

Borrowing Derivational Morphology

Marion Schulte

Although there has been some interest in the interface between morphology and semantics recently, Lieber (2012: 2108) still calls derivational semantics “the most neglected area of morphological theory in the last three decades”. Some important findings have been made concerning fundamental issues such as the representation of derivational semantics or the range of meanings of derivational affixes (e.g. Lieber 2004; Lehrer 2003), but some issues have practically not been investigated at all. One of these is the question how language contact may affect the semantics of derivational morphology.

In this talk, I will investigate the effects borrowing can have on the form and function of derivational morphology based on a case study of the borrowed Middle English suffix *-ery* and its Middle French origin *-erie*. The data come from the *Oxford English Dictionary online* and the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* and the semantics of these two suffixes are analysed using semantic maps (cf. Schulte 2015). This investigation shows that the semantic structure of *-ery* is highly similar to that of *-erie*. Although it has been claimed in the literature, at least with regard to grammatical morphemes, that “[t]here is [...] no reason to assume that MAT-borrowed grammatical morphemes in a RL [recipient language] take over the full gamut of functions of their sources” (Gardani et al. 2015: 6), there is no evidence for simplification of any kind in the data investigated here. On the contrary, Middle English *-ery* can be considered a more polysemous morphological category than Middle French *-erie*. The borrowed suffix has been subject to substantial semantic changes since its integration into the recipient language, however, and these will also be investigated here. A comparison to formally and functionally similar native suffixes will help to evaluate these changes.

References:

- Gardani, Francesco, Peter Arkadiev & Nino Amiridze. 2015. Borrowed morphology: an overview. In Francesco Gardani, Peter Arkadiev & Nino Amiridze (eds.), *Borrowed morphology*. 1-23.
- Lehrer, Adrienne. 2003. Polysemy in derivational affixes. In Brigitte Nerlich, Zazie Todd, Vimala Herman & David D. Clarke (eds.), *Polysemy. Flexible patterns of meaning in mind and language*, 217-232. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Lieber, Rochelle. 2004. *Morphology and lexical semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
- Lieber, Rochelle. 2012. Semantics of derivational morphology. In Claudia Maienborn, Klaus von Heusinger & Paul Portner (eds.), *Semantics*, 2098-2119. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Schulte, Marion. 2015. *The semantics of derivational morphology. A synchronic and diachronic investigation of the suffixes -age and -ery in English*. Tübingen: Narr.