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Word Formation Process in Automotive Terms on Car Brand's Websites

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Abstract: Automotive technology has continuously evolved over time, leading to the emergence of new terminologies that did not previously exist. Nowadays, automakers introduce their products through websites, allowing consumers to search the internet and explore the complete features of vehicles they intend to purchase. The objective of this study is to identify recent automotive terminologies used on these websites and to analyze how these terms are formed. The term “recent” refers to the terminology currently used by various automakers, including Nissan, Toyota, Hyundai, Honda, Geely, Li Auto, and BYD. These terminologies reflect not only advancements in automotive technology but also the growing human desire to develop more efficient and environmentally friendly vehicles with reduced dependence on fossil fuels and increased use of renewable resources. The findings reveal that most terminologies are formed through compounding and acronyms, with open and hyphenated compounds being the most common types. Furthermore, some terminologies are formed by taking the initial letters of each word to create acronyms.

Keywords: Automotive terms, Word formation, website.

INTRODUCTION

Human mobility has become increasingly convenient due to the widespread use of automobiles. Over time, automobile design and technology have continuously evolved to meet human needs and to address environmental concerns. This evolution of automotive technology has also influenced the English language, particularly with the emergence of gas-powered, hybrid, and electric energy vehicles. These vehicles incorporate the latest innovations, giving rise to new lexical items that require careful examination so that the general public can comprehend the meaning of these specialized terms (Fitria, 2022; Jelimun, 2024).

This study focuses on examining words related to automotive terms found on official vehicle brand websites, with the aim of identifying how these words are formed and categorizing their types. Websites serve as an effective medium for brand introduction and allow customers to explore a vehicle’s specifications and features virtually before making a purchasing decision. In order to conduct this analysis, morphology is employed as the primary analytical tool. According to the Encyclopædia Britannica (2026), morphology is defined as the study of internal word structure. Within a word, there is a smallest unit of meaning known as a morpheme. Morphemes are classified into two categories: free morphemes and bound morphemes. A free morpheme is one that can stand independently and carry meaning, such as run, walk, cat, and cake. In contrast, a bound morpheme cannot stand alone and must be attached to another morpheme in order to be meaningful, such as the prefixes re-, un-, and anti-, as well as the suffix -est (O’Grady & Guzman, 1996).

Morphology also studies the processes by which words are formed. This is referred to as the word formation process. According to Yule (2014), there are several types of word formation processes, including affixation, conversion, clipping, back-formation, compounding, borrowing, coinage, blending,

reduplication, and acronym formation. Each of these processes contributes uniquely to the expansion of vocabulary in English (Katamba, 1993).

Through this study, the automotive lexical terms of the twenty-first century will be thoroughly examined in order to provide clear comprehension for readers and to serve as a reference for further studies. This is particularly important given that the rapid development of automotive technology continues to enrich the English lexicon with new and specialized vocabulary.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design, in which the researcher conducts a comprehensive analysis and description of the data. As stated by Creswell (2014), qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meanings that individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem. The data for this study were collected from automotive terminology found on the official websites of seven automotive brands, namely Nissan, Toyota, Hyundai, Honda, Geely, Li Auto, and BYD. These brands were selected due to their diverse geographical origins and their active role in introducing new automotive technologies. The analysis focused specifically on English-language versions of the websites to ensure consistency in linguistic analysis.

The data were collected from specific sections of the websites, including product descriptions, technical specifications, and promotional texts, where automotive terminology is most frequently used. The data collection process was conducted over a defined period, from January to March 2026, to ensure that the terminology analyzed reflects recent usage. Data collection was carried out through careful observation and documentation of relevant lexical items found within these sections. Subsequently, the identified terms were analyzed using the theoretical framework of word formation processes as proposed by Yule (2014) and O'Grady and Guzman (1996). Each term was examined to determine the type of word formation process involved and to explain its meaning within its contextual usage.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Automotive technology developed a long time and it brings new lexicon. Where can people see this new type of lexicons? this new lexicon can be seen through brand's social media, official website, and brochure. In addition, this study focuses on terms which found on official website. By looking via website, people have an idea of what vehicle they want. allows for some people, this new and particular terms can be confusing. To deal with it, a study has to be conducted to comprehend new vocabularies that will developed in the future.

To understand how automotive vocabulary form and develop, morphology is a vital tool to examine, especially in word formation. According to O'Grady & Guzman (1996) morphology is a study of word formation and analysis of word class system and the rules in it. In morphology, there is a smallest unit that contains meaning, this is called 'morpheme'. Morpheme is classified into two types, first, free morpheme, which can stand by itself and contains a meaning e.g. car, plane, and walk. Meanwhile, bound morpheme is the smallest unit of language that cannot stand by itself and must attach to another morpheme to make it meaningful, for instance, prefix *ir-* in irresponsible and suffix *-ed* in walked. Bound morpheme is divided into two categories.

First, derivational bound morpheme, where it changes the word class. For example, adding *-ness* into morpheme 'happy' it then becomes 'happiness'. Adding suffix *-ness* change the word class of happy (adjective) into happiness (noun). On the other hand, inflection bound morpheme does not change the word class. Instead, it changes grammatical function of the word. For instance, suffix *-s* if added into word 'student' the meaning will change from singular into plural. Word does not form by itself, a process occurred

to form a word from morpheme. This process is called word formation. There are different types of word formation process, which are blending, coinage, reduplication, acronym, affixation, compounding, back formation, conversion, derivation, abbreviation, borrowing, and conversion.

Writer analyzed different car trademark websites, examine and explain about the word formation process. The results are mentioned below.

1. NEV, this term is taken from BYD website (<https://www.byd.com/nea/electric-cars/what-is-a-nev>), NEV stands for New Energy Vehicle which includes all types of electrified vehicle, whether hybrid or pure electric. NEV is formed through two processes, first compounding, which include as open compound where there is space between each of the morpheme to form new word with different meaning. And acronym is done by taking first letter of each morpheme to formed NEV.



2. EV, this term is taken from Toyota website (<https://itstimeforeveryone.toyota.astra.co.id/>) EV stands for electric vehicle, electric vehicle is a type of vehicle that gets the energy from electricity stored in a battery. The battery can be recharge like phone whether in home or in public charging space. EV (electric vehicle) is an instance of two actions, compound and acronym. in word formation where a new word is form by only the initial letter.



3. HEV, still from Toyota website (<https://itstimeforeveryone.toyota.astra.co.id/>) HEV is Hybrid Electric Vehicle, the difference between hybrid and electric is that hybrid vehicle get the power from an engine which powered by electric motor and combustion engine. HEV (hybrid electric vehicle) comes from two processes, compound and acronym. compound comes from the joint word between hybrid, electric, and vehicle. While acronym forms from the first letter of each word, H, E, and V. It then forms the word HEV.

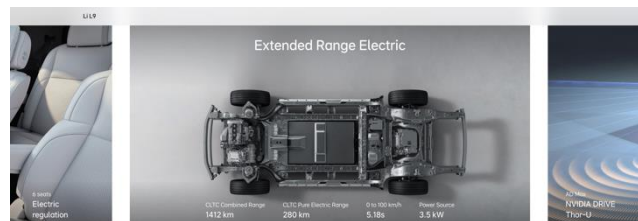


4. PHEV, still from Toyota website (<https://itstimeforeveryone.toyota.astra.co.id/>) PHEV is a short form of Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle which is the highest form of hybrid vehicle. Same like hybrid vehicle, the source of energy is electric motor and combustion engine. This type of vehicle runs with both power from electric energy by battery until it runs out then continue by gas. And with that, this vehicle has both tanks, one for gas and the other for electric charging tank. Similar to the

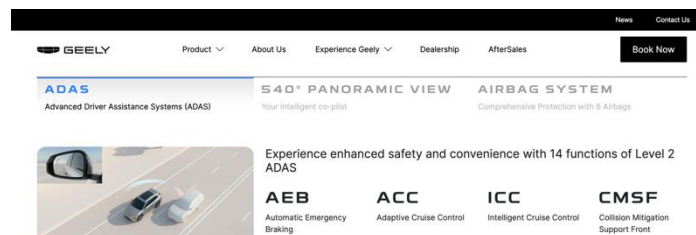
previous result, this word is formed by compounding, in which the combination of more than one word. In this case, there is a hyphenated compound word (Plug-in) and an open compound (hybrid electric vehicle). Then, an acronym process occurred which takes the first letter of each word to shorten it and make it easier to pronounce. The result is the word PHEV.



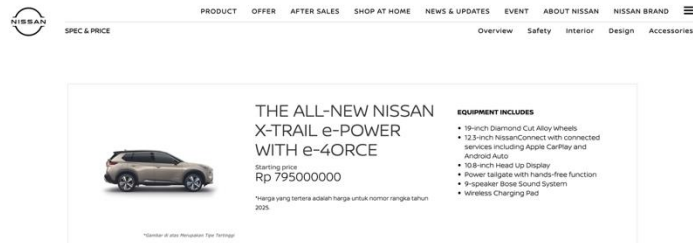
5. FCEV, this word was taken from the Honda website about the new CR-V (<https://automobiles.honda.com/cr-v-fcev>). FCEV stands for fuel cell electric vehicle. This type of vehicle gets the energy from hydrogen which is then converted into electricity by a fuel cell. FCEV is formed through compounding and acronym. Fuel cell electric vehicle is included as an open compound because it has space between each of the words, followed with an acronym by taking the first word from every word.
6. REEV/ EREV, this word was taken from the Li Auto website, <https://www.liauto.com/L9> introducing their flagship SUV, L9. EREV is a popular type of electrified vehicle in China and it works like this, the vehicle can be given gas like a hybrid and plug-in hybrid. The difference is that the combustion engine in EREV works as a generator to fill the battery instead of an engine in a regular vehicle. REEV is a form of compounding and acronym. Compounding occurred by combining each word from extended, range, electric, and vehicle. While an acronym took the first letter of each word.



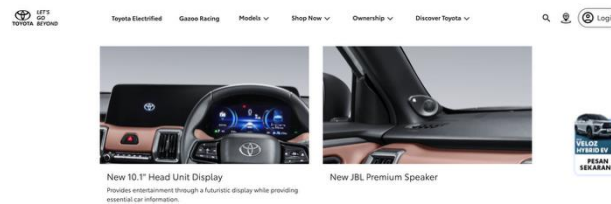
7. ADAS, this word was taken from the Geely website (<https://geelyauto.id/starray-em-i>). ADAS is a short form of *advance driver assistance system*. This technology assists the driver to keep safe and comfortable. ADAS works by a combination of sensors, radar, and camera to monitor traffic conditions, detect potential hazards, and provide warnings for the driver. From the word itself, ADAS is formed through two processes, compounding and acronym. Advance driver assistance system is an open compound because there is space between each word. After compounding, each letter of the word is taken and forms an acronym.



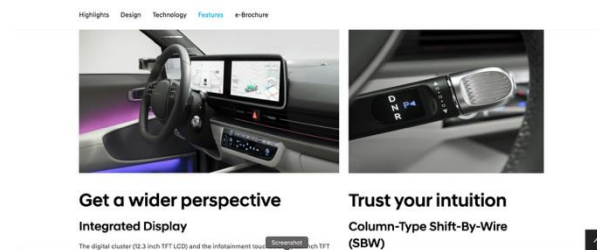
8. Head-up display, this word is taken from Nissan website (<https://nissan.co.id/vehicles/new/the-all-new-nissan-x-trail-e-power-with-e-4orce/spec-&-price>). Head up display is used to indicate vehicle speed, direction, turn signal, and safety features without having to see downward. Head-up display (HUD) is formed through both compounding and acronym, the compound is a type of both open and hyphenated compound word.



9. Head unit, this term is taken from Toyota Website and it refers to an interface and entertainment centre of a vehicle, which located in the middle between driver and front passenger. This system contain DVD player and radio (both AM and FM). However, in recent cars, head unit has been refreshed and becoming screen which have smartphone integration, whether IOS or android auto and integrate car features there so no more physical button. Head Unit is form through compounding, which included as open compound where there is space between each morpheme and the combination form new meaning which is a entertainment and control centre in a vehicle



10. Shift-by-wire, this word is taken from Hyundai website (<https://www.hyundai.com/ph/en/find-a-car/ioniq6/features>) which is a system in form of lever, button, or knob that allows driver to change driving settings (drive, park, reverse, and neutral). This term is formed by combining two or more words which are 'shift' and by-wire which include as compound word. Specifically, hyphenated compound word which has hyphenated sign



CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the rapid development of automotive technology has significantly contributed to the expansion of specialized vocabulary in the automotive domain, particularly as reflected in official car brand websites. Based on the analysis of ten selected terminologies collected from seven automakers' English-language websites, the findings indicate that compounding and acronym formation are the dominant word formation processes. More specifically, open and hyphenated compounds frequently serve as the structural basis for the creation of technical terms, which are then often shortened into acronyms to enhance efficiency and usability in communication.

The study contributes to the field of morphology by providing empirical evidence of how contemporary technological innovation influences lexical formation in a specific domain. It also highlights the functional role of language in simplifying complex technological concepts for broader consumer accessibility. The prevalence of acronyms suggests a tendency toward linguistic economy, while compounding reflects the need to maintain semantic transparency in technical descriptions.

However, the findings are limited to a specific dataset, namely English-language content from selected automotive websites within a defined time frame. Therefore, future research is recommended to expand the scope by including other languages, platforms, or industries in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of word formation patterns in evolving technological contexts.

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