more accurately, especially regarding shortened forms like VAR or FIFA. For Language Learners, learners are expected to expand their lexical range and refine their word-recognition skills by understanding the specific morphological patterns used in professional sports journalism.

For educators, the results provide authentic instructional material for teaching morphology and vocabulary, allowing teachers to integrate real-world media texts into the classroom. For journalists, it offers insights into the linguistic creativity required to craft concise and appealing headlines while maintaining clarity within limited space. For future researchers, this

study serves as an empirical reference for those intending to conduct comparative studies on different news genres or explore morphological developments in other digital media platforms

E. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on analyzing word-formation processes in BBC Sport Online News headlines published on 1st -31st October 2025. The data source consists of 123 headlines selected by taking 1–5 headlines per day that represent the most prominent sports event or news topic of that specific day, which may include one or more different types of sports depending on the daily news cycle. From these 123 headlines, the researcher identified and analyzed 262 occurrences of word-formation processes as the actual linguistic data. The analysis is strictly restricted to the ten types of word-formation processes proposed by Yule. Since the data only covers October 2025 the vocabulary is restricted to sports events during that month and focusing on headlines that means the language is affected by strict word limits. This often leads to the use of shortened words, meaning the results capture headline writing strategies rather than full-text language usage

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Word Formation

Word formation refers to the process through which new words are created in a language. According to Yule, it involves various morphological mechanisms such as compounding, blending, clipping, derivation,

borrowing, and acronyms.¹⁶ In the context of this study, word formation is analyzed to reveal how BBC Sport Online News writers construct concise and appealing headlines by employing different morphological strategies that make the news language dynamic and efficient.

2. BBC Sport Online News

BBC Sport Online News is a section of the British Broadcasting Corporation's online news service that reports on national and international sports events. It is chosen as the data source because its headlines frequently display linguistic innovation and morphological creativity through the use of shortened, blended, or compounded forms that make the content engaging and easy to read. In this study BBC serves as data, analyze and identify the types of word formation according to Yule classification.

3. Headline

A headline is a brief, attention-grabbing title that summarizes the essence of a news article. As Mårdh notes, headlines often employ linguistic devices such as ellipsis, nominalization, and inventive word formation to convey meaning effectively within limited space.¹⁷ In this study, headlines function as the linguistic data for analyzing the morphological processes that illustrate creativity and language efficiency in BBC Sport News journalistic writing.

¹⁶ Yule, *The Study of Language*, 52–63.

¹⁷ Ingrid Mårdh, *Headlines: On the Grammar of English Front Page Headlines* (Liberläromedel/Gleerup, 1980), 17–19.

G. Organization of Writing

The organization of this study is designed to present the flow of the researcher's thinking in analyzing the word-formation processes found in BBC Sport Online News. Each chapter is arranged to highlight why it is included in the structure of this study, showing the logical progression and coherence between sections.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides the foundation of the study. It explains the topic of word formation in BBC Sport Online News is important to investigate, particularly because sports headlines often use short, creative, efficient lexical forms, and produced rapidly and updated frequently, which leads to the emergence of numerous variations of word-formation processes. The research problem, objective, significance, and definitions of key terms are presented to establish the direction and scope of the study, ensuring that readers clearly understand the context and focus of the study

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter develops the theoretical foundation needed to support the analysis. Theories related to language, morphology, morphemes, and the full range of word-formation processes proposed by Yule are presented because they serve as the main analytical tools in this study.

The review of previous studies is included to show why this study is necessary namely, the gap that previous studies have focused on political or general news, while word formation in sports headlines remains

underexplored. This chapter positions the current study within the field of linguistics and strengthens its conceptual basis.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter explains why the chosen research method is appropriate for the study. A descriptive qualitative method is used because the data consist of words and linguistic forms rather than numerical data. The selection of BBC Sport Online News headlines from October 2025 is justified by the concise and creative headlines, which makes them rich in examples of word formation.

The procedures for collecting and analyzing the data are described to demonstrate the systematic steps taken to identify, classify, and interpret the word-formation processes based on Yule's framework. This chapter, therefore, provides the methodological justification for the entire process.

CHAPTER IV: WORD-FORMATION ANALYSIS IN BBC SPORT ONLINE NEWS HEADLINES

This chapter presents the morphological analysis of the data collected from BBC Sport Online News headlines. The analysis is structured to address the research objectives by identifying the structural processes of word-formation through Lieber's labeling and classifying the types based on Yule's theory

CHAPTER V: FREQUENCY AND DOMINANCE OF WORD-FORMATION PROCESSES

This chapter discusses the frequency and dominance of the identified processes. It provides a deeper interpretation of the morphological patterns that characterize BBC sports journalism to reveal the linguistic strategies used by journalists.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter summarize the results as direct answers to the research question, highlighting the dominant word-formation processes found. The suggestions provide implications for linguistic studies and recommendations for future researchers, explaining why the findings are relevant for the development of morphology and media language studies.