

## On the Grammaticalization of Derivational Affixes in English

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Derivational affixes often have their origin in independent lexical units, cf. English *-dom* < OE *dōm*; *-ly* < OE *līc*; *a-* < OE *on*; etc. Thus, their development can be described as a typical process of grammaticalization along the cline from syntax to morphology as postulated by Li & Thompsen (1974), Bybee (1985), or Hopper (1988). Furthermore, they are subject to such mechanisms that are typically involved in grammaticalization processes as semantic bleaching, phonetic reduction, paradigmaticization, decategorialization, and fusion.

On the other hand, the status of derivational affixes as grammatical categories is highly disputed, cf. Adams (1973:12); Hopper & Traugott (1993: 5); Brinton & Traugott (2005: 63). Brinton & Traugott even distinguish between lexical and grammatical derivational affixes. If grammaticalization is understood as a process by which grammatical forms or categories emerge or are affected so that they become more grammatical, then it might be argued that at least the 'lexical' derivational affixes cannot be the result of a grammaticalization process.

In my paper I will approach the question of what makes up a grammatical category, and what should be considered essential mechanisms constituting a grammaticalization process. This theoretical discussion will be applied to the origin and development of English derivational affixes. It will be shown that there are several paths that can lead to a derivational affix. These paths will be discussed in terms of grammaticalization, lexicalization, and exaptation.

### References

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