Briefing 6 – Prefixes and vocabulary

1. Introduction

Latin has many verbs that bring a core meaning that creates a family of related verbs. Many of these bring a family of new words by the use of prefixes like **-ad** or **pre-** . Common Latin words and members of their prefixed family create literally thousands of English words. If you know a basic Latin verb, and you know how suffices work, you can extend your Latin vocabulary a lot!

First, remember that many Latin verbs have a Supine ending **-um** that when replaced by '*ion*' becomes an English word.

For example, take the word **mitto**, which means *I send*, with principal parts:

mitto, mittere, misi, missum

Its supine **missum**, with the substitution, becomes the English word *mission* – something one is sent to do.

In Latin, **mitto** can have a number of prefixes: here are some results of prefixes:

admitto (*I let in*), **amitto** (*I lose*), **antemitto** (*I send ahead*), **circummitto** (*I send around*), **committo** (*I bring together*), **demitto** *(I drop)*, **dimitto** (*I dismiss*), **emitto** (*I send out*), **intermitto** (*I interrupt*), **omitto** (*I omit*), **permitto** (*I let through*), **praemitto** (*I send ahead*), **promitto** (*I promise*), **remitto** (*I resend*), **submitto** (*I raise/rear*), **supermitto** (*I throw over*), **transmitto** (*I send across*)

This list is given, not for learning, but to illustrate the value of knowing how to apply the principle. Note, in looking at these words and the English meanings, that the English meaning can have strayed from the original meaning, often in an abstract way. For example, an 'admission' is when you now let in a contrary fact.

Note that if you know the principle parts of **mitto**, you will know the principle parts of any of its family; for example:

permitto, permittere permisi, permissum - *I let through*

The English word from the supine in this case is, of course '*permission*'. It is interesting to look in the dictionary for verbs that use the prefixes listed for **mitto** – for **ad-** in a small Latin/English dictionary there may be 40 or more.

We find English words for **mitto** alone:

admit	*demise*	*omit*	*promise*	*submission*
admission	*emit*	*omission*	*remit*	*transmit*
commit	*emission*	*permit*	*remission*	*transmission*
commission	*intermission*	*permission*	*submit*	

2. Common verbs that use prefixes

What are the best basic verbs to know apart from **mitto**? The following are derived from the Cambridge Latin Course vocabulary:

cado – I fall	**fugio** – I flee	**sentio** – I feel
capio – I take, capture	**iacio** – I throw	**specto** – I watch
cedo – I yield	**lego** – I read/choose	**spero** – I hope
do – I give	**mitto** – I send	**sum** – I am
eo – I go	**moveo** – I move	**venio** – I come
facio – I make/do	**pono** – I place	**video** – I see
fero – I carry	**porto** – I carry	**vinco** – I conquer
frango – I break	**pugno** – I fight	**voco** – I call

3. Use of specific prefixes

Some prefixes create new verbs with a clear derivation (usually) from the prefix's meaning.

3.1. re- or red- with the sense of 'back'

recede – I recede, go back	**refugio** – I flee back, escapere	**revenio** - I come back, return
reddo – I give back	**reiicio** – I throw back, reject	**revoco** – I call back, revive
redeo – I return, go back	**repono** – I put back, replace	
refero – I bring back, redirect	**respecto** – I look back on, respect	

Note that **reiicio** (often written **rejicio** with supine **rejectum**)changes the 'a' vowel in 'iacio' to 'i' e.g. **-iiceo** with a prefix. The other principle parts keep the vowel unchanged:

reiicio reiicere reieci reiectum compared with **iacio iacere ieci iectum**.

Of course, the consonantal 'i' is often written as 'j' but is normally pronounced as a 'y: for example:

yackio yackery yaykee yactum, ray-yickio, ray-yickery, ray-yaykee ray-yectum

3.2. con- or com- etc. with the sense of 'with' or 'together'

The prefix **con-** etc, corresponds to the preposition **cum** – *with*. The last letter, 'n', often varies to work best with a following consonant:

concado – I fall together
concipio – I devise, conceive
concedo – I concede, allow
condo – I store, put away
coneo – I walk, march
conficio – I construct, complete
confero – I bring together, collect
confrango – I shatter, subdur

confugio – I take refuge
conicio – I pile together, infer
colligo – I collect, connect
commoveo – I agitate, disturb
compono – I arrange, compose
comporto – I transport, amass
conpugno – I fight with
consentio – I agree, consent

conspecto – I observe, watch
conspero – I hope for, trust
consum – I am together with
convenio – I meet, assemble
convideo – I look at, consider
convinco – I find guilty, convict

3.3. in- or im- etc, with the sense of in, into

The **-in** prefix sometimes has the sense of a negation.

incado – I sink, drop, plummet
incipio – I begin, undertake
incedo – I advance, approach
indo – I put in/on, I introduce
ineo – I enter, begin
inficio – I corrupt, infect, spoil
infero – I carry in, urge, inflict
infrango – I insert, thrust in/on
invoco

infugio – I run away, go into exile
inicio – I hurl in, inject
illego – I read, gather
immoveo – I move, affect, disturb
impono – I impose, establish
importo – I bring in, import, cause
impugno – I fight against, attack
insentio – I realise, understand

inspecto – I examine, inspect
inspero – I look forward to
insum – I am in/on/there
invenio – I come upon, find, invent
invideo – I envy, begrudge, refuse
invinco – I defeat, succeed
invoco – I call upon, invoke