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MORPHOLOGICAL PRODUCTIVITY OF ADJECTIVE-FORMING PREFIXES IN ENGLISH AT THE LEVEL OF WORD-FORMATION RULES

Abstract: This paper studies the morphological productivity of adjective-forming prefixes at the level of word-formation rules. The productivity at the aforementioned level is the union of the productivity at the level of word-formation types and morphological types. The aim of the paper is to offer pieces of information on the interaction of different concepts within different word-formation types together with the morphological aspect through different morphological types. We find 267 examples of adjectives and analyse 31 prefixes interacting with various simple or complex adjectives in the corpus comprised of news, literary, academic and TV registers. After analytic, descriptive and statistical methods, we conclude that they fall into 5 different conceptual categories, i.e., wordformation type clusters (Quality, Location, Quantity, Time and State). The majority of clusters show that the stem is determining the conceptual category while prefixes refine it. The highest productivity rates are recorded with such word-formation types. The only exceptions are Quantity and Time where the conceptual category depends on the prefixes and stems equally. The results from the morphological analyses show that most of the prefixes are inserting additional semantic pieces of information, usually recording the highest PR and not changing the conceptual category of the stem and appearing within one or multiple clusters, with exceptions for Quantity and Time.

Keywords: morphological productivity, word-formation type clusters, word-formation rules, word-formation types, morphological types, adjective-forming prefixes in English.

1. INTRODUCTION

The quantitative research of morphological productivity has been going through its most productive period, with the introduction of Baayen's formulas (1992, 1993) that relied considerably on all the existing definitions of morphological productivity: the focus being on the frequency of the output words (Rainer, 1987, as cited in: Bauer, 2004:p.25), the number of available bases (Lieber, 1981), the proportion of words actually used to the number of words potentially created by a particular process (Aronoff, 1976), the possibility of forming new words (Rainer, 1987, as cited in: Bauer, 2004:p.25), the probability of new forms occurring (Harris, 1951; Aronoff, 1983) and the number of new forms occurring in a specified period of time (Rainer, 1987, as cited in: Bauer, 2004:p.25). This affix-driven quantitative model with its clear terminology has become almost unavoidable in the contemporary research (Baayen, 1994; Baayen & Renouf, 1996; Baayen & Neijt, 1997; Plag, Dalton-Puffer & Baayen, 1999; Hay & Baayen, 2002; Hay & Baayen, 2003; Plag, 2003; Fernandez-Dominguez, Diaz-Negrillo & Štekauer, 2007; Žarković, 2017, 2019a, 2019b), but also recognised as completely unusable for any other word-formation-process, but affixation (Жарковић, 2017; Żarković, 2017; Žarković Mccray, 2022; Žarković Mccray & Kujundžić, 2022) and detached from human imagination, knowledge, experience, etc. (Štekauer, 2005a, 2005b). Having in mind that morphological productivity is seen as the property of human language, which allows language users to use their acquired linguistic knowledge to name something new when needed (Yule, 1996:p.22-23), we wanted our research on the morphological productivity of adjective-forming prefixes to be detached from Baayen's formula-driven analyses and based on the observations that wordformation is about naming acts and processes that are active and forming (Grzega, 2002). These observations can be found as the core of onomasiological theory to word-formation and morphological productivity.

1.1. Onomasiological theory

Onomasiological theory was marked by pioneering theories of word-formation by Miloš Dokulil (1962, as cited in: Štekauer, 2005a) and Ján Horecký (1983, 1989, as cited in: Štekauer, 2005a). While Dokulil was focused on the idea of onomasiological categories defining them as basic conceptual structures enabling the act of naming to happen, Ján Horecký made a highly significant step in the development of onomasiological theory of word-formation by his multi-level model of word-formation, including an object of extra-linguistic reality, the pre-semantic (conceptual), semantic, and formal levels. His elaborate semantic level that he develops enlists semantic distinctive features, offers an analysis of their relations, and proposes their hierarchical organisation.

Being largely influenced by Dokulil's and Horecký's ideas, Pavol Štekauer establishes the form-meaning unity as the fundamental principle of his onomasiological model and goes to say:

'Word-formation deals with productive and rule-governed patterns (wordformation types and rules, and morphological types) used to generate motivated naming units in response to the specific naming needs of a particular speech community by making use of word-formation bases of bilateral naming units and affixes stored in the Lexical Component.' (2005a:p.212)

He emphasises the importance of the active role of language users in the act of naming to bypass an affix-driven system of rules which he sees as impersonal and detached from naming units and language users. The act of naming cannot be seen as detached from human knowledge, experience, imagination, etc. (Štekauer, 2005a, 2005b). The assumption is that each act of naming is first lexically scanned by the speech community, which predetermines all the ensuing steps within the act of naming.

1.2. Onomasiology and Morphological Productivity

The onomasiological theory states that all naming units are formed by productive word-formation and morphological types/rules (Štekauer, 2005a, 2005b; Štekauer *et al.*, 2005). Each act of naming starts at the conceptual level where the object to be named is identified within the conceptual category. When the concept of the object is identified, the naming process identifies semantic and morphemic components in the naming structure of the resulting word. Different naming structures can be analysed from different angles leading to different productivity rates (PR). The onomasiological approach distinguishes four different levels of naming structures, i.e. four levels of productivity:

1. the productivity at the level of Onomasiological Types

2. the productivity at the level of Word-Formation Types

3. the productivity at the level of Morphological Types

4. the productivity at the level of Word-Formation Rules

Morphological Productivity of Adjective-Forming Prefixes in English at the Level of Word-Formation Rules

The productivity of onomasiological types starts from the needs of the speech community and distinguishes five onomasiological types and consists of three main elements (a determining constituent, a determined constituent of the onomasiological mark that stands for the concept, and the onomasiological base of the onomasiological mark that is like a head of a complex word). The productivity of each onomasiological type depends on the question which elements that constitute onomasiological structures are linguistically expressed at the onomatiological level indicating in that way language users' different cognitive processes and linguistic representation that regulate the act of naming (Štekauer et al., 2005).

The productivity at the level of word-formation types is also related to the conceptual categories. This enables the researchers to study different word-formation types within the same concept. For instance, the concept of Agent can have different word-formation types: Action – Agent (*writer*); Object – Action – Agent (*woodcutter*), etc. Different word-formation types used to form new words within the same concept represent a single word-formation type cluster. Every cluster is 100% productive and every single word-formation type can be computed internally, within the cluster.

The productivity at the level of morphological types shows that any wordformation type may have various morphological representations (*novelist* (N+-*ist*), *writer* (V+-*er*), etc.). They represent various morphological types used to form new complex words within one and the same conceptual category, which leads us to a single morphological type cluster. The cluster is 100% productive, and individual morphological types may be computed internally, within the particular cluster.

The productivity at the level of word-formation rules represents word-formation types and morphological types and therefore, the concept of Agent looks like this (Štekauer, 2005a, 2005b; Štekauer *et al.*, 2005):

Action – Agent Verb -er (driver)

Instrument – Agent Noun (s) man (oarsman)

Object - Action - Agent Noun Verb -er (wood-cutter)

2. METHODOLOGY AND CORPUS

Our research is focused on adjective-forming prefixes and the productivity rate (PR) at the level of word-formation rules. The aim is to identify how many different concepts the analysed adjectives with different prefixes fall into and then present the productivity rate of word-formation types and morphological types for every identified concept, i.e. word-formation type clusters (WFTC). Our research is based on the hypothesis that prefixes in English serve as efficient and practical tools for introducing supplementary semantic information into the structure of words. While it is true that any form of affixation can add semantic content to newly-formed lexemes, even if it is relatively minor, the specific aim of our study is to investigate the distinct role that prefixes play in this process. We contend that prefixes have a unique ability to convey nuanced meanings that can alter the overall sense of the word, thereby enriching the lexicon and enhancing communicative precision. It is important to note that, while the addition of new semantics is a fundamental requirement of all word-formation processes, the particular emphasis of our investigation is on the distinctive contributions made by prefixes in English.

Registers*	Sources	Number of words
News	The Guardian, The Telegraph, The Sun (2013)	100 590
Literary	Groff, Lauren. (2009). Delicate Birds and Other Stories, Hayes, Sadie. (2011). The Start-Up. The Anti-Social Network, Casey, Ryan. (2012). What We Saw, Keplinger, Kody. (2013). Secrets and Lies	187 040
Academic	Moral Judgement and Decision Making (2009), The Handbook of Evolutionary Economic Geography (2010) NETWORK GEEKS: How They Built the Internet (2013)	99 228
Television	House (2012), The Vampire Diaries (2010-2011), Two and a Half Men (2009), The Big Bang Theory (2011)	121 376
Total number of words		508 234

The corpus used to generate examples is comprised of texts from news, literary, academic and TV registers:

Table 1 – The corpus

* See Literature for abbreviations and details regarding stories selected for the literary register, papers in academic register and selected transcripts for television register.

ФИЛОЛОГ XIV 2023 27

Morphological Productivity of Adjective-Forming Prefixes in English at the Level of Word-Formation Rules

We start the research by identifying adjectives with different prefixes with the help of computer software *AntConc 3.2.4.*² (Anthony, 2014). Every analysed adjective is then identified as a certain semantic concept, i.e., falling into a certain word-formation type cluster. All analysed clusters offer two pieces of information on adjectives in them: information regarding the interaction of different semantic concepts (word-formation types) and morphological elements (morphological types). Every cluster is 100% productive and thus every cluster offers productivity rates for different word-formation types and morphological types.

We decided not to incorporate big corpora, currently available to researchers, into our research for two reasons: not wanting to present irrelevant conclusions due to the size of our corpus and the frequency of similar questions in the academic discourse and the fact that big corpora would inevitably lead to numerous examples. All the analysed examples in this research were analysed manually, which would in case of big corpora require a group of people. By using our corpus, we wanted to include formal registers, but also the less formal ones in order to generate as many different examples as possible and present different paths pursued in different registers when forming words. We used analytic, descriptive and statistical methods in our analyses.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

After analysing the corpus, we came to 267 examples³ of adjectives with adjectiveforming prefixes which fall into 5 different semantic concepts, i.e., word-formation type clusters: Quality (215 examples), Location (19), Quantity (13), Time (11) and State (9).

We will begin our analysis by showing the productivity rates (PR) of different word-formation types and morphological types for the concept of Quality as the most productive concept in terms of analysed examples:

²We downloaded the software at the following website: http://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/

³The number of examples refers to type frequency, i.e. the number of different words with the same prefix in our analysis (More on type frequency versus token frequency at Plag, 2003; Du & Zhang, 2010).

Maja M. Žarković Mccray

Word-formation types:*	Examples:	Total number of examples (215)	PR (100%)
negation – quality	disloyal (H S8 E 21)	158	73.48%
	illegal (LPM 110)		
	invaluable (DBSF 91)		
	nonmoral (FRI 297)		
	unbeautiful (DBM 45)		
quantity – quality	extraordinary (EEG 143)	51	23.72%
	hypercritical (DT 19/8)		
	super-sexy (TS 14/6)		
Morphological	Framples	Total number of	PR
types:	Examples.	examples (215)	(100%)
prefix + stem	amoral (LPM 104)	215	100%
<i>a-</i> + adjective	anti-political (DT 29/4)	1	
<i>anti-</i> + adjective	dishonest (H S8 E19)	6	
<i>dis-</i> + adjective	dysfunctional (AAS 18)	5	
<i>dys-</i> + adjective	extraordinary (EEG 143)	1	
<i>extra-</i> + adjective	hypersensitive (HS8E19)	8	
<i>hyper-</i> + adjective	hypothermic (DBW70)	9	
<i>hypo-</i> + adjective	illegal (LPM 110)	9	
<i>il-</i> + adjective	impossible (BBT S5 E10)	1	
<i>im-</i> + adjective	incorrect (ICS 194)	10	
<i>in-</i> + adjective	irregular (H S8 E18)	35	
<i>ir-</i> + adjective	nonobvious (ICS 197)	11	
<i>non-</i> + adjective	overconfident (FRI 299)	12	
over- + adjective	prototypical (FRI 293)	15	
<i>proto-</i> + adjective	pseudo-religious (NG 77)	1	
<i>pseudo-</i> + adjective	quasi-literary (TG 29/4)	1	
<i>quasi-</i> + adjective	redoubtable (NG 18)	1	
<i>re-</i> + adjective	semi-true (DBB 57)	3	
<i>semi-</i> + adjective	supernatural (VD S2E5)	5	
<i>super-</i> + adjective	uneasy (WWS 104)	5	
<i>un-</i> + adjective	-	76	
,			

Table 2 – Morphological productivity of Quality at the level of word-formation rules

* We are not going to present all the anaylzed word-formation types but only the most productive ones in most of the word-formation type clusters keeping the paper within the given guidelines.

We find 4 different word-formation types in this word-formation type cluster (WFTC) and one morphological type, which is not surprising given that our morphological analysis focused on the interaction between prefixes and stems, which is a shared characteristic across all clusters. It is important to note that we did not examine the internal structure of the stems themselves. The productivity rate of [negation – quality] word-formation type is the highest with 73.48% followed only by [quantity – quality] with 23.72%. All the other word-formation types scored lower than the aforementioned ones. The only morphological type, prefix + stem, shows the interaction of 20 different prefixes with various simple or complex adjectives. The majority of prefixes expressed negation (10 in total) or quantity (6), which aligns with the overall presence of these concepts in the most productive word-formation types. This cluster showcases how the analysed prefixes do not change the conceptual category of adjectives but only insert their meaning into the exiting conceptual category, and, for example, turn a positive feature into a negative one (amoral, dishonest, impossible, uneasy, etc.), make it reversative (redoubtable) or emphasise it (*extraordinary*, *hyperthermic*, etc.)

The following WFTC shows different word-formation types and morphological types for adjectives falling into the conceptual category of Location:

Word-formation	Examples:	Total number of	PR
types:		examples (19)	(100%)
location – location	subconcious (H S8 E22)	19	100%
	intercontinental (BBT S5		
	<i>E2</i>)		
Morphological	Examples:	Total number of	PR
types:		examples (19)	(100%)
prefix + stem		19	100%
<i>inter-</i> + adjective	inter-sectoral (AAS 29)	13	
<i>intra-</i> + adjective	intra-regional (LID 453)	1	
<i>pre-</i> + adjective	prefrontal (FRI 281)	1	
<i>sub-</i> + adjective	subconcious (H S8 E22)	1	
<i>trans-</i> + adjective	transatlantic (NG 23)	3	

ФИЛОЛОГ XIV 2023 27

Table 3 - Morphological productivity of Location at the level of word-formation rules

Maja M. Žarković Mccray

We recorded one word-formation type in this WFTC. The only analysed word-formation type was [location – location]. The morphological type, prefix + stem, showed the interaction of 5 different prefixes with simple and complex adjectives. The results in this WFTC align in the same way as the results in the previous WFTC, i.e., all prefixes expressed location and only inserted the meaning without changing the conceptual category of adjectives. Their meanings differentiated, for example, between the location that included multiple entities (*inter-sectoral*) or a single entity (*intra-regional*).

We continue our analysis by presenting word-formation types and morphological types for adjectives that fall into the conceptual category of Quantity. The analysis is presented in the following table:

		Total	
Word-formation	Examples:	number of	PR
types:		examples	(100 %)
		(13)	
quantity – quality	suboptimal (EEG 154)	3	23.07%
number – quality	bisexual (TS 29/4)	3	23.07%
quantity –	multi-locational (EEG 154)	3	23.07%
location			
		Total	
Morphological	Examples:	number of	PR
types:		examples	(100%)
		(13)	
prefix + stem		13	100%
<i>bi-</i> + adjective	bilateral (H S8 E21)	4	
<i>extra-</i> + adjective	extrawide (DBF 101)	1	
<i>in-</i> + adjective	infinite (ICS 193)	1	
<i>macro-</i> + adjective	macro-institutional (EEG 154)	1	
<i>mono-</i> + adjective	monocultural (NG 34)	1	
<i>multi-</i> + adjective	multi-national (AAS 13)	3	
<i>sub-</i> + adjective	subatomic (NG 19)	2	

Table 4 - Morphological productivity of Quantity at the level of word-formation rules

There are 6 different word-formation types in this WFTC. The same PR is shared by 3 types: [quantity – quality], [number – quality] and [quantity – location] with 23.07% respectively. All the other word-formation types scored lower than

Morphological Productivity of Adjective-Forming Prefixes in English at the Level of Word-Formation Rules

the aforementioned ones. Morphological analysis shows the interaction of 7 different prefixes with simple or complex adjectives. This cluster exemplifies various characteristics that prefixes show when inserting semantic pieces of information. Some prefixes can be recorded in different clusters, i.e., conceptual categories, not changing their conceptual category. Such prefixes are, in our case, *extra-* and *in-*, prefixes that express quantity and negation respectively in this cluster but also with adjectives falling into the conceptual category of Quality. Some prefixes have numerous meanings such as *sub-*, which, in this cluster expresses quantity, but with adjectives falling into the conceptual category of Location, it expresses location. We also have prefixes that change the quality expressed by adjectives and influence the conceptual category, i.e., cluster (*bisexual – attracted to both men and women, macro-institutional – referring to the overall organisation of institutions, monocultural – referring to the growth of a single organism, multi-national – including several nationalities), which makes them as relevant for the meaning as the adjective itself.*

		Total	
Word-formation	Examples:	number of	PR
types:		examples	(100%)
		(11)	
time – time	neoclassical (AAS 17)	6	54.54%
time – quality	postconventional (LPM 108)	3	27.27%
time – action	preoperative (FRI 278)	2	18.18%
	Examples:	Total	
Manul ala staal tau aa		number of	PR
Morphological types:		examples	(100%)
		(11)	
prefix + adjective		11	100%
<i>neo-</i> + adjective	neo-Darwinian (AAS 6)	5	
<i>post-</i> + adjective	postoperative (FRI 278)	3	
<i>pre-</i> + adjective	prehistoric (NG 22)	3	
	1		

Our next WFTC shows the analysis of adjectives falling into the conceptual category of Time:

Table 5 – Morphological productivity of Time at the level of word-formation rules

There are 3 different word-formation types in this WFTC and we find 3 prefixes interacting with various complex adjectives. The highest productivity rate is achieved

by [time – time] with 54.54% followed by [time – quality] (27.27%) and [time – action] (18.18%). Some prefixes just insert the information without changing the conceptual category of the stem (*neoclassical*), but some prefixes found in the analysis help us understand the timeline better, for example, whether the description of time refers to before (*preoperative*) or after (*postoperative*), emphasising as well the importance of the influence the prefixes have on the change that happens with the conceptual category of the stem. The prefix *pre-* can be seen in this cluster as well as within the conceptual category of Location, which exemplifies numerous meanings that some prefixes might insert, in this particular case, Time (*prehistoric, preoperative*) or Location (*prefrontal*).

Word-formation		Total number	PR
types:	Examples:	of examples (9)	(100 %)
negation – state	unaware (NG 22)	9	100%
Morphological	F 1	Total number	PR
types:	Examples:	of examples (9)	(100%)
prefix + stem		0	1000/
<i>un-</i> + adjective	unhygenic (BBT S5 E2)	9	100%

Our analysis continues with adjectives that fall into the conceptual category of State:

Table 6 - Morphological productivity of State at the level of word-formation rules

We find one word-formation type in this WFTC and we analysed the interaction between only one prefix (un-) and various simple or complex adjectives, all expressing state. The prefix un- is a very frequent prefix with adjectives that fall into the conceptual category of Quality and we find it there with the same meaning as in this cluster. The overall meaning of the adjective is sometimes already known from the stem itself and the prefix makes it more defined, which is the case in this cluster as well as in the majority of clusters where prefixes do not change the conceptual category of adjectives.

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The analysis included 267 examples of different complex adjectives containing various adjective-forming prefixes. After identifying the semantic concepts for every analysed adjective, we categorised them into 5 word-formation type clusters (Quality, Location, Quantity, Time and State). Every cluster offered two pieces

of information: the number of word-formation types and morphological types. All clusters recorded only one morphological type (prefix + stem), which is not surprising given that the analysis was focused on the interaction of prefixes and stems not going into the stem structure analysis.

After the analysis of word-formation types, we can say there is no clear link between the number of analysed examples and the number of word-formation types. The most productive WFTC in terms of analysed examples was Quality with 215 adjectives, but not in terms of word-formation types with only 4 recorded. Quantity, nevertheless, with only 13 analysed examples was the most productive WFTC in terms of word-formation types with 6 recorded in the analysis. The highest productivity rates of different word-formation types in different word-formation type clusters showed that in the majority of examples the concept was expressed by the stem and usually just refined by prefixes. The only exceptions were Quantity and Time where the interaction between prefixes and stems in some examples put an equal emphasis on both elements when determining the WFTC.

The morphological analysis included 31 adjective-forming prefixes occurring in one or multiple word-formation type clusters. We cannot say that there is a link between the number of analysed prefixes and the number of word-formation types. The most productive WFTC in terms of analysed prefixes was Quality with 20, but only 4 word-formation types, while Quantity records 7 prefixes and 6 wordformation types. In all the analysed examples, the stem was always realised by various simple or complex adjectives.

In conclusion, our research has successfully supported the hypothesisthat prefixes in English are an effective means of enhancing semantic information in word-formation. Our analysis of the characteristics of adjective-forming prefixes has demonstrated that they refine the core meaning of stems without changing their conceptual category (*amoral, intercontinental, unbeautiful*, etc.). Additionally, prefixes can convey different meanings across various conceptual categories (*uneasy, unaware, subconscious, suboptimal*, etc.) and can even influence the overall conceptual category of the resulting word becoming equally important as the stems themselves (*bisexual, preoperative, postoperative*, etc.). The findings of our study contribute to a better understanding of the role of prefixes in enriching the lexicon and improving communicative precision in the English language. By examining the patterns of semantic interactions and morphology in word-formation, our research provides valuable insights into the mechanisms by which English words are formed. Overall, our study underscores the importance of prefixes in English word-formation and highlights their significance as a tool for conveying nuanced meanings.

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ФИЛОЛОГ XIV 2023 27

58

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ФИЛОЛОГ XIV 2023 27

Maja M. Žarković Mccray

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MORFOLOŠKA PRODUKTIVNOST PREFIKSA U TVORBI PRIDJEVA U ENGLESKOM JEZIKU NA NIVOU PRAVILA TVORBE

Rezime

Rad se bavi proučavanjem morfološke produktivnosti prefiksa koje se koriste za tvorbu pridjeva na nivou pravila tvorbe. Produktivnost na nivou pravila tvorbe predstavlja proučavanje produktivnosti na nivou tvorbenih tipova i morfoloških tipova. Osnovni cilj rada jeste ponuditi informacije o interakciji različitih semantičkih koncepata, što je suština proučavanja produktivnosti na nivou tvorbenih tipova, zajedno sa različitim morfološkim strukturama koje se pročavaju na nivou morfoloških tipova. Nakon analize korpusa koji se sastoji od tekstova preuzetih iz novinskog, književnog, stručnog i televizijskog registra, dolazimo do 267 primjera pridjeva i, uz upotrebu deskriptivno-analitičke i statističke metode, zaključujemo da pridjevi koje smo pronašli u korpusu mogu da se svrstaju u pet različitih tvorbenih skupova (kvalitet, lokacija, kvantitet, vrijeme i stanje). Najveću stopu produktivnosti bilježe tvorbeni tipovi gdje stem određuje koncept za cijeli skup, a prefiksi su tu samo da dodatno pojasne značenje. Jedini izuzeci bili su skupovi kao što su kvantitet i vrijeme, gdje smo pronašli tvorbene tipove u kojima je koncept zavisio podjednako od stema i od prefiksa. Analiza morfoloških

tipova pokazuje da prefiksi koji ubacuju dodatne semantičke poruke u strukturu riječi bilježe najveći stepen produktivnosti i da mogu da se pojave u jednom ili više skupova. Jedini izuzeci pronađeni su sa skupovima kao što su kvantitet i vrijeme.

► *Ključne riječi:* morfološka produktivnost, tvorbeni skupovi, pravila tvorbe, tvorbeni tipovi, morfološki tipovi, prefiksi u tvorbi pridjeva u engleskom jeziku.

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