

## The usefulness of add ons (continued)

The structure of many words in English allows bits to be added before and after the main word. These affixes give more information about meaning or structure of the word (or sometimes both).

*Patterning* can help a learner notice a language feature. The tutor does this when they model language that contains the target feature in context:

In the following cases, a final –s:

*“My daughter **walks** to school. She **leaves** home about eight o’clock. Sometimes she **walks** very slowly, and then she’s late for school! How about your son?”*

*“In my house I **do** the food shopping. Who **does** the shopping in your house?”*

Some of the most common affixes, like this one above, have a **grammatical** function

- The –s above shows that the verb is 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular.
- At other times a final –s shows that a noun is plural.

*“How many **books** did you borrow from the library today, Hyacinth? Twelve? How exciting!”*

- Other suffixes show the **word class**, which may be useful for some learners. For example:
  - ance, -tion, -sion are *noun* endings (*importance, contraction, recession*)
  - ant, -al, often show that the word is an *adjective* (*important, recessional*)
  - ly sometimes indicates an *adverb* (*importantly, really*)

We usually just use, and teach, these as part of the word, which is just fine. It can be useful to draw a learner’s attention to the difference (or similarity!) in pronunciation as well as spelling between words like *important* and *importance*.

- The largest number of suffixes carry information about meaning **and** structure

Help (verb or noun) ..... *helpless, helpful* (adjs)

Child (noun) ..... *childish* (adj)

- Two suffixes which often challenge learners are –ed and –ing:

1. Interest (verb or noun) .....*Interesting* (present participle; also adjective with an active meaning = carrying the quality of “interest”)

*“That book on mushrooms looks very **interesting**, Hyacinth. May I borrow it?”*

