Le but du cours de lexicologie comparée anglais-français est de familiariser les étudiants avec les mécanismes de la créativité lexicale en anglais et en français, et de les initier aux principales méthodes de l’analyse lexicale, en particulier en leur présentant le fonctionnement des principales matrices lexicogéniques.

The lexicon in English and French, how it is formed, and how it relates to the rest of the language. Stress will be laid on the processes of neology in the two languages: how new words come into being.

Le cours comporte un manuel :


Le programme des cours a été transmis par courriel aux étudiants le 3 février 2009, ainsi qu’un polycopié qui aurait dû servir lors du premier cours « présentiel », qui reprend les notions fondamentales concernant le lexique et les différentes manières de l’aborder

D’autres polycopiés existent pour les cours qui devaient suivre, notamment ceux sur la composition et la dérivation qui peuvent être considérées comme les principales matrices lexicogéniques. Elles sont traitées dans les chapitres 2, 3 et 4 du manuel. À l’exception de la conversion et la néologie sémantique (chapitre 8), les autres matrices peuvent être considérées comme moins fondamentales : la troncation, la motivation phonétique, les emprunts.

Ce document comporte les éléments suivants :
- introduction à l’analyse lexicale
- composition
- dérivation
- réduction morphologique
- bibliographie sommaire

Les présentations sont suivies d’exercices pris dans le manuel. Un corrigé est disponible.

Un deuxième document vous sera adressé comportant une présentation plus succincte de autres matrices lexicogéniques, également avec exercices.
Bibliographie sommaire

Manuel


Voir aussi


Lesson One: The lexicon in the language

What does the lexicon consist of? All the words of the language. But what is a word?
- Is *ghost writer* one word or two?
- Is *labradoodle* an English word?
- Is \( H_2SO_4 \) an English word?

Where does the lexicon fit in to the levels of language analysis?
- phonetics
- phonology
- morphology
- syntax
- semantics

What is the relation between lexicology and lexicography?
- attested words
- unattested but possible words

Lexicon consists not only of words (attested and unattested) but also of the rules that enable them to be created.

The study of lexicology is also partly socially and historically based. In French linguistics, lexicology is a usual and largely accepted division of language study. In English-speaking countries, *lexicology* is little used (though *lexicography* is making inroads into the academic scene). It is subsumed into *lexical semantics* and *lexical morphology*. In this sense, desinential morphology (the study of verb endings or plural markers) is considered part of syntax, whereas derivational (suffixes such as –*er* in *run, runner*) and compositional (prefixes or suffixes such as –*ette* in *towelette*) morphology is part of lexical morphology.

Neology

Linguistics concentrating on competence:
- imperfect evidence of the system of lexical production at work

Linguistics concentrating on performance:
- accounting for the circumstances which enable these words to be created
(sociolinguistic, etc.)

The lexicon from a diachronic and synchronic viewpoint

The study of neology is necessarily diachronic, as it aims on determining how this part of the language changes over time. However it is possible to adopt a historical viewpoint to find out about origins of words (etymology, one of the objectives of philology).

Studying the lexicon as it is today is generally considered to be a synchronic approach, as its history is not taken into account, but it is also diachronic inasmuch as its immediate evolution is.

Phraseology and fixed expressions

Lexicology (and indeed lexicography) also embraces the study of idiomatic usage of words and their immediate contexts (collocations) in the form of phraseology.

Example: *Paul ran a clothes shop.* [passive] *The shop was well run.*
Paul ran a marathon. [passive] The marathon was well run 

Non-compositionality of meaning: the meaning of the word or phrase is not the sum of its components: example (given by Paillard 2000 : 15): *to shoot oneself in the foot.*

**Collocation and distribution:**

Collocation within a syntactic unit: *blond collocates with hair in blond hair, her hair is blond.*

Distribution: set of contexts within which a unit can appear: *I combed my _ ; where’s the _ spray? My _ is too long.*

**Exercises**

How does the morphology lead to the interpretation of the following neologisms?

ableism travelogue abortuary mouse potato carjacking wind farm

Which is not a collocate of the adjective?

BRIGHT idea, green, smell, child, day, room
CLEAR attitude, need, instruction, alternative day, conscience
LIGHT traffic, work, day, entertain, suitcase, rain, green
HIGH season, price, opinion, spirits, hours, time, priority, table

**Find the collocates (adjectives) in French.**

célibataire
chaleur
démenti
hiver
fumeur
majorité

**Find the collocates and translate into French**

blissfully absorbed
critically accurate
deeply addicted
deceptively annoyed
devastatingly asleep
hopelessly funny
perfectly ill
sound true
strictly simple
understandably unaware
abide by an aim
achieve one’s address
address a complaint
gain an issue
give up a fortune
lodge a grudge against
nurse the law
offer a link
quench smoking
squander a reputation
win a victory

Dictionary research. What are the collocates of scenery, landscape in learner’s dictionaries, a concise or college dictionary and a dictionary of collocations (BBI)?

What collocations are to be found with the following?

acute, clerical, leak (n), redundant, rehabilitate

What idiomatic expressions are constructed with the following?

bandwagon, fences, bark (... tree), rainy day
brick wall, dead body, robbery, shoestring

Two-layer idioms

turn your back on s/th, s/o
a clean bill of health
to have a go at s/o
hard on someone’s heels

Translate the following idioms according to the context

There’s a lot of string pulling and going to bed with the directors, but the basic thing is how good your acting is.

She thought she was on a fast track to a good job as a medical assistant, especially when she passed the exam with flying colours.

The American people are going to resent any hint that he will be let off the hook because of his privileged position.

Their was the biggest tax evasion cases ever prosecuted, although the million dollars involved was described by the government lawyer as only the tip of the iceberg.

I think it is a very good thing that Europe’s citizens are not dependent for their securities on MEPs who scream blue murder just because they are asked to show their identity card at a frontier.
Lesson 2

Affixation

Lexemes are considered independently of their different word forms. Dictionaries in English present word forms without affixes as headwords (français : vedette). French verbs, on the contrary, are indicated with the infinitive affix –er, -ir, -re…).

In English-speaking linguistics, morphemes are divided into several classes:
free and bound, lexical and grammatical (see below, after Tournier 1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Free morphemes</th>
<th>Bound morphemes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lexemes: nouns, verbs, etc.</td>
<td>Affixes – anti; -ion…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles, pronouns, prep…</td>
<td>Inflexional morphemes: -ed, -s, -st…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affixes are further divided into prefixes and suffixes (anticlockwise).

In English and French, only suffixes are inflexional (also called desinental). They are the grammatical markers which do not change the meaning of the word, but add certain relations.

Eg comparative and superlative markers : small, smaller, smallest
Verb endings : change, changes, changed, changing
Nouns plurals: dog, dogs; ox, oxen

Suffixes which form new words are called derivational:
read – reader ; the –er suffix changes a verb into a noun (the agent)
bright – brightly; the –ly suffix changes an adjective into an adverb
bright – brightness; the –ness suffix changes an adjective into a noun
sun – sunny; the –y suffix changes a noun into an adjective

French has similar derivational suffixes
courir : coureur
poli : poliment
poli : politesse
poisson : poissonsneaux

Some linguists distinguish between derivational suffixes, which change the grammatical category of the lexeme to which they are added – those we have seen - , and compositional suffixes, which do change the grammatical category:

king – kingdom
kitchen – kitchenette

Or in French : jardin – jardinet; maison - maisonnette
In all cases, though, the suffix shows the grammatical category.

Separable and inseparable prefixes

In English, contrary to French, a difference in stress marks out separable and inseparable prefixes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>separable prefix</th>
<th>inseparable prefix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rewrite</td>
<td>reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>prepayment</td>
<td>precaution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>refermer</td>
<td>renoncer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pré-chauffage</td>
<td>précaution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second element of words such as *deceive, perceive, deduce, reduce* are not autonomous and are called **bound roots** in English (*pseudo-morphèmes, pseudo-lexèmes* in French).

Many of these have a typical noun pattern or verb pattern stress.

- *approach, concern, exchange, respect*
- *comfort, concrete, outrage, process*
- *abstract, export, increase, survey*
- *addict, object, protest, rebel*

Find examples of the following prefixes in English, determine their meaning and look for the equivalent in French:

- **anti-, be-, co- (col-, com-, con-), en-, ex-; fore-; pro-; re- dis- in- (il- im-, ir-), non-, un-**

**Neutral and stress-imposing suffixes in English**

As for the prefixes, suffixes have no effect on stress in French. In English some suffixes have no influence on the syllable which is stressed:

- *hesitate, hestitating, hesitatingly*
- *comfort, comfortable, comfortably.*

Other do:

- *national, nationality; category, categorization…*

What is the nature of the following suffixes as far as stress is concerned?

**Verb to noun:** -*(a)tion; -ee; -er; -ment*

**Adjective to noun:** -ity : -ness

**Noun to noun:** -ette; -hood; -ist; -ship

**Noun to adjective:** -ial, -ian, -ic; -ish, -ful, -less

**Verb to adjective:** -able; -some

**Adjective to verb:** -ify; -en, -ize

**Noun to verb:** -ify; -ize

**Germanic and Latin affixes**

Identify, among the suffixes above, those of Germanic and those of Latin origin. Sometimes the two can compete : -*ity – ness* Which is used to create new words?

Which of the two types of suffix is more autonomous?

**Productive suffixes in English**

He’s an early riser

Admittedly
Wordlessly

Which are the most productive suffixes for new words in English and French?

**Allomorphs**

Variations on the same morpheme are termed allomorphs. These are common in both French and English, for affixes:

- \( \text{in-} + \text{logical} : \text{illogical} \)
- \( \text{in} + \text{possible} : \text{impossible} \)
- \( \text{in} + \text{responsible} : \text{irresponsible} \)

as well as for roots

- \( \text{long} + \text{-th} : \text{-length} \)

French often uses forms from Latin:

- pouls : impulser
- sain – santé
- claire : claret
- sel : saler

Haplology occurs when a syllable which would be difficult to pronounce, usually because of repetition, is dropped:

- \( \text{gratuity} + \text{ité} : \text{gratuité} \)

**Reanalysis and creation of new “suffixes”**

Paillard gives examples of “splinters” (parts of lexemes which represent the whole lexeme in a blend), which, used as a final element, resemble a suffix:

- alcoholic : workaholic : bikini : monokini…

It is also possible to class this as compounding.

**Parasynthetic derivation**

When a new word is formed by adding a prefix and a suffix (the two being necessary) we speak of parasynthetic derivation. It is used in both English and French

- \( \text{dé}+\text{rat}+\text{iser} \)
- \( \text{in} + \text{doctrin}+\text{ate} \)

It is particularly common in French, where the infinitive is an expressed suffix.

**Backformation**
**Backformation** (French dérivation regressive) occurs when a new word is formed by taking off an affix where no such form existed previously. For example, the verb to *caretake* comes from the noun *caretaker*, which in turn comes from *to take care of s/thing*; *to mass-produce* comes from *mass-production*, which in turn comes from *to produce (s/thing) in mass*.

**Affixal homonymy and polysemy**

Homonyms : - *amener : amoral*

Paronyms : *diabled; dyslexic*

Polysemy : - *ship : membership, friendship, apprenticeship, premiership, craftsmanship, scholarship, readership…*

**Exercises**

**Identify the affixes in the following:**

*unmannerliness ; ceremony ; approbation ; fire-fighters; downloaded; impoverish; fanzine; gazump; stick-to-itiveness; uxoriousness*

**Which are the odd men out ?**

| battleship | hardship | membership |
| cadetship  | horsemanship | premiership |
| chairmanship | kinship | warship |
| championship | ladyship | worship |

**Which of the following have a direct equivalent in French?**

*archery; bravery ; brewery ; discovery; embroidery; fishery; flattery; forgery; greenery; nursery; robbery; rockery; slavery; snobbery; surgery.*

**Compare suffixed forms ending in –ment or –age in French and translate into English.**

*Abattre ; ajuster ; blanchir ; décoller ; flotter ; laver ; nettoyer.*
Lesson 3

Compounding

While affixation is developed to a similar extent in both English and French (though used more intensively in the latter), compounding is especially associated with English.

**Definition:** Combination of two free lexical morphemes giving one lexical unit.

**Example:** English *breakwater* (*break* : *water*); French *brise-lames* (*brise* : *lames*).

**Scope:** French linguists and some English-speaking linguists consider learned composition, which uses Latin and particularly Greek roots, as a form of composition (eg. *photograph*), even though the elements (*combining forms* in English, *formants* or *quasi-lexèmes* in French) are not autonomous. Although these elements are not autonomous, they have a referential not grammatical function.

In addition, recent developments in linguistics, in particular the availability of large corpora, have modified approaches to compounding. The dichotomy between compounds and free forms is largely replaced by a continuum between more or less fixed collocations, with compounding considered to be situated at the most fixed end of the scale. Other linguists tend to regard lexical units made up of more than one lexical element as part of syntax as long as the construction is consistent with syntactic patterns.

**Criteria of compounding**

1. **One written unit**
   Words made up of more than one lexical morpheme and written without blank(s) are compounds. However, many compounds are written with blanks. In addition – in English at least – different dictionaries may indicate divergent spellings:
   
   ghost writer – ghost-writer - ghostwriter

2. **Stress**
   In English, compound nouns tend to be stressed on their first element
   
   ‘taxi , cab  ‘ghost , writer

3. **Syntactic criteria**
   a. Inseparability: *ghost unknown writer*; *assistante très sociale*
   b. Commutation: *water clock/ clepsidre ; pomme de terre/patate*
   c. Impossibility to paraphrase: *ce garçon est de café*

Elements of the compounds lose their determination (*abstrait d’actualisation*)

**Types of compounds**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Germanic compounding</th>
<th>Romance compounding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualifier to the left</td>
<td>Qualifier to the right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>navy blue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frogman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oilwell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rocket-launcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
English has some Romance constructions, both in old borrowings (Princess Royal, court martial, secretary general) and in prepositional constructions: bird of prey. Sometimes both exist, with possible semantic specialisation: wineglass/glass of wine.

**Compounding of truncated forms**

Variously known as *blends, portmanteau words* in English, *mots-valises, amalgames* in French, these compounds are made up of one or more reduced morphemes:

\[
\text{motor + hotel : motel} \\
\text{information + automatique : informatique}
\]

The reduced morphemes are called *splinters* in English and *fractomorphèmes* in French.

**Neoclassical compounds**

Both English and French have compounds words borrowed from the classical languages; eg. philosopher (lover of knowledge). Other compounds created from the same material were made in the modern languages, and it is often difficult to determine in which language the neoclassical compound was first coined.

Some only appear at the beginning of words (tele-), others only at the end (-crat), most can appear in either position (path, phil…)

Both appear in either language, though in English the neoclassical form is often less common than the Germanic type compound: exposition d’horticulture : flower show.

**Compound noun types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N+N</td>
<td>ghost writer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N’sN</td>
<td>Dog’s breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+prep+N</td>
<td>Bird of prey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+ V ing</td>
<td>beekeeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ving + N</td>
<td>walking stick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C p pres + N</td>
<td>shooting star</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+ Ver</td>
<td>tin-opener</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V+ suf + prep + N (Fr)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V=N obj</td>
<td>breakwater</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V+V</td>
<td>make believe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj+N</td>
<td>blackmail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv/prep+N</td>
<td>overcoat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V + adv/prep</td>
<td>breakdown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differences in using various compounding types

Argument structure

Compound adjectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N+N+ed</td>
<td>long-legged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+V-en V en + N</td>
<td>hand-made</td>
<td>fait main</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv+°Ven</td>
<td>well-dressed</td>
<td>bien habillé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+A</td>
<td>olive green</td>
<td>vert olive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+N</td>
<td>Hard of hearing</td>
<td>dur d’oreille</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+V ing</td>
<td>breathtaking</td>
<td>résistant au feu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj+ V ing</td>
<td>well-meaning</td>
<td>bienveillant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+A</td>
<td>deaf-mute</td>
<td>sourd-muet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compound verbs

Usually obtained through other means (back formation – to double-glaze), conversion (to honeymoon), but also include phrasal verbs in English.

Comparison of English structures – stressing compounding – and French, stressing derivation.

Compounding in English  
affixation in French

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two lexemes</td>
<td>coffee pot</td>
<td>Cafetière</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scarecrow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Footbridge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chicken out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take-off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two lexemes and one affix</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book-binding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent-mindedness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brighten up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scroll-down menu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two or more lexemes</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airlift</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog show</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair lotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tear-off slip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spin doctor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Exercises**

1. What have the following in common, once translated into English: *sauterelle, fossoyeur, vêliplanchiste, démaquillant*?

2. Complete the following series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secourisme</th>
<th>Ralentir</th>
<th>Déclencher</th>
<th>Plumier</th>
<th>Tronçonneuse</th>
<th>Menottes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actionnaire</td>
<td>Coiffeur</td>
<td>Couturier</td>
<td>Ébéniste</td>
<td>Amortisseur</td>
<td>Citadin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lave-vaisselle</td>
<td>porte-avions</td>
<td>ouvre-boîte</td>
<td>essuie-glace</td>
<td>Tournevis</td>
<td>garde-chasse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>empreintes digitales</td>
<td>témoin oculaire</td>
<td>lotion capillaire</td>
<td>année bissextile</td>
<td>muscle cardiaque</td>
<td>syntagme nominal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>heartfelt</th>
<th>seafaring</th>
<th>law-abiding</th>
<th>threadbare</th>
<th>star-spangled</th>
<th>tight-fisted</th>
<th>hare-brained</th>
<th>user-friendly</th>
<th>trigger-happy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>paraphrase</th>
<th>example</th>
<th>translation in French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>heartful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seafaring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law-abiding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hare-brained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>user-friendly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trigger-happy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How are the following items formed: *heliport, breathalyser, camcorder, guessimate, medicare, motel, Oxbridge, smog…*?

What are the English equivalents of *pédicure, orthophoniste, oto-rhin-laryngologiste, kinésithérapeute, radiographie…*?
Lesson 4

Morphological reduction

We have so far concentrated on the way new lexical items are created by adding elements (compounding : adding two free morphemes (lexemes); deriving: adding a bound morpheme to a free morpheme). We now come to the case where new words are formed by taking a part of the original word away.

Truncation or clipping

This is known as truncation, or truncation proper, or clipping in English. It is common, in both French and English. Sometimes both languages use the same truncations:

- e.g. prof from professeur/professor
- pro from professionnel/professional

Both languages have preferred forms. In French, the truncated form was traditionally an open syllable: perso for personnel, apéro for apéritif. In English, a closed syllable is usually preferred: exam for examination, ad for advertisement. A good example of the difference is déca in French and decaf in English. However, possibly because of English influence, truncations with closed syllables have become more common in French: cf spoken après-m for après-midi.

Note that truncations may well be accompanied by modifications in spelling and/or pronunciation, especially of the final element: apéro in French, already mentioned, telly in English from television.

Most truncations in both English and French are backclippings (French apocope), where the last part of the word is maintained, but foreclipping (French aphérèse) are not uncommon:

- (aero)plane (cara)van (tele)phone

Many truncations are characteristic of informal language, but some become part of received language (cf pneu in French, zoo in English).

Truncations are quite an important subcategory of new words, but two other categories are vastly better represented. Both combine reduction with compounding. The first concerns the maximum reduction, when only the first letter of the words are left; the second concerns less radical reduction, when more than one letter of the word or words are left.

Initialisms or acronyms

An initialism or acronym is a word formed by the first letter of the words making up the lexeme. Unlike French, which has the commonly accepted word sigle to designate this phenomenon, English tends to use acronym. However it can be useful to distinguish between

- initials read letter by letter:
  - RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)
  - SNCF (Société nationale des chemins de fer)
    - These are termed sigles in French, and initialisms in English
- initials read as a word:
  - WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant)
- AIDS (Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome)
- CAPES (Certificat d’aptitude professionnelle à l’enseignement secondaire)
- sida (syndrome d’immunodéficience acquise)
  - These are termed acronymes in French, and acronyms in English.

There may be variation in the written form, though generally the initials predominate:

- DJ or deejay
- PDG or pédégé

Sometimes more than the initial letter is kept, so that the result can be read as a word:
- COURLY : COMMunauté URbaine de LYon

In addition, words thus created may well be designed to reflect an aspect of their meaning:
- ORBITAL: ORganisation du Bassin Intérieur des Transports Annulaires Libérés des Encombrements

These are sometimes termed syllabic acronyms (acronymes syllabiques).

**Blends**

Blends are compounds made up of one or more clippings. In French they are variously called amalgames (Tournier) or mots-valises, itself a loan translation from the English portmanteau word, a quotation from Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass*. Note that a portmanteau, in nineteenth century England, was a case for carrying clothes, which folded the garments in such a way that they took up less space and would therefore not be crushed. This motivation is largely lost to present-day speakers of English.

The elements making up the blend are termed splinters in English and fracto-morphèmes in French (once again following Tournier’s terminology).

They are particularly well developed in contemporary English, especially American English:

- *Smog* : smoke + fog
- *Motel* : motor + hotel

Many of the older blends have a common element which is elided (as the fold in the portmanteau), but this is not always the case

- *Brunch* : breakfast + lunch
- *Labrador + poodle* : labradoodle

While most blends are made up of two clippings, some contain only one:

- *Breathalyser* : breath + analyser

Blends appear more commonly in English than in French, where they are sometimes criticised.

**Reasons for truncations**

- Economy : especially important for long constructions often referred to (institutional)
- Euphemism : avoid using an inappropriate expression
BO (body odor)
IVG (interruption volontaire de grossesse – rather than avortement)
- Playful language: LOL (laugh out loud)
- Prestige of technical terms

**Exercises from the handbook**

What is the meaning of the following initialisms?

Ex 5.1
**AD, CE, CFCs, GOP, HMSO, MCP, MEP, NALGO, NASA, OPEC, the 3 Rs, R&D, RUC, s.o.b. TGIF, TUC, WHO, Y2K** (Confession: I only found 14 without the help of the dictionary!)

Ex 5.5
What homonyms can you find for the following initialisms in English?
*AA, ABC, CO, STD*

and between English and French

*DEA, COD, LEA.

Ex. 5.6 English uses several Latin abbreviations. What are these?
*a.m., p.m., e.g., ca, c., AD, ER, ibid., viz.*

Ex 5.8 Find the origin of the following abbreviations:
*con; condo; deli; diss; fax; pep; perks; pharm; poly; tech; turps*

the truncation of *vegetables* has three forms. What are they and how are they used?

Ex 5.9 How were the following blends form and what do they mean?

*abortuary; amtrac; Amtrak; aquacise; beautique; brunch; fanzine; guesstimate; napalm; Spanglish; travelog*

Ex 5.10 Put the abbreviated forms below into the appropriate box.

French: *amphi; CODEVI; Deug; dico; Forpronu; ONG; ovni; sécam; vępéciste; rurbain; tapuscrit*

English: *Amoco; brolly; brunch; Cobuild; IBM; Nalgo; OFWAT; transistor; telecom; VSO*

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