Directionality in affixation: testing the applicability of Marchand's (1964) semantic criteria

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Word-Formation Theories VI & Typology and Universals in Word-Formation V 23–26 June 2022, Košice, Slovakia





Project Ref. PID2020-119851GB-I00 funded by



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Background

Conversion is typically described in analogy to affixation (cf. Valera 2014, and references therein)

Examples of N/V conversion in English:

- (1) $attempt^{V}$ [ACTION] / $attempt^{N}$ [EVENT]
- (2) $smile^{N}$ [GESTURE] / $smile^{V}$ [ACTION]

Examples of affixation in English:

- (3) $write^{V}$ [ACTION] > $writer^{N}$ [AGENT]
- (4) *deboned*^{ADJ}
 - $de-+boned^{ADJ}$ 1. Of a
 - 1. Of a corset: not stiffened with whalebone
 - $debone^{V} + -ed$
- 2. Of meat or fish: that has had the bones removed

Background

Directionality in word formation

Various criteria have been proposed in the literature to identify directionality in unclear cases, including:

- i. Diachronic (historical evidence / attestation dates, e.g. Biese 1941)
- ii. Synchronic (emphasis on use and semantics cf. Marchand 1963, 1964)

Since then, several studies have taken on the issue from various perspectives (see e.g., Cetnarowska 1993, Štekauer 1996, Plag 2003, Bram 2011, Lohmann 2017, on English, Don 2003, based on phonological and morphological properties in Dutch, Plank 2010, on German, but potentially extendable to other languages, Tribout 2020, on French, or Ševčíková 2021 on Czech, among others).

"[D]irectionality remains a deadlock in many respects" (cf. Bauer and Valera 2005: 11).

Background

Marchand's (1964) content criteria for directionality

- i. Semantic Dependence: "[t]he word that for its analysis is dependent on the content of the other pair member is necessarily the derivative" (Marchand 1964: 12), e.g.: $knife^{N} > knife^{V}$ 'to cut with a knife'
- ii. Semantic Pattern: "[c]ertain words have characteristic meanings which mark them as derivatives" (Marchand 1964: 15), e.g.: 'to act as N' 'one who Vs' 'to make ADJ'
- iii. Semantic Range: that "[o]f two homophonous words exhibiting similar sets of semantic features the one with the smaller field of reference is the derivative" (Marchand 1964: 14), e.g.: $convert^{V} > convert^{N}$ 'one who has been converted to a religion/belief'
- iv. Restriction of Usage: "[i]f one word has a smaller range of usage than its pair member, it must be considered the derivative" (Marchand (1964: 13), e.g. restrictions to some forms, poetic, slang, etc.
- v. Register use
- vi. Frequency of occurrence

Aims of the study

i. To study whether Marchand's semantic criteria (1964) for directionality prove applicable in a sample of word-class changing affixation in English

ii. To see how measurable the criteria are when considering senses

Directionality should be studied by word senses and not by lexemes (Plank 2010)

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i. Data sample selection and extraction

List of 30 underived bases (Projekt Monika, cf. Körtvélyessy et al. 2020, and specifically Popova 2020, dealing with the study of derivational paradigms in English)

Table 1. Number of derivatives by affixation per paradigm base

Nouns	nDerivatives	Verbs	nDerivatives	Adjectives	nDerivatives
bone	16	burn	8	bad	4
day	7	cut	10	black	11
dog	17	dig	8	long	12
eye	11	drink	16	narrow	7
fire	10	give	7	new	5
louse	9	hold	15	old	6
name	14	know	13	straight	9
stone	15	pull	5	thick	14
tooth	20	sew	5	thin	7
water	20	throw	7	warm	9
Sum	139		94		84

i. Data sample selection and extraction

List of word-class changing affixes (Quirk et al. 1985, Stockwell & Minkova 2001) → Search of derivatives in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and the *British National Corpus* (BNC) → **Total of 317 derived lexemes**

Table 1. Number of derivatives by affixation per paradigm base

Nouns	nDerivatives	Verbs	nDerivatives	Adjectives	nDerivatives
bone	16	burn	8	bad	4
day	7	cut	10	black	11
dog	17	dig	8	long	12
eye	11	drink	16	narrow	7
fire	10	give	7	new	5
louse	9	hold	15	old	6
name	14	know	13	straight	9
stone	15	pull	5	thick	14
tooth	20	sew	5	thin	7
water	20	throw	7	warm	9
Sum	139		94		84

ii. Application of Marchand's (1969) criteria: semantic dependence

Table 2. Semantic dependence in the paradigm of bone^N (OED)

BASE	D1	D2	nSenses	+ SD	- SD	?	nSD
$\overline{bone^{\scriptscriptstyle { m N}}}$			22				
	$boned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3	1, 2, 3			3
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3	1, 2		3	2
	$boneless^{ ext{ iny N}}$		*				*
		$bonelessly^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADV}}}$	1	1			1
		bonelessness ^N	1	1			1
	bony/bonny/ boney ^{ADJ}		3	1, 2		3	2
	$bony^{N}$		1	1			1
	$bony^{\vee}$		1	1			1
	•	$bonily^{ ext{ADV}}$					
		$boninness^{ ext{ iny N}}$	1	1			1
	$boning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		4	1, 2, 3a, 3b, 4			4
	$boner^{\scriptscriptstyle{ m N}}$		4	1, 2a	2b, 3	4	1.5
	$boneish^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADJ}}}$		2	1, 2			2
	$debone^{\scriptscriptstyle m V}$		1	1			1
		$deboned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$	2	1, 2			2
		$deboning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$	1	1			1
Total			28				23.5

ii. Application of Marchand's (1969) criteria: semantic pattern

Table 3. Semantic pattern in the paradigm of *bone*^N (OED)

BASE	D1	D2	nSenses	-SP/?	nSP
$bone^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$			22		
	$boned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3		3
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3		3
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		*		*
		$bonelessly^{ ext{ iny ADV}}$	1		1
		$bonelessness^{ ext{ iny N}}$	1		1
	$bony^{*_{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3		3
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		1	1	0
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{V}}$		1		1
	•	$bonily^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADV}}}$			1
		$boninness^{ ext{ iny N}}$	1		
	$boning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		4	V: 1, 2, 3a, 4	0.5
	$boner^{\scriptscriptstyle{ m N}}$		4	, , ,	4
	$boneish^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADJ}}}$		2		2
	$debone^{\scriptscriptstyle { m V}}$		1		1
		$deboned^{\scriptscriptstyle ext{ADJ}}$	2	V: 2	1
		$deboning^{ ext{ iny N}}$	1		1
Total		J	28		22.5

ii. Application of Marchand's (1969) criteria: restrictions of usage

Table 4. Restrictions of usage in the paradigm of bone^N (OED)

BASE	D1	D2	nS	RU1	RU2	RU3	RU4	nRU
$bone^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$			22	Hist./obs./rare: 3, 10, 18, 19b, 20, 21	Pl.: 5a, 7, 16 (+coll.), 17		Figurative: 1c, 4b,	11.5
			_	Slang: 11,14	Mass n.: 8a			
	$boned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3	Specific: 2				1
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADJ}}}$		3	Specific: 2			Figurative: 3	1
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{N}}$		*					*
		$bonelessly^{ ext{ iny ADV}}$	1				Figurative: 1	1
		$bonelessness^{\scriptscriptstyle { m N}}$	1					0
	bony*ADJ		3	Specific: 3 (U.S. Mining.)				1
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{N}}}$		1	Specific: 1 (U.S. Mining.)				1
	$bony^{\vee}$		1	Obsolete (+ nonceword): 1				1
		$bonily^{\scriptscriptstyle ext{ADV}}$	1					0
		$boninness^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{N}}$	1					0
	$boning^{\scriptscriptstyle { m N}}$		4	Specific: 1, 2, 3 Slang: 4	– Pl.			4
	$boner^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		4	Slang: 1, 3, 4				3
	$boneish^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADJ}}}$		2	Obsolete: 1				1
	$debone^{\scriptscriptstyle m V}$		1					0
		$deboned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$	2	Specific: 1				1
		$deboning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$	1	Specific: 1				1
Total		G	28				Total nRU (Der)	16

ii. Application of Marchand's (1969) criteria: semantic range (number of senses)

Table 6. Number of senses for the lexemes in the paradigm of bone^N

BASE	D1	D2	nSenses
$bone^{N}$			22
	$boned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		*
		$bonelessly^{ ext{ iny ADV}}$	1
		bonelessness ^N	1
	$bony^{*_{ ext{ADJ}}}$		3
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		1
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{V}}$		1
		$bonily^{ ext{ iny ADV}}$	1
		$boninness^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$	1
	$boning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		4
	$boner^{\scriptscriptstyle{ m N}}$		4
	$boneish^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADJ}}}$		2
	$debone^{\scriptscriptstyle m V}$		1
		$deboned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$	2
		$deboning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$	1
Total			28

ii. Application of Marchand's (1969) criteria: semantic range (qualitative analysis)

Table 5. Semantic range in the paradigm of bone^N (OED)

BASE	D1	D2	SR	New/unrelated senses
$\overline{bone^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}}$				
	$boned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		≲	
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		<	
	$boneless^{ ext{ iny N}}$		<	
		$bonelessly^{ ext{ iny ADV}}$	≲	
		$bonelessness^{ ext{ iny N}}$	≲	
	$bony^{*_{ ext{ADJ}}}$		≲	
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		<	
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{V}}$		<	
		$bonily^{\scriptscriptstyle ext{ADV}}$?	
		$boninness^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{N}}$	≈	
	$boning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		<	
	$boner^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		<	2b, 3
	$boneish^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADJ}}}$		<	
	$debone^{\scriptscriptstyle { m V}}$		<	
		$deboned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$?	
		$deboning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$	<	

Qualitative analysis of the SR ≈: similar >: wider <: narrower ≲: narrower/close to similar ?: unclear

ii. Application of Marchand's (1969) criteria: range of registers

Table 7. Range of registers in the paradigm of *bone*^N (BNC) (+: attested / -: not attested)

BASE	D1	D2	nReg	Spok	Fiction	Magaz	Newsp	Non- Acad	Acad	Misc
$bone^{\mathrm{N}}$			7	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	$boned^{ ext{ADJ}}$		6	+	+	+	+	+	_	+
	$boneless^{ ext{ADJ}}$		6	+	+	+	+	+	_	+
	$boneless^{ ext{N}}$		2	-	_	+	_	+	_	_
		$bonelessly^{ m ADV}$	1	_	+	_	_	_	_	_
		$bonelessness^{ m N}$		_	_	_	_	_	_	_
	bony*ADJ		7	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	boney*ADJ		3	_	+	+	+	_	_	_
	$bony^{ m N}$			_	_	_	_	_	_	_
	$bony^{ m V}$			_	_	_	_	_	_	_
	-	$bonily^{ ext{ADV}}$	2	_	+	+	_	_	_	_
		$boniness^{ m N}$	2	_	+	_	_	_	_	+
	$boning^{ ext{ iny N}}$		2	+	-	_	+	_	_	_
	$boner^{ m N}$			-	_	_	-	_	_	_
	$boneish^{ ext{ADJ}}$			_	_	_	_	_	_	_
	$debone^{ m V}$		1	_	+	_	_	_	_	_
		$deboned^{ m ADJ}$		_	_	_	_	_	_	_
		$deboning^{ ext{ iny N}}$		_	_	_	_	_	_	_

ii. Application of Marchand's (1969) criteria: frequency of occurrence

Table 8. Normalized frequency of occurrence (NF) in the paradigm of bone^N (BNC)

BASE	D 1	D2	NF
bone ^N			45,60
	$boned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		0,33
	$boneless^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$		0,46
	$boneless^{ ext{ iny N}}$		0,03
		$bonelessly^{ ext{ iny ADV}}$	0,02
		$bonelessness^{ ext{ iny N}}$	
	bony*/boney ^{ADJ}		3,36
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$		
	$bony^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{V}}$		
	•	$bonily^{\scriptscriptstyle ext{ADV}}$	0,02
		$boninness^{ ext{ iny N}}$	0,02
	$boning^{ ext{ iny N}}$		0,03
	$boner^{^{ m N}}$		
	$boneish^{\scriptscriptstyle{\mathrm{ADJ}}}$		
	$debone^{\scriptscriptstyle \mathrm{V}}$		0,01
		$deboned^{\scriptscriptstyle{ ext{ADJ}}}$	
		$deboning^{\scriptscriptstyle m N}$	

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- ii. Semantic pattern (SP)
- iii. Restrictions of usage (RU)
- iv. Semantic range (SR)
- v. Range of registers (Reg)
- vi. Frequency of occurrence (Freq)

i. Semantic dependence

Table 9. Senses of the derivatives from the nominal, adjectival and verbal bases showing SD by order of derivation

N	D1	D2
bone	83%	100%
day	70%	100%
dog	69%	100%
eye	80%	100%
fire	48%	100%
louse	43%	100%
name	61%	100%
stone	88%	80%
tooth	70%	100%
water	72%	100%

ADJ	D1	D2
bad	100%	
black	81%	75%
long	67%	50%
narrow	93%	100%
new	64%	
old	100%	100%
straight	80%	100%
thick	89%	100%
thin	100%	
warm	94%	_

V	D1	D2	D3
burn	86%	50%	
cut	56%	100%	
dig	69%	100%	
drink	81%	_	
give	91%		
hold	64%	80%	100%
know	89%	80%	
pull	88%		
sew	100%	_	
throw	100%	0%	

Examples:

- +SD (5)
- (5) boneless^{ADJ}
- 1. 'Having no bones; lacking bones'

- -SD
- (6) boner^N

- 2b. Attributive. Cow of poor quality whose meat is used for low-quality beef products.
- (7) warming^N
- 2. A thrashing, trouncing. Also figurative.

ii. Semantic pattern

Table 10. Senses of the derivatives from the nominal, adjectival and verbal bases showing SP by order of derivation

N	D1	D2
bone	83%	100%
day	60%	100%
dog	77%	100%
eye	80%	100%
fire	45%	100%
louse	57%	100%
name	60%	50%
stone	86%	100%
tooth	69%	100%
water	61%	100%

ADJ	D1	D2
bad	100%	
black	82%	100%
long	87%	100%
narrow	46%	100%
new	73%	
old	100%	100%
straight	70%	100%
thick	100%	100%
thin	100%	
warm	94%	_

V	D1	D2	D3
burn	95%	50%	
cut	56%	100%	
dig	69%	100%	
drink	81%	100%	
give	91%		
hold	89%	50%	100%
know	79%	100%	
pull	85%		
sew	83%	_	
throw	100%	100%	

Examples:

+SP (8)

 $warming^{N}$

1a 'the action of making warm; the state of becoming warm.'

-SP

(9) *narrowly*^{ADV}

4. †a. Barely, scarcely. Obsolete. rare.

iii. Restrictions of usage

Table 11. Senses showing RU for the nominal, adjectival, and verbal bases and their derivatives by order of derivation

N	Base	D1	D2
bone	68%	65%	43%
day	43%	50%	0%
dog	55%	64%	50%
eye	25%	75%	0%
fire	33%	59%	100%
louse	50%	57%	50%
name	36%	56%	0%
stone	22%	38%	20%
tooth	33%	38%	0%
water	31%	54%	57%

ADJ	Base	D1	D2
bad	23%	38%	
black	60%	65%	8%
long	6%	67%	
narrow	33%	43%	100%
new	11%	64%	
old	38%	50%	
straight	30%	30%	
thick	50%	22%	17%
thin	38%	33%	
warm	19%	53%	

V	Base	D1	D2	D3
burn	57%	48%	50%	
cut	24%	63%	50%	
dig	11%	38%	100%	
drink	25%	50%		
give	18%	45%		
hold	18%	61%	70%	100%
know	41%	58%	40%	
pull	37%	50%		
sew	50%	33%		
throw	37%	60%	100%	

Restricted senses in the derivatives are typically related to senses in the base which are restricted too, e.g.:

- (10) pulling^N 2. e. **British slang**. The action of picking up a sexual partner.
- (11) pull^V 12. a. **transitive. British slang**. To pick up (a partner), esp. for sexual intercourse; to seduce.

iv. Semantic range: number of senses in the OED

Table 12. Number of senses for the derivatives from the nominal bases by order of derivation (OED)

N	Base > D1	Base = D1	Base < D1	D1 > D2	D1 = D2	D1 < D2
bone	100%	0%	0%	57%	29%	0%
day	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
dog	100%	0%	0%	40%	40%	0%
eye	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
fire	100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
louse	40%	60%	0%	0%	50%	0%
name	100%	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%
stone	100%	0%	0%	40%	20%	0%
tooth	57%	36%	7%	17%	0%	0%
water	90%	0%	0%	33%	0%	0%

iv. Semantic range: number of senses in the OED

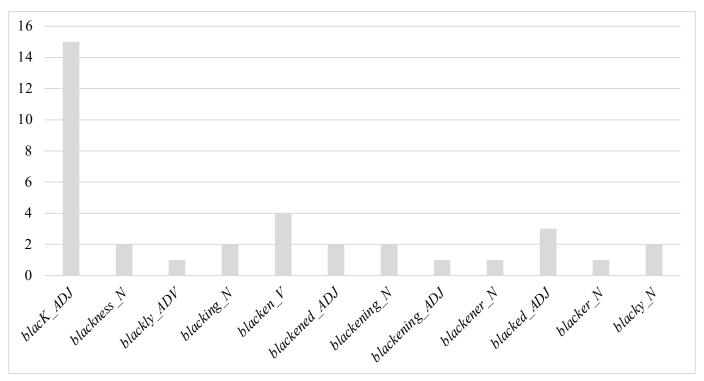


Figure 1. Number of senses for each lexeme in the paradigm of black^{ADJ}

Issues: inconsistencies in the organization of senses in the OED and their description, e.g.:

(12) *eyelessness*^N 'The state or condition of being eyeless (in various senses)'.

iv. Semantic range: qualitative analysis of the OED senses

Table 13. Qualitative analysis of the SR for the nominal paradigms by order of derivation (OED)

N	$D1 \approx Base$	D1 ≲ Base	D1 < Base	D1 > Base	$D2 \approx D1$	D2 ≤ D1	D2 < D1	D2 > D1
bone	0%	0%	100%	0%	17%	17%	33%	0%
day	0%	33%	67%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
dog	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	60%	0%	0%
eye	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%
fire	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
louse	0%	0%	40%	40%	50%	50%	0%	0%
name	0%	10%	70%	0%	25%	50%	25%	0%
stone	0%	10%	90%	0%	40%	60%	0%	0%
tooth	0%	14%	86%	0%	17%	67%	17%	0%
water	0%	0%	90%	0%	30%	30%	40%	0%

Variation found for each paradigm

v. Range of registers (BNC)

Table 14. Range of registers for the derivatives of the bases by order of derivation (BNC)

	Base > D1	Base = D1	Base < D1	D1 > D2	D1 = D2	D1 < D2	D2 > D3	D2 = D3	D2 < D3
N	63%	37%	0%	79%	21%	0%			
ADJ	49%	51%	0%	94%	6%	0%			
V	40%	60%	0%	66%	33%	0%	0%	100%	0%

Example of a typical case:

(13)	Base	D1	D2	nReg
	$stone^{N}$			7
		$stony^{\mathrm{ADJ}}$		7
			stoniness ^N	3

vi. Frequency of occurrence (BNC)

Table 15. Normalized frequency of occurrence for the derivatives of the bases by order of derivation

-	Base > D1	Base < D1	D1 > D2	D1 < D2	D2 = D3
N	98%	2%	95%	5%	
ADJ	100%	0%	94%	6%	
V	100%	0%	89%	11%	100%

Few examples where the Freq of the derivative > base, e.g.:

(14)	Lexeme	Frequency	Normalized frequency (BNC)
	$louse^{N}$	192	1,99
	lousy ^{ADJ}	221	2,29

Conclusion

Do the criteria prove applicable in affixation? Is an analysis at the level of senses feasible?

- i. SD / SP: seem to indicate correctly a base>derivative direction for most cases in our sample. However, this is not true for every sense, and variation is found in the paradigms.
- ii. RU: proves useful only at the level of sense and for specific cases on a base/derivative comparison.
- iii. SR: seems narrower for most derivatives. It is best measured qualitatively but proves time-consuming. A comparison of the number of senses does not always offer relevant results.
- iv. Reg: does not always offer relevant results. It may be reliable if studied by senses, and perhaps only after a more fine-grained classification is made.
- v. Freq: derivatives show a lower Freq than their bases for the paradigms studied. This may serve a useful diagnosis and offer interesting results if studied by senses. But when is a difference in frequency to be considered relevant?

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Directionality in affixation: testing the applicability of Marchand's (1964) semantic criteria

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Word-Formation Theories VI & Typology and Universals in Word-Formation V 23–26 June, 2022, Košice, Slovakia





Project Ref. PID2020-119851GB-I00 funded by

