Sánchez Fajardo, José A.

Morphophonological salience through constructional schemas : an analysis of two case studies of English Slang Words Ending in {o}

Brno studies in English. 2021, vol. 47, iss. 1, pp. 47-71

ISSN 0524-6881 (print); ISSN 1805-0867 (online)

Stable URL (DOI): https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2021-1-4
Stable URL (handle): https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/144294

Brno Studies in English
Volume 47, No. 1, 2021

ISSN 0524-6881 | e-ISSN 1805-0867
https://doi.org/10.5817/BSE2021-1-4

Morphophonological Salience through Constructional Schemas: An Analysis of Two Case Studies of English Slang Words Ending in {o}

José A. Sánchez Fajardo

Abstract
This paper is aimed at examining salient morphophonological traits of English slang words ending in {o} and conveying the meanings 'foolish person' and 'mad person', e.g. *dozo*, *crazo*. The study is based on the corollary that schematic generalizations reflect the principles of salience and embedded productivity. Data was taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Green's Dictionary of Slang*, and the *Oxford Dictionary of Slang*. The schemas are elaborated upon the aspects of phonological content (PHON), morphosyntactic properties (SYN) and semantic value (SEM). Findings suggest that constructions, being overtly disyllabic and trochaic, show a standard phonetic template (Cl_1VCl_2o), 'Cl' and 'V' standing for consonant cluster and vowel, respectively. Besides instantiating the bases with the value of 'PERSON perceived as possessing negative qualities', the suffix *-o*, which is generally attached to a nominal or an adjectival base, might lead to variation of grammatical category and the expression of pejorative/marginal traits.

Key words
Constructional schema; morphophonological salience; construction morphology; suffix -o; English slang

1. Introduction

Investigating derivational paradigms is a continuing concern within the domains of natural morphology (Dressler et al. 1987) and construction morphology (Booij 2010). The complex units that result from these paradigms can lead to a systematic correlation, for instance, between unmarked units and their corresponding derivatives, as in (1a) and (1b). These suffixed lexical forms (e.g. *fatso*, *stinko*) show a set of new semantic values that affect both denotational and connotational meanings. A construction-based approach can also help understand the pairing of form and meaning in these two examples, and how their constructional schemas (CSs) pertain to a network of constructions, in which the coinage of new words

is based on an existing paradigm and their abstractions (cf. Blevins 2006). The abstractive approach can be extended to lexical units that undergo orthographic alterations to make the new words fit certain paradigmatic requirements, e.g. the ending <o> as in (1c). The use of prototypical {o} (specified phonemically as /oʊ/ in AmE), instead of either the suffix *-o* or the non-suffixal <o>, to indicate the type of ending, is more conceptually accurate, for not all the cases explored in this study are derivatives. It is presupposed that non-derivatives (e.g. *homo*) are characterized by a type of suffix that emerges via reanalysis, motivated by analogy with overt-suffixed words, as in *fatso* and *stinko*.

(1) a. *fat* *fatso*
b. *stink* *stinko*
c. *homosexual* *homo*

The interplay of derivatives, as in (1a) and (1b), and clipped words ending in <o>, as in (1c), suggests that there might be morphosemantic regularities in English slang word formation. These regularities can be expressed through abstracted schemas to convey generalizations, which, in turn, demonstrate the non-arbitrary property of word-formation processes, e.g. *homo* is preferred over *hom* or *mosex*. Thus, by exploring the CSs of non-conventionalized {o}-ending units conveying 'foolish person' and 'mad person' (e.g. *dozo*, *eggo*), this paper attempts to assess salient morphosyntactic and phonological features that are abstracted into unified constructional schemas. It is hypothesized that (i) these salient features operate on the mental representation of {o} through the properties of schema unification and schema productivity; and that (ii) salience is extensible to other words following similar (and well-established) templates on the morphosemantic and phonological planes. The study also offers some important insights into the paradigmatic nature of existing morphological templates (e.g. $[[doz(y)]_{Aj}o]_{Ni}$; $[[egg]_{Nj}o]_{Ni}$), and into the analogical forms that are not derivatives (e.g. *schizo* < *schizophrenic*). The examples of *homo* and *schizo* show that phonological and morphological rules are subject to a more complex process of conceptualization, where the negative evaluation rendered by {o} becomes a templatic trait within the domain of evaluative morphology. In fact, the use of schemas in the analysis of derivatives and clipped words, which share similar semantic structures ('someone who is offensively considered A' as in *fatso*, *homo*), might help understand how an abstract schema "provides the recipe for coining new words of that type", and how it can be used to corroborate that "the meaning of a word is not completely arbitrary" (Booij 2019: 386).

2. Limiting the scope of study

2.1 On the evaluative morphology of the suffix -o (or the ending {o})

The archetypal ending {o}, as suggested in section 1, encompasses two different morphological structures: the suffix *-o* (as in *fatso* and *stinko*) and the non-suffixal

word closure <o> (as in *homo*). Etymologically, the English suffix *-o* might have originated extra- and intra-linguistically. The OED3 shows that it could have been adopted in English through Romance-origin words, where {o} was a constituent of the last syllable of words. Also, the rise of various English combining forms (e.g. *Anglo-*, *hypo-*) as a result of lexical shortening seems to have gained a relatively high frequency in units of similar origin. Although the etymology of the suffix has not been fully confirmed, it has been particularly productive in Australasian varieties of English (Bauer et al. 2015: 392), and more recently in American English, in which its origin has been associated with Italian or Hispanic migration to the US (Hamans 2020: 152).

The OED3 shows three main entries for the suffix *-o*: (a) forming interjections, e.g. *whacko*; (b) forming familiar, informal equivalents of nouns and adjectives from either truncated word-forms, e.g. *aggro*, or from complete words, e.g. *cheapo*; and (c) forming personal nouns from non-personal nouns, e.g. *milko*. These senses are heavily based on the syntactic functions of bases and the grammatical category of derivatives. The fact remains, however, that if the suffix *-o* and the suffixal word closure <o> are jointly used as a word-extraction criterion, five general groups are found: (i) a loanword (chiefly Spanish or Italian) that remains unchanged, e.g. *loco*, *cazzo*; (ii) a loanword that undergoes orthographic and phonological changes, e.g. *hogo* < *haut goût* (Fr.); (iii) a clipped base ending in <o>, e.g. *demo* < *democrat*; (iv) a clipped base suffixed with *-o*, e.g. *anarcho* < *anarchist*; and (v) a full base suffixed with *-o*, e.g. *fatso* < *fat*. While these entries clearly differ on their morphological structure and word-forming mechanism, they all share the same semantic output which is generally connected to the expression of negative attitudes (Schneider 2003: 111), particularly towards a referent. Words ending in {o} have been stereotyped as denominal nouns which "anchor to the initial base syllable" and are far less common than their paronyms ending in *-ie*, e.g. *prossie* and *prosso* (Bauer et al. 2015: 393)

The idea that a certain morphological pattern can be conceptualized is not new. On the level of evaluative morphology, it is possible to examine "how semantic changes originate in conceptual processes that exploit morphological forms to express evaluative meanings" (Besedina 2012: 177). Stated differently, concepts, such as that of 'pejoration' (or 'derogation'), are thought to be associated with 'templatic' morphological forms (e.g. suffixed words ending in *-o*). The grammaticalization of *-o* explains how the non-suffixal <o> in clipped words (*limo*, *curio*, *condo*) leads to the emergence of the suffix *-o* (*combo* < *combination*, *aggro* < *aggravation*) where it was not expected (Jamet 2009: 27).

An interesting aspect of diminutive suffixes, as in *-ie*, is the fact that they are inherently linked to 'smallness' in physical space (Taylor 2012: 172). Previous studies on the correlation between the concepts of diminution and pejoration suggest that derogatory morphemes (e.g. *-o*, *-ie*) emerge as a result of the metaphorical transfer of the notion of 'smallness' out of the spatial domain (Tarasova and Sánchez Fajardo 2019). This study in particular shows a bidirectionality of 'smallness' and 'irrelevance' on the evaluative morphology plane, i.e. derivatives, as in *kiddo* and *fatso*, show dissimilar levels of connotation. This correlation, however, does not act homogeneously on all diminutive suffixes: *-o* suffixed words

are restricted by grammatical and semantic rules; for instance, {o} is not used to derive either female names or positive adjectives (Schneider 2003: 111).

Interestingly, the ending {o} has been traditionally associated with the so-called 'mock Spanish' in the US, which is "a set of tactics that speakers of American English use to appropriate symbolic resources from Spanish" (Hill 2008: 128). One of the devices used in mock Spanish is the assignment of new pronunciations, meanings and cultural values by changing native words into Spanish-like constructs: *no problem*, *stinko*, *same-o same-o*, *el cheapo*. Being acknowledged as a "mini-register", mock Spanish is intended to create a jocular or pejorative tone after the parody imitation of Spanish (Breidenbach 2006: 5). The insertion of Spanish article *el* into the new construction generates hybrid formations that intensify "a jocular, pseudo-Spanish nominal variant of the word" as in *el cheapo* meaning "something cheap or shoddy" (Schultz 2018: 222).

2.2 *On construction morphology and salience*

The present research is based on Booij's (2007, 2010, 2015, 2019) concept of construction morphology (CxM), by means of which morphologically related units are expressed through generalizations (i.e. 'schemas'). The notion of a constructional schema is linked to both the conventionalization of lexical properties of language, and the pairing of form and function. This pairing is acknowledged as contributing to analogical formations on the morphological level (Bauer et al. 2015: 633), as well as to the memory storage of generic concepts, as with pejoration, on the cognitive level (Rumelhart 1980: 34). An interesting principle of CxM is that of a tripartite parallel architecture of lexicon, whereby a word, consisting of a sequence of sounds correlated with a specific meaning, also represents a syntactic category (cf. Jackendoff 2002; Booij and Audring 2017). These three levels of analysis, i.e. phonological (PHON), morphosyntactic (SYN) and semantic (SEM), are strategically devised in this study to explore the meaningful contribution of a templatic shape (Booij 2019: 386), as illustrated in (2).

(2) *dozo* (< *dozy*) 'a foolish person'
PHON: $[C_1 o C_2 o]_i \rightarrow [d\ o\ ʊ\ z]_j + [o\ ʊ]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [doz(y)]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: $[\text{ONE who is } A_j]_i \rightarrow [\text{ONE who is } dozy]_i$
SEM: $[\text{foolish PERSON}]_i$

The schematic allocation of these three levels of analysis sheds light on the correlative representation between form and function, and on the abstractive notion that emerges from other analogical schemas. The phonological shape informs on the degree of morphological accommodation undergone by the base to fit the template. The morphosyntactic description of the schema allows for a detailed categorization of the base and/or the affix. The semantic value of the schema integrates the input semantics of components (Sem) and the output meaning of the CS (SEM). This decomposition demonstrates the extent to which the semantic structure of schemas is connected to the input meaning of morphological constituents.

The tripartite approach to construction morphology generates analogical templates on three levels of language. The onomasiological examination of slang words ending in {o} leads to a specific SEM correlating with templatic PHON and SYN. This correlation also confirms the principle of analogy, by means of which complex words originate from suitable patterns that simplify the rule system, "thus making it easier for subsequent generations to generate forms by rules" (Bauer 2001: 83). The paradigmatic factor of analogy, in actual fact, has been signaled as a source of new complex words (Booij 2007: 248), and phonological and morphosyntactic templates are blended into the expression of a specific meaning. A construction-based model, such as (2), shows that analogy can anchor to any of the linguistic levels represented, and that a network of CSs can be used to explore the degree of abstraction of the schemas and subschemas, and hence their degree of predictability. Analogy can surely lead to patterns that "[abstract] away from specific model words" (Booij 2010: 90), thus embedding schemas with a higher-order semantics (SEM). For instance, in example (2), the literal meaning conveyed by morphological constituents, particularly lexical bases such as *dozy*, is abstracted into a more general meaning (SEM). Clearly, SEM resorts to analogical patterns that reinforce its templatic and higher-order value. The use of schemas in word-formation analysis is perfectly compatible with the principle of analogy, and the network of schemas might presuppose "a symbolic approach to representing linguistic knowledge" (Booij 2010: 91).

Two CxM-related notions are important to this research: schema inheritance (SI) and schema unification (SU). Inheritance has been defined as the degree of preservation of syntactic valency of bases (Booij 2007: 215). The gradeability of SYN determines the emergence of high-level and low-level order CSs in a given network. The former can contain some properties of lower-level constructions, including those features that pertain to low-level constructions, as well as those that differentiate them from other same-level constructions. Construction networks are sets of hierarchical CSs that "form clusters of mutually related generalizations about linguistic competence, going from more abstract and unconstrained to more restricted" (Fried and Östman 2004: 72).

Schema unification of CSs is based on the principle of cognitive economy, by means of which language users are able to establish a direct relation between a base word and a complex word "without a formal implication of the grammar" (Booij 2010: 43). SU negates an individual composition of a CS, and it also explains how such a CS pertains to a network of constructions, where the structures of schemas are simplified into generalizations. Well-established CSs, therefore, may lead to non-conventionalized and potential constructions. SU, understood as a construction-based approach to analogy, governs the morphosyntactic restrictions that characterize specific CSs from nested (or simplified) ones. Hierarchically speaking, as suggested above, a distinction is made between more generalized constructions, or high-level order, and less abstract, or low-level order, constructions.

Examples (2) and (3) show two of the CSs under study for *dozo* and *dorko*, both meaning 'a foolish person'. These two CSs, therefore, possess an identical SEM, which is expressed through different semantic associations of the stem

units: unlike *dorko* (or *eggo*), *dozo* is dependent on a non-physical quality (*dozy*). Their phonological and morphosyntactic structures are dissimilar, but a unified construction, as illustrated in (4), follows the abstracted properties of both independently established schemas.

(3) *dorko* (≺ *dork*) 'a foolish person'
PHON: $[C_1VC_2C_3o]_i \rightarrow [d\ ɔ\text{:}\ r\ k]_j + [o\ ʊ]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [dork]_{Nj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: $[ONE\ who\ resembles\ N_j]_i \rightarrow [ONE\ who\ resembles\ a\ dork]_i$
SEM: $[foolish\ PERSON]_i$

(4) *dozo*, *dorko*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2(C_3)o]_i \rightarrow [C_1\ V\ C_2\ (C_3)]_j + [o\ ʊ]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X]_j + [o_k]_{Aff}$
SEM: $[foolish\ PERSON]_i$

SU and SI account for the embedded productivity of the ending {o} in English slang words, since non-productive word-formation processes become productive when co-occurring with other word-formation processes (Booij 2010: 47). Consequently, a construction-based approach to morphology can advance the study of the grammaticalization of {o}, particularly the morphosemantic traits that are analogically used in would-be (or potential) schemas. These morphosemantic features are salient to language users, and are hence reflected on the so-called naturalness and predictability of constructions in natural morphology (Dressler et al. 1987). For a CS to possess a high degree of iconicity, or a strong mental representation, there are three variables that are believed to module the aspect of iconicity: type or token frequency, nonceness and productivity (Giraudo and Dal Maso 2016). These variables are used in this study to explore the templatic nature of CSs and their morphophonological salience.

This study does not, however, seek to propose alternatives for measuring productivity indexes in sets and subsets of CSs, but rather to explore how the properties of SI and SU are connected to the degree of productivity in two specific networks. In fact, various studies show that the degree to which a schema is prone to unification corresponds to that of productivity (Audring and Masini 2013: 4). The property of embedded productivity is also linked to the subconcepts of generality, regularity and extensibility (Barðdal 2008: 171), which characterize the properties of schema abstraction and generalization, as well as the 'openness' of a schema to attract other constructions. Barðdal's theory of syntactic productivity involves the tenets of type frequency and semantic coherence, the latter referring to the internal consistency between relevant items (2008: 172). These two tenets constitute the cline of productivity, in which the most productive items are those showing the highest level of type frequency (schematicity) and the lowest one of semantic coherence (specificity).

3. Methodology

Data for this research study were drawn from three sources: the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED3), *Green's Dictionary of Slang* (GDS) and the *Oxford Dictionary of Slang* (ODS). The number of slang/colloquial lemmas ending in {o} (specified phonemically as /oʊ/ in AmE) totals 402 (see Annex 1). This initial data-compilation stage results in a word repository or 'matrix list', from which, due to the volume of data, only the lemmas expressing the output meanings (SEM) of [foolish PERSON] and [mad PERSON] have been extracted and used as case studies. The matrix list does not include all the words ending in {o}, since a relevant criterion that is followed by the lemmas used in the study is that of Englishness, i.e. words that have originated in English or have been imported first and then undergone morphophonological change. Criteria for omitting the lemmas are: unadapted loanwords (*tonto* 'foolish'), personal names (*bobo* 'a foolish person'), place names (*kybo* 'a privy' < *Khyber*) or brand names (*brillo* 'a black person'). Various words of unknown etymologies have also been included in the study because their templatic morphology coincides with the ones used in the analysis.

In a second stage of analysis, all these words are processed and grouped according to the systematic relationship aroused between phonological form (PHON), meaning (SEM) and morphosyntactic properties (SYN) (Booij 2019: 386). An intermediate semantic descriptor (Sem) is also used to represent how lexical bases contribute to the aspect of semantic compositionality of complex words. The tripartite modeling of words allows for a complete description of what sort of multilayered changes appoint to well-established regularities, in order to demonstrate the non-arbitrariness of slang words ending in {o} through the properties of SU, SI and schema productivity.

Once the tripartite modeling of constructions is completed, the resulting schemas are unified in networks of constructions, based on the principles of SI and SU. The objective of schema unification is twofold: identifying common syntactic properties and establishing recurrent phonetic templates. These networks offer an effective way to visually locate what properties are inherited from lower-order schemas, and which schemas are more prone to embedded productivity. SU leads to generalizations that objectively reflect salient morphophonological traits. The benefit of using two case studies is that the aspects of productivity and unification can be explored in two different construction-based systems. Also, a case-study approach is useful in examining both the multilayered and hierarchical qualities of networks, and the role of {o} as "a semantic operator on the meaning of the base word" (Booij 2010: 28). In the follow-up phase of the study, the constructional schemas, particularly meta-constructions, are used as referential models to corroborate the extent to which words itemized in the matrix list, other than those used as case studies, fit the tripartite templatic shape.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1 The constructional schemas expressing [foolish PERSON] and [mad PERSON]

The two sets of networks that are explored in this study correspond to the meanings [foolish PERSON] and [mad PERSON]. These two sets account for approximately nine percent of the matrix list, which are examined in the following sections by using an onomasiological approach to CxM (from SEM to PHON and SYN).

4.1.1 The CSs expressing [foolish PERSON]

A total of 22 nouns ending in {o} are found to correlate with the meaning [foolish PERSON]: *bosco* < *bosky*, *bo* (unknown etymology), *denso* < *dense*, *dimbo* < *dim*, *dimmo* < *dim*, *dippo* < *dip*, *dozo* < *dozy*, *dubbo* < *dub*, *dumbo* < *dumb*, *dummo* < *dumb*, *eggo* < *egg*, (*el*) *dorko* < *dork*, *jazzbo* (or *jassbo*) < *jazz*, *jo* (unknown etymology), *jocko* < *jockey*, *maco* < *macquereau* (Fr.), *momo* < *moron*, *remo* < *remedial student*, *sappo* < *sap*, *schmo* < *schmuck*, *stupo* < *stupid* and *thicko* < *thick*. Most of these words are derivatives in which the suffix *-o* is attached to a base that is preferably adjectival. The words whose origin is unknown are also used in the study, as represented in (9), because their compositionality fits the templatic shape that is investigated. The grammatical category (noun) is retained through the value PERSON that is used in the semantic structure. To determine the degree of schema inheritance and schema unification, four general sets of CSs are elaborated on the basis of morphosyntactic properties (SYN). Sub-schemas are also differentiated through their phonological traits to observe regularities and unifying criteria.

The first set of networks, as schematized in (5), shows the highest number of coinages, in which the suffix *-o* is attached to an adjectival base. In this case, the suffix partakes in a process of nominalization where the quality expressed by the lexical base (adjective) is transposed into the resulting suffixed noun. The semantic decomposition of these constructions through Sem and SEM shows that *-o* acts as a nexus between the adjective and PERSON. The transposition of qualities from the base into the derivative is not equal in all the CSs studied. In the cases of *dumbo*, *dummo*, *stupo* and *schmo*, the denotational value of the adjective ('quality') is converted into the noun ('someone possessing/showing certain qualities'), similar to the way *-ie/y* derivatives are formed, as in *smartie*, *biggie* and *shortie* (Tarasova and Sánchez Fajardo 2019). These types of nouns are less frequent and their degree of semantic transparency is much higher than *thicko*, *dimmo*, *dimbo*, *dozo*, *dippo* and *bosco* where certain morphosemantic features of the lexical bases (*thick*, *dim*, *dozy*, *dippy* and *bosky*) are encoded in the suffixed nominalizations.

(5) **CS-1** *dumbo, dummo, denso, stupo, thicko, dimmo, dimbo, dozo, dippo, bosco*
PHON: $[C_1(C_2)VC_3(C_4)o]_i \rightarrow [C_1(C_2)VC_3(C_4)]_j + [o\ ʊ]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: $[ONE\ who\ is\ X_j]_i$
SEM: $[foolish\ PERSON]_i$

All the words, including those expressed in models (6) and (7), are disyllabic, which appears to be a commonality in the templatic constructions under study. Conforming to a two-syllable pattern, various words are made up of a clipped base, as in *stupo*, *dozo* and *bosco*. Shortened bases are all back clipped, and the remaining segments show enough orthographic and phonological clusters to maintain a certain degree of recognizability. Another feature that facilitates morphological salience (or recognizability) is the phonological composition of bases: there is a clear tendency towards a consonant-vowel-consonant cluster (CVC) in (5) and (6).

(5.1) **CS-1.1** *dumbo, dimbo,*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2(C_3)o]_i \rightarrow [C_1\,V\,C_2\,(C_3)]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who is $X_j]_i$
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

(5.2) **CS-1.2** *dummo, thicko, denso*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2C_3o]_i \rightarrow [C_1\,V\,C_2\,C_3]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who is $X_j]_i$
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

(5.3) **CS-1.3** *dippo, dozo, bosco*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2(C_3)o]_i \rightarrow [C_1\,V\,C_2\,(C_3)]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [[X(y)]]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who is $[X(y)]_j]_i$
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

(5.4) **CS-1.4** *stupo*
PHON: $[C_1C_2VC_3o]_i \rightarrow [s\ t\ u{:}\ p]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [stup(id)]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who is $stup(id)_j]_i$
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

(5.5) **CS-1.5** *schmo*
PHON: $[C_1C_2o]_i \rightarrow [\int\ m]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [schm(uck)]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who is $schm(uck)_j]_i$
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

The network of constructions represented in (6) consists of a nominal base, to which the suffix *-o* is also attached. With the exception of *remo*, the nominal bases change into disyllabic units through the addition of a suffix. No modification of grammatical category is executed here, which confirms that *-o* does not have a strictly nominalizing function. The *-o* suffixation process, however, underscores the semantic marginalization of these words. The connotational value rendered

by the suffix *-o* does not solely pertain to (6), but it is rather 'extensible' to all the subschemas. Most of the constructions activate the meaning of 'resemblance', but with disparaging connotations. As regards semantic opacity, *remo* (6.4) and *eggo* (6.3) stand out from the rest, since their semantic structure comes across as less transparent. The former results from the processes of ellipsis and back clipping of the phrasal base *remedial student*, whilst the latter operates on the physical features of an 'egg', which means that there is a metaphorical association between being 'egg-headed' and acting 'foolishly'.

(6) **CS-2** *jocko*, *eggo*, *sappo*, *dorko, dubbo, remo*
PHON: $[(C_1)VC_2(C_3)o]_i \rightarrow [(C_1)\ V\ C_2\ (C_3)]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X]_{Nj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who resembles an $X_j]_i$
SEM: $[\text{foolish PERSON}]_i$

(6.1) **CS-2.1** *jocko*, *sappo, dubbo*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2o]_i \rightarrow [C_1\ V\ C_2\ ]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X]_{Nj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who resembles an $X_j]_i$
SEM: $[\text{foolish PERSON}]_i$

(6.2) **CS-2.2** *dorko*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2C_3o]_i \rightarrow [d\ ɔ\text{:}\ r\ k]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [dork]_{Nj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who resembles a $dork_j]_i$
SEM: $[\text{foolish PERSON}]_i$

(6.3) **CS-2.3** *eggo*
PHON: $[VCo]_i \rightarrow [e\ g]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [egg]_{Nj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who resembles an $egg_j]_i$
SEM: $[\text{foolish PERSON}]_i$

(6.4) **CS-2.4** *remo*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2o]_i \rightarrow [r\ ɪ\ m]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [rem(edial\ student)]_{Nj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: [ONE who resembles a $remedial\ student_j]_i$
SEM: $[\text{foolish PERSON}]_i$

Constructions (7), (8) and (9) are nonce models that do not pertain to any of the networks schematized above. In contrast to schemas (5) and (6), as well as their subschemas, these unproductive models are not suffixed with *-o*. Schema (7) involves a complex unit that is formed on back clipping and reduplication to ensure that the unit fits the templatic generalization of a disyllabic base ending in {o}. As in (6.1) and (6.2), the output meaning [foolish PERSON] is strictly dependent on the input meaning of the lexical base *moron*. The reduplicative

base *-mo* contributes to the formation of the so-called "CoCo template" (Gorman and MacKenzie 1998), where the two syllables ending in *-o* imbue the complex word with nuances of marginalization. Schema (8) is the only example of adapted borrowing that is used in this part of the study. As informed by its three-layer construction, the syntactic properties are predictably simplified into its grammatical category (N). Although the original etymon in French (*maquereau* 'a pimp') could have triggered the aspect of 'resemblance', it is assumed that users are not necessarily aware of the input semantics of *maquereau* as in *dorko*, *sappo* or *dubbo*. Finally, construction (9) involves the only monosyllabic examples in the network, which suggests variation on the phonological plane. Nonetheless, the ending {o}, following the output-oriented property of schemas (Booij 2010: 30), shows a relatively rigid nominalizing effect and the semantic quality of [foolish PERSON].

(7) **CS-3** *momo*
PHON: $[CoCo]_i \rightarrow [m\ o\ ʊ]_j + [m\ o\ ʊ]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [mo(ron)]_{Aj} + [mo_k]_{Redup}$
Sem: [ONE who resembles a $moron_j$]$_i$
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

(8) **CS-4** *maco*
PHON: $[C_1VC_2o]_i \rightarrow [m\ æ\ k\ o\ ʊ]_i$
SYN: N_i
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

(9) **CS-5** *bo*, *jo*
PHON: $[Co]_i \rightarrow [C\ o\ ʊ]_i$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [Co]_i$
SEM: [foolish PERSON]$_i$

4.1.2 The CSs expressing [mad PERSON]

A total of 12 nouns expressing [mad PERSON] have been attested: *crazo* < *crazy*, *flako* < *flaky*, *kinko* < *kinky*, *maddo* < *mad*, *nutso* < *nuts*, *psycho* < *psychopath*, *schizo* < *schizophrenic*, *sicko* < *sick*, *strange-o* < *strange*, *troppo* < *tropical* (disease), *weirdo* < *weird* and *whacko* (or *wacko*) < *whacky*. As opposed to the schemas examined in section 4.1.1, constructions (10) and (11) show relatively homogeneous structures, all the words being, for instance, disyllabic and trochaic.

With the exceptions of *psycho* and *schizo*, all the units are deadjectival derivatives in which the suffix *-o* is attached to either a full base, as in (10.2), or a clipped one, as in (10.2) and (10.3). According to the degree of semantic opacity conveyed by the adjectival base, these constructions are overtly transparent because certain evaluative features are transposed from the base into the nominal derivative. Although *flako* and *kinko* are less transparent than *maddo* and *crazo*, the semantic structure of *flaky* and *kinky* is not induced by the *-o* suffixation process, but rather by preceding word-building mechanisms. The metaphorical encoding of *flaky*

and *kinky*, therefore, is not relevant to the constructional schema, which explains why *flako* and *kinko* are not semantically distinguished from *maddo* or *nutso*, as expressed in (10). The case of *troppo* in (10.3) is semantically more opaque because the connection between 'tropical disease' and mental abnormality is highly cryptic.

(10) **CS-6** *crazo*, *flako*, *kinko*, *maddo*, *nutso*, *sicko*, *strange-o*, *troppo*, *weirdo*, *whacko*
PHON: $[(C_1)(C_2)C_3VC_4(C_5)o]_i \rightarrow [(C_1)\ C_2\ C_3\ V\ C_4\ (C_5)]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: $[ONE\ who\ is\ X_j]_i$
SEM: $[mad\ PERSON]_i$

(10.1) **CS-6.2** *crazo*, *flako*, *kinko*, *whacko*
PHON: $[(C_1)C_2VC_3(C_4)o]_i \rightarrow [(C_1)\ C_2\ V\ C_3\ (C_4)]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X(y)]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: $[ONE\ who\ is\ [X(y)]_j]_i$
SEM: $[mad\ PERSON]_i$

(10.2) **CS-6.3** *maddo*, *nutso*, *sicko*, *strange-o*, *weirdo*
PHON: $[(C_1)(C_2)C_3VC_4(C_5)o]_i \rightarrow [(C_1)\ (C_2\ )\ C_3\ V\ C_4\ (C_5)]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [X_j]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: $[ONE\ who\ is\ X_j]_i$
SEM: $[mad\ PERSON]_i$

(10.3) **CS-6.4** *troppo*
PHON: $[C_1C_2VC_3C_4o]_i \rightarrow [t\ r\ o\ p]_j + [o\ \upsilon]_k$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [[trop(ical)]_j]_{Aj} + [o_k]_{Aff}$
Sem: $[ONE\ who\ is\ X_j]_i$
SEM: $[mad\ PERSON]_i$

(11) **CS-7** *psycho*, *schizo*
PHON: $[C_1C_2VC_3C_4o]_i \rightarrow [C_1\ (C_2)\ V\ C_3\ o\ \upsilon]_i$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [[clipN]_j]_{Ni}$
Sem: $[ONE\ who\ resembles\ N_j]_i$
SEM: $[mad\ PERSON]_i$

4.2 Analysis of morphophonological salience through the networks of constructions

4.2.1 On schema unification, inheritance and productivity

The aspects of schema unification, inheritance and productivity are indicators of the degree of extensibility and embeddability of schemas (Barðdal 2008; Booij 2010; Hoffmann 2017). Schemas are hence abstracted into templatic shapes that specify salient properties of the subclasses, whereas subschemas inherit the

generalizations that dominate the network of constructions. The analysis of how these regularities are variably open to new coinages can help understand which morphophonological features are more salient. The aspect of productivity, as suggested in section 2.2, is dependent on the variability of both type schemas and word-formation mechanisms. Productivity is therefore correlated with the principle of SU, which implies the possibility of multiple word-formation patterns (Booij 2010: 43).

The network of CSs expressing [foolish PERSON] is divided into five levels of abstractness (see Figure 1), in which CS-F (F standing for 'foolish') constitutes the schema showing the highest levels of abstractness (level 1). Their constituents are a generalized representation of salient peculiarities of level-2 schemas, and these from lower-order schemas. This hierarchical representation of such generalizations allows for a better understanding of (i) which morphological operations there are, and (ii) which salient features characterize the schemas. CSs are discerned at a first level of analysis through their morphosyntactic properties, and their corresponding subschemas, through their phonetic templates.

Figure 1 shows an overview of the multilayered network of constructions expressing [foolish PERSON]. The degree of abstractness moves from higher order (level 1) into lower order (level 5). The constructions that are abbreviated in elliptical-shaped figures (e.g. CS-5) have been elaborated after the data extracted in section 4.1. CS-F, CS-1, CS-2 and CS-1.6 are developed as a 'meta-node' (CS-F) or 'intermediate nodes' (CS-1, CS-2, CS-1.6) that specify abstract schemas from which evidence-based CSs are synthesized. These nodes, regardless of the type of level to which they pertain, constitute a systematic recipe in the overall network.

The network in Figure 1 suggests a relatively high productivity index as various word-formation processes co-occur (derivation, clipping, reduplication and borrowing). Another aspect that reinforces the property of high productivity is the existence of different type schemas or frequency (morphological heterogeneity), which is also linked to the variability of grammatical categories: denominal (e.g. *schmo*, *eggo*) and deadjectival (e.g. *dumbo*, *thicko*). Further intra-constructional examination shows that productivity is rather gradable: CS-3, CS-4 and CS-5 are 'dead-end' nonce constructions, as they are unable to generate subschemas with the data available. However, the inability to generate subschemas does not mean null productivity, since they can still motivate other templatic complex units indirectly (Booij 2015). The aspect of dead-end*ness* is related to Barðdals (2008) model of productivity, whereby models that possess a high degree of specificity, that is, semantic coherence between morphological constituents, are less productive. CS-1 and CS-2, alternatively, are abstract generalizations of two particular morphological systems, also known as "meta-constructions" (Booij 2010: 28). The dominance of a meta-construction over more specific, or lower-order, schemas, is a relative category, as meta-constructions might also be abstracted into a higher-level schema, e.g. CS-F.

The abstracted features that are both inherited by lower-level words/schemas and generalized into higher-level ones corroborate various salient phonological and morphosyntactic properties. For instance, slang *-o* derivatives expressing [foolish PERSON] are disyllabic words whose lexical base is either adjectival or

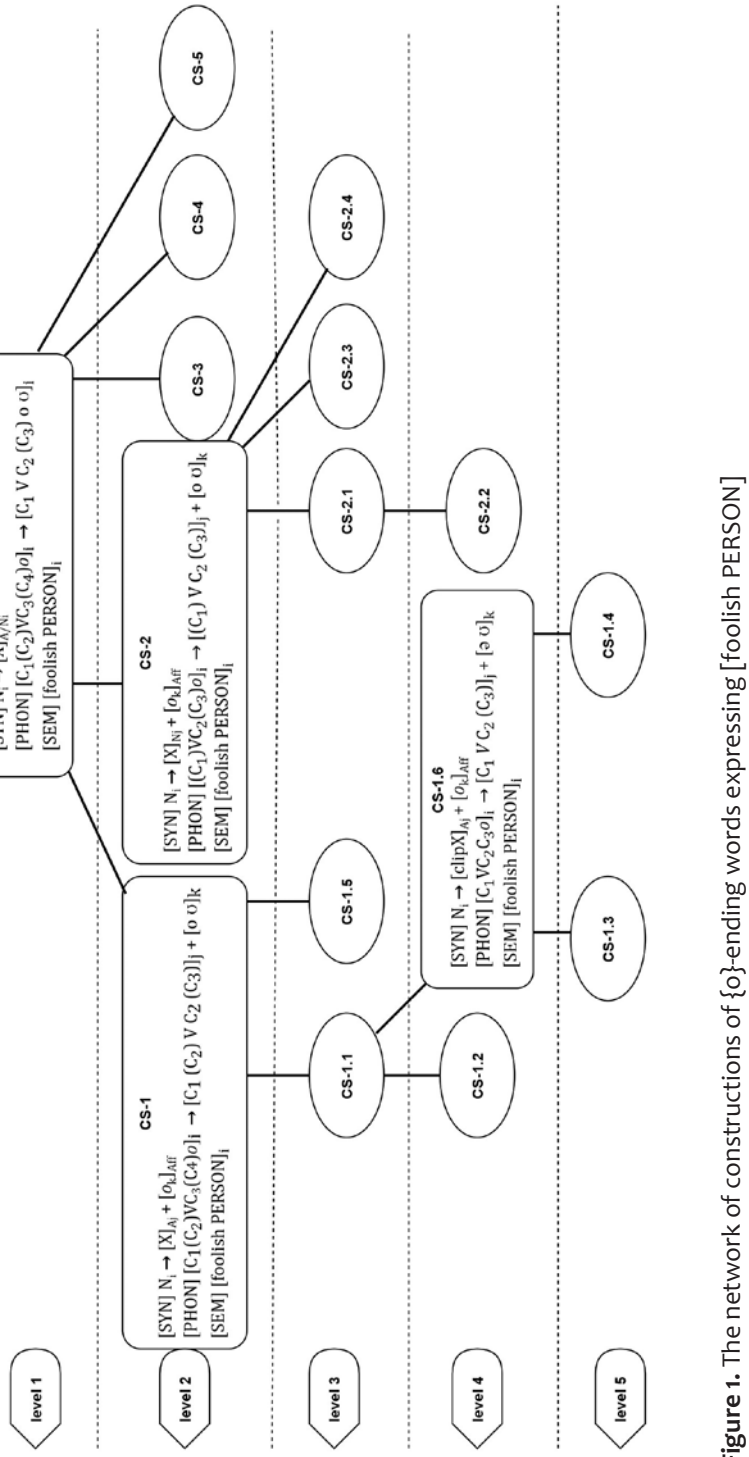

Figure 1. The network of constructions of {o}-ending words expressing [foolish PERSON]

nominal. The monosyllabic base fits the 'ClVCl' template, 'Cl' standing for a consonant cluster, and 'V' for a vowel (or a diphthong). The vast majority of schemas, particularly those that generate more subschemas (CS-1 and CS-2), are based on the process of *-o* suffixation, which confirms that derivational patterns dominate level-2 schemas.

The network of CSs expressing [mad PERSON] consists of four levels of abstractness (see Figure 2). Only two schemas are generalized at level 2, which indicates fewer types of CS, and hence less productivity. In fact, with the exception of CS-7, all the schemas are based on *-o* suffixation, which, as in the case of the CS-F network, confirms the active role of the suffix in the expression of new grammatical categories and of more specific semantic values (e.g. PERSON, marginalization). CS-6 is, therefore, generally characterized by deadjectival nominalization and disyllabism. This salient morphophonological template is inherited by lower-order schemas, particularly in CS-6.1 (see Figure 2) and CS-1.6 (see Figure 1), in which adjectival bases undergo a back clipping process to conform to inherited morphological salience.

Regardless of the differentiating aspects of type frequency (or schema heterogeneity) and embedded productivity, both CS-F and CS-M show morphological templates that are extensible to schemas that are not strictly lower-order ones. For instance, the inheritance of generalizing properties, such as 'disyllabic, trochaic words ending in {o}', is guaranteed by level-2 schemas (CS-3, CS-4 and CS-7) through the morphophonological accommodation of loanwords (e.g. *maco*) or the rearrangement of clipped bases (e.g. *momo*, *psycho*). This property is, however, more productively replicated below the nodes CS-6.1 and CS-1.6, where schemas show a higher index of type frequency (schematicity) and a lower index of semantic coherence (specificity).

Meta-constructions CS-F and CS-M inherit particularities of all the lemmas under study, but the data only represents a small part of a more complex system. The analysis of their schemas shows which properties are more prone to generating subschemas, and which ones constitute dead-end ones. On a more abstract level, these two meta-constructions can also be used as input data for a higher-order generalization, as illustrated in (12).

(12) **CS-0**
PHON: $[(Cl_1)VCl_2o]_i$
SYN: $N_i \rightarrow [[X]_{A/Nj}\ \{o\}]_i$
Sem: [PERSON being $[X]_{Aj}$ or resembling $[X]_{Nj}]_i$
SEM: [PERSON perceived as possessing negative qualities]$_i$

In this new meta-construction, PHON is generalized by using 'Cl' (standing for consonant cluster), which implies that a cluster might consist of one or various consonant phonemes. On the level of morphosyntax, [X] encompasses either an adjectival base or a nominal one. The use of {o} denotes the complex etymology of subschemas (i.e. *-o* derivatives and non-suffixal <o>). The process of abstraction of a network of schemas shows that CSs are output-oriented, since their modeling is not based on rules, but rather on the information provided by the argument

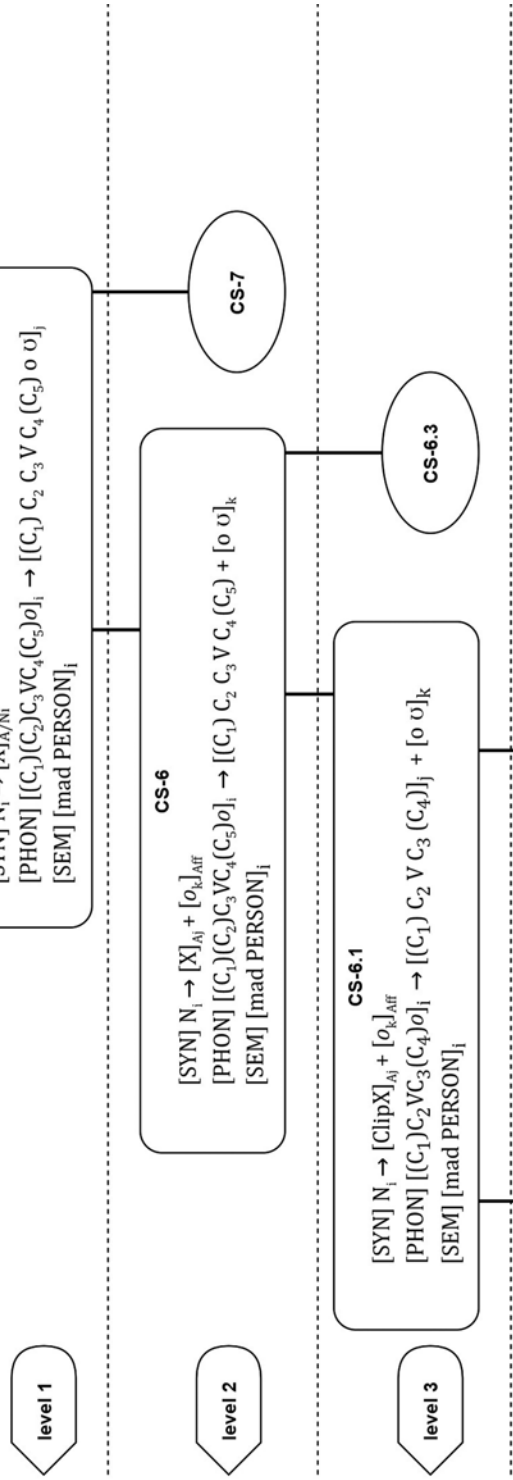

Figure 2. The network of constructions of {o}-ending words expressing [mad PERSON]

interpreted from the data (Booij 2010: 30). The semantic value of the schema has three salient principles that fit all the semantic templates examined: PERSON, 'negative qualities' and perception. These three aspects show that *-o* saliently correlates with the value of 'someone who is characterized by showing negative qualities', or with that of 'someone negatively perceived as resembling someone else'. In other words, the output-oriented semantics suggests that negative qualities of PERSON are disparagingly perceived by a speaker. SEM, therefore, integrates these semantic values into the argument 'PERSON perceived as possessing negative qualities', where nominal and adjectival bases are also accepted.

4.2.2 Extensibility of meta-constructional properties in the matrix list

The use of a matrix list to associate some of the properties of meta-constructions (e.g. CS-0, CS-F, CS-M) with the rest of the lemmas ending in {o}, can help corroborate the properties of SU and morphophonological salience. That is, a hierarchical arrangement of constructions shows which morphophonological patterns or semantic properties operate on specific words that are not necessarily included in the data under study. One aspect that stands out from the matrix list is that of PERSON, which accounts for 257 (out of 402) of the lemmas compiled. This confirms the relatively strict correlation between {o} and PERSON in slang lexical units. The aspect of 'negative qualities' in CS-0 is a more complex question since not all words ending in {o} share the same degree of connotation. For instance, *oppo* (< *opposite* 'best friend'), *sano* (< *sanitary inspector*) and *soro* (< *sorority member*) show a continuum along which the evaluative meanings expressed by {o} vary from endearment (*oppo*) to derogation (*soro*). As with the suffix *-ie/y*, originally conceived as a diminutive-forming unit in English, {o} reflects the complexity of evaluative morphology in the expression of 'smallness' and 'irrelevance' on the same continuum (Schneider 2003; Tarasova and Sánchez Fajardo 2019). Despite these varying values of connotation, the form {o}, however, imbues the words with marginal or colloquial traits.

Curiously, the most prolific semantic fields are those felt as taboo: illegal trade (*pro* < *prostitute*, *bando* < *abandoned* 'drug lab', *silko* < unknown etymology 'thief'); sex (*boyo* < *boy* 'the penis', *twisto* < *twist* 'a sexual pervert'); homosexuality (*homo* < *homosexual*, *lesbo* < *lesbian*); ethnicity/origin (*squasho* < *squash* 'black person', *beano* < *bean* 'a Mexican', *dino* < *dynamiter* 'a Hispanic or Italian laborer'). The formation of these (generally derivative) words is mostly based on either morphological variation (e.g. *bando*) or semantic indirectness (e.g. *beano*). Semantic indirectness is connected with the metaphorical (or metonymic) association of a referent ('a Mexican') to a representative element (*bean*) that makes up the lexical base of the final construct (*beano*).

From the data in the matrix list, strong evidence of morphological value of derivatives suggests that 268 (out of 402) of the lemmas are suffixed with *-o*. This high percentage accentuates the corollary of (i) high productivity index of meta-constructions in which *-o* is attached to nominal/adjectival base, e.g. CS-6, CS-1, CS-2; and that of (ii) mental association between *-o* and marginal or non-standard language. In addition, a significant number of units that originate from

clipped adjectives (215 words) reveal a particularly productive SYN ([clipX]$_{Aj}$ + [o_k]$_{Aff}$]). Clipping, whose marginalization-enhancing function has been acknowledged (Mattiello 2005), also guarantees a disyllabic shape. In fact, disyllabic templates account for 94.8% of the lemmas, and monosyllabic ones are predominantly characterized by homonymy (e.g. *bo* < *bohemian*, < *hobo*; *mo* < *moustache*, < *moment*; *pro* < *professional*, < *prostitute*).

4.2.3 The value of suffix -o in the constructional schemas

A visible contribution of the tripartite architecture of constructions is the elaboration of direct interfaces between SEM and PHON (Booij 2010: 11), in which a given sound is linked to either a semantic structure ('foolish person') or semantic value ('person' and 'negatively perceived qualities'). This does not necessarily imply a case of sound symbolism but it does reflect a trend towards a relatively strict correlation between meaning and phonographemic sequence. The fact that non-derivatives (clipped words or adapted loanwords) undergo morphological variation to comply with an {o}-ending template, demonstrates the significance of the interface.

The noun-forming suffix *-o* can be more semantically restricted than other derivational suffixes (*-ie/y*, *-er*), particularly when expressing a pejorative meaning of 'person that is mad/foolish'. The suffix, therefore, generally underscores disparaging valuation and agentiveness (i.e. the expression of the semantic component of PERSON). In (13), both *sickie* and *sicko* express the meaning of 'a crazy person'; but unlike *sicko*, *sickie* also means 'a day's sick leave' (GDS), which makes *sickie* more ambiguous. However, in (14), *thickie*, *thicko* and *thick* mean 'a fool', and *thicko* and *thickie* convey the meaning of 'a foolish person'. The word *thick*, on the other hand, can also be used for 'a drink of dense consistency' or 'a muscular man' (OGD). These examples of *-ie* and *-o*, as in (13) and (14) respectively, confirm the synonymic relation of derivatives in English slang, but more evidence-based data are needed to explore the degree of pejoration and semantic transparency that these derivatives, e.g. *sickie* and *sicko*, convey on the levels of pragmatics and semantics.

(13) *sicko* (n.)
sickie (n.)
**sick* (n.)
**sicker* (n.)

(14) *thicko* (n.)
thickie (n.)
thick (n.)
**thicker* (n.)

5. Conclusions

This paper has identified salient morphological and phonological properties of slang words ending in {o} in English, through a construction-based analysis of two case studies. The elaboration or modeling of construction networks confirms that subschemas where the suffix *-o* is attached to a nominal or adjectival base are predominant. In both case studies, instances of clipped bases have been detected, thus corroborating the fact that various word-formation processes might be involved in the creation of complex words, leading to high productivity. The index, or cline, of productivity is linked to the aspects of (high) type schemas and (low) semantic predictability (or coherence), in which schemas (and subschemas) pertaining to CS-F are more productive than those pertaining to CS-M. This study has also found that constructions are overtly disyllabic, and the standard phonetic template is Cl_1VCl_2o, 'Cl' standing for consonant cluster. The suffix *-o* (or non-affixal ending <o> in few cases) generally partakes in the formation of complex units while imbuing lexical bases with the aspect of PERSON and marginalization. This co-indexical property of the suffix, being the head of the argument in question, leads to variation of grammatical category (from adjective to noun) and connotational re-assignment ('pejorative' or 'marginal').

An intra-constructional examination of these two networks also confirms that two types of CS are found: actual CSs and potential CSs. Whereas the former correspond to the schemas modeled after existing words in English, the latter are CSs that are elaborated as meta-constructions (or nodes), from which actual subschemas originate. Potential constructions contribute to completing the architecture of networks as a set of relations, in which generalizations of salient cues are entrenched in their general configuration. Therefore, the process of elaborating and assessing meta-constructions shows what salient features are predictable (e.g. disyllabism and adjectival base), and which ones are more prone to analogical replication. Various CSs are found to be unable to generate subsets of constructions, which are termed dead-end schemas; but this labeling does not do justice to their actual implication in the process of templatic analogy.

Empirical findings in this study provide a new understanding of how generalizations of schemas can be used to explore salient morphophonological templates through the aspects of semantic predictability and lexical creativity, particularly in slang vocabulary. The scope of this study is limited to two case studies, and the semantic values of [foolish PERSON] and [mad PERSON] are used to compile data and to examine the networks. However, further analysis on the matrix list shows that some of the meta-constructions elaborated from the case studies are not restricted to these semantic values. Considerably more work will need to be done to determine the implication of analogy and schematic networks in the formation of evaluative words.

References

Audring, Jenny and Francesca Masini (2013) Construction morphology: A welcome. *Bologna Seminar on Construction Morphology*. Available at http://www.lilec.it/cxm/?page_id=10

Bauer, Laurie (2001) *Morphological Productivity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bauer, Laurie, Rochelle Lieber and Ingo Plag (2015) *The Oxford Reference Guide to English Morphology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barðdal, Jóhanna (2008) *Productivity. Evidence from Case and Argument Structure in Icelandic*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Besedina, Natalia A. (2012) Evaluation through morphology: a cognitive perspective. *Proceedings of CLA Meeting* 1, 177–192.

Blevins, James P. (2006) Word-based morphology. *Journal of Linguistics* 42, 531–573.

Booij, Geert (2007 [2005]) *The Grammar of Words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Booij, Geert (2010) *Construction Morphology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Booij, Geert (2015) Construction Morphology. In: Hippisley, Andrew and Gregory T. Stump (eds.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Morphology.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 424–448.

Booij, Geert (2019) The role of schemas in Construction Morphology. *Word Structure* 12(3), 385–395.

Booij, Geert and Jenny Audring (2018) Partial motivation, multiple motivation: The role of output schemas in morphology. In: Booij, Geert (ed.) *The Construction of Words: Advances in Construction Morphology*. Cham: Springer, 59–80.

Breidenbach, C. M. (2006) *Deconstructing Mock Spanish: A Multidisciplinary Analysis of Mock Spanish as Racism, Humor, and Insult*. Columbia: University of South Carolina dissertation.

Dressler, Wolfgang U., Oswald Panagl, Willi Mayerthaler and Wolfgang U. Wurzel (1987) *Leitmotifs in Natural Morphology.* Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Fried, Mirjam and Jan-Ola Östman (2004) Construction grammar: A thumbnail sketch. In: Fried, Mirjam and Jan-Ola Östman (eds.) *Construction Grammar in a Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins Publishing, 11–86.

Giraudo, Hélène and Serena Dal Maso (2016) The salience of the complex words and their parts: Which comes first? *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01778

GDS: Green, Jonathon (n.d.) *Green's Dictionary of Slang*. https://greensdictofslang.com/

Gorman, Kyle and Laurel MacKenzie (2009) A Po-Mo Boho in SoHo: Emerging specificity in English templatic hypocoristics. *LSA Annual Meeting*. http://laurelmackenzie.com/presentations/Gorman_MacKenzie_LSA2009_slides.pdf

Hamans, Camiel (2020) How an 'Italian' suffix became productive in Germanic languages. In: ten Hacken, Pius and Renáta Panocová (eds.) *The Interaction of Borrowing and Word Formation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hill, Jane H. (2008) *The Everyday Language of White Racism*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Hoffmann, Thomas (2017) Construction grammars. In Dancygier, Barbara (ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jackendoff, Ray (2002) *Foundations of Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jamet, Denis (2009) A morphophonological approach to clipping in English. *Lexis: Journal in English Lexicology* 1, 15–31.

Mattiello, Elisa (2005) The Pervasiveness of slang in standard and non-standard English. *Mots Palabras Words* 6, 7–41.

ODS: Ayto, John (1998) *Oxford Dictionary of Slang*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

OED3: *Oxford English Dictionary online*, 3rd edition, Oxford University Press. https://en.oxforddictionaries.com [accessed 14 December 2019].

Rumelhart, David E. (1980) Schemata: the building of blocks of cognition. In Spiro, Rand J., Bertram C. Bruce and William F. Brewer (eds.) *Theoretical Issues in Reading Comprehension: Perspectives from Cognitive Psychology, Linguistics, Artificial Intelligence, and Education*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 33–58.

Schneider, Klaus P. (2003) *Diminutives in English*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

Schultz, Julia (2017) *The Influence of Spanish on the English Language since 1801: A Lexical Investigation*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Tarasova, Elizaveta and José A. Sánchez Fajardo (2019) Exploring the evaluative nature of Adj+*ie/y* nominalisations in contemporary English. Paper presented at *International Conference On Cognitive Linguistics*, Kwansei Gakuin University (Japan), 6-11 August 2019.

Taylor, John R. (2003) *Linguistic Categorization: Prototypes in Linguistic Theory*, 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Annexes

The matrix list of words ending in {o} extracted from OED3, ODS and GDS.

lemma	etymon	lemma	etymon
abo[1]	*aboriginal*	*bottle-o*	*bottle* + -o
aggro[1]	*aggr(avation)* + -o	*bro*	*brother*
aggro[2]	*aggr(essive)* + -o	*bo*[1]	*boy*
alvo	unknown	*bo*[2]	*(ho)bo*
ambo	*amb(ulance)* + -o	*bo*[3]	*bo(hemian)*
appo	*app(lication)* + -o	*bo*[4]	*(Colomb)ia* +-o
(on) appro[1]	*appr(oval)* + -o	*bo*[5]	unknown
appro[2]	*appro(bation)*	*bobo*[1]	*bo(urgeois)* + *bo(hemian)*
arvo	*af(ternoon)* + -o	*bobo*[2]	unknown
bando	*(a)bando(ned)*	*boffo*	unknown
beano	*bean* + -o	*bozo*	unknown
benzo[1]	*Benz* + -o	*boyo*	*boy* + -o
benzo[2]	*benzo(diazepine)*	*brasco*	*brass* + -(c)o
bingo[1]	*bing(le)* + -o	*bubbo*	unknown
bingo[2]	*bimbo* mispron.	*buggo*	*bug(s)* + -o
bizzo	*bus(iness)* + -o	*bullo*	*bull* + -o
blindo	*blind(er)* + -o	*bronzo*	*bronze*
blinko	*blink* + -o	*bucko*	*buck* + -o
blotto	*blot* + -o	*bunco, bunko*	*banca* (Sp.)
boffo[1]	*boff* + -o	*(el) cheapo*	*cheap* + -o
boffo[2]	unknown	*cheerio*	*cheer* + -(i)o
boho	*boh(emian)* +-o	*choco, chocko*	*chocolate*
boilo	*boil* + -o	*cholo*	*Cholo(llán)*
boko[1]	unknown	*chongo*	unknown
boko[2]	possibly Fr. *beaucoup*	*chrimbo*	*Chri(stmas)* + -o
boko[3]	possibly var. *broke*	*chromo*	*chromolithograph*
bono	Polari	*chubbo*	*chub* + -o
bonzo	unknown	*chunko*	*chunk* + -o
bombo	*bomb* + -o	*chummo*	*chum* + -o
bosco	unknown	*clicko*	*click* + -o

lemma	etymon
clobbo	*clob* + -o
co[1]	*co(ve)*
co[2]	*co-(respondent)*
cocko	*cock* + -o
coco, koko	*coco(nut)*
coco	*coc(aine)* + -o
combo	*comb(ination)* + -o
commo	*comm(unist)* + -o
compo	*comp(ensation)* + -o
concho	*consc(ientious)* + -o
confo	*conf(erence)* + -o
congo	*con(gregationalist)* + -o
convo	*conv(ersation)* + -o
co-ro	*co-r(espondent)* + -o
cozo	Yid. *chazer*
cracko	*crack(ed)* + *-o*
crap-o, crappo	*crap* + -o
crappo	Fr. *crapaud*
crazo	*craz(y)* + -o
cro[1]*, crow*	*chro(mo)*
cro[2]	Fr. *(es)cro(c)*
cro[3]	*Chro(nic)* + -o
crumbo	*crum* + -(b)o
cuffo	*cuff* + *-o*
daddy-o	*daddy* + *-o*
dago	Sp. *Diego*
decko, dekko	*dikhu* (Hindustani)
deado	*dead* + -o
delinko	*delinqu(ent)* + -o
demo[1]	*demo(nstration)*
demo[2]	*demo(crat)*
demo[3]	*demo(lition)*
denso	*dens(e)* + -o
depresso	*depress(ed)* + *-o*
dermo	*derm(atitis)* + -o
dero	*der(elict)* + -o
desto	*dest(ination)* + -o
devo	*dev(iant)* + -o
dillio	unknown
dillo	backslang (< *old*)
dumbo	*dumb* + -o
dimbo	*dim* + -(b)o
dimmo[1]	*dim(e)* + -o
dimmo[2]	*dim* + -o
dino	*dyno*[1]
dippo	*dip* + -o
dipso	*dipso(maniac)*

lemma	etymon
ditso, ditzo	*ditz* + -o
doggo	*dog* + -o
doppo	*dop(e)* + -o
dozo	*doz(y)* + -o
dubbo	*dub* + -o
dumbo	*dumb* + *-o*
dummo	var. *dumbo*
dyno[1] *dino*	*dynamiter*
dyno[2]	*dynamite*
eco	*eco(nomy)*
eggo	*egg* + -o
eldo	*El Do(rado)*
(el) dorko	*el* + *dork* + -o
(el) foldo	*el* + *fold* + -o
(el) primo	*el* + *prim(e)* + -o
(el) sleazo	*el* + *sleaz(e)* + -o
(el) stinko	*el* + *stink* + -o
eno	backslang *one*
eppo	*ep(ileptic)* + -o
ethno	*ethn(ic)* + -o
evo	*ev(ening)* + -o
faro, fairo	*fa(i)r* + -o
fatso	*fat* + -(s)o
feeblo	*feebl(e)* + -o
fembo	prob. *fem(ale)* + *b(imb)o*
femo	*fem(inist)* + -o
fisho	*fish* + -o
fisno	backslang *(< office)*
flako	*flak(y)* + -o
fomo	Accr.
gabo, gabbo	*gab* + -o
galvo	*galv(anized)* + -o
garbo	*garb(age)* + -o
geezo	*geez(er)* + -o
gippo, gyppo	*Egytian*
ginzo, guinzo	*Guinea*
gismo, gizmo	unknown
goffo	unknown
good-o	*good* + -o
gonzo[1]	*gon(e)* + *(cra)zo*
gonzo[2]	*gon(e)* + -(z)o
guino	*guin(ea)* + -o
guinzo	*Guin(ea)* + -(z)o
gyno	*gyn(aecologist)* + -o
hambo	*ham* + *(ham)bo(ne)*
homo	*homosexual*
hanktelo	unknown

lemma	etymon
hardo	*hard* + -o
himbo	*him* + *(bim)bo*
ho	var. pron. *whore*
hobo	unknown
hogo	Fr. *haut goût*
honcho	Jap. *han'cho*
hypo[1]	*hypo(chondriac)*
hypo[2]	*hypo(dermic)*
hypo[3]	*hyp(e)* + -o
hygelo	unknown
ikeymo	*Ikey* + *Moses*
imo[1]	*im(becile)* + -o
imo[2]	*im(itation)* + -o
info	*info(rmation)*
intro[1]	*intro(duction)*
intro[2]	*intro(duce)*
iso	*iso(lation)*
isro, izro	*Isr(ael)* + *(af)ro*
jacko	*jackass* + -o
jalino	unknown
jambo	*Jam (Tarts)* + -o
jaro	Maori *whauraura*
jazzbo, jassbo	*jazz* + -bo(y)
jewfro	See *isro*
jo[1]	*Jo(e)*
jo[2]	*Nava(jo)*
jo[3]	*jo(ke)*
jocko	*jock(ey)* + -o
jojo	unknown
joko	*jock* + -o
jollo	*joll(ification)* + -o
jollyo	*jolly* + -o
journo	*journ(alist)* + -o
jumpo	*jump* + -o
Kenso	*Kens(ington)* + -o
keo	Scot. *kiow-ow*
kero	*kero(sene)*
kilo	*kilo(meter)*
kiddo	*kid* + -o
kinko	*kink(y)* + -o
klepto	*klepto(maniac)*
kojo	Fante *Kodwo*
koreegro	*Kore(an)* + *(n)egro*
laddo	*lad* + -o
lam-o, lam-o[1]	*lam(e)* + -o
lam-o[2]	*lam(e)* + -o
lavvo	*lav(atory)* + -o

lemma	etymon
lefto	*left* + -o
lesbo	*les(bian)* + -o
leso, lezzo	*les(bian)* + -o
libbo	*lib(erty)* + -o
limo	*limo(usine)*
lingo	*lingua*
lipo	*lipo(suction)*
locomo	*locomo(tion)*
lolo	unknown
looko	*look* + -o
lusho	*lush* + -o
maco[1]	Fr. *ma co(commère)*
maco[2]	Fr. *maqu(er)eau*
maddo	*mad* + -o
madolo	unknown
mago	*mag(istrate)*
malco	*malco(ordinated)*
mambo jumbo	Mande *mama dyumbo*
mammy-o	*mammy* + -o
marko	*mark* + -o
maso	*maso(chist)*
matzo	Heb. *motzer*
mayo	*mayonnaise*
meno	*meno(pause)*
metho	*meth(ylated)*
milko	*milk* + -o
Mo	*Mo(gul)*
mo[1]	*moustache*
mo[2]	*moment*
mo[3]	*mo(nth)*
mo[4]	*(ho)mo*
mo[5]	*mo(therfucker)*
mo[6]	*mo(ta)*
mo[7]	*mo(tivation)*
mo[8]	unknown
mofo	*mo(ther)f(ucker)* + -o
molo	unknown
momo	*mo(ron)* redup.
mongo[1]	unknown
mongo[2]	*(hu)mong(ous)* + -o
moto	Accr. *m(aster) o(f) t(he) o(bvious)*
mungo	unknown
muso	*mus(ician)* + -o
nammo	*woman* backslang
narbo	unknown
nasho	*nat(ional)* + -o

lemma	etymon
neato	*neat* + -o
nebo	*(i)neb(riated)* + -o
nego	*neg(ative)*
nibso	*nibs* + -o
nitro	*nitro(glycerine)*
nitto	*nit* + -o
nutso	*nuts* + -o
nympho	*nympho(maniac)*
oafo	*oaf* + -o
obbo, obo	*ob(servation)* + -o
obno	*obno(xious)*
octo	*octo(pus)*
oldo	*old* + -o
oppo	*opposite*
osso	unknown
oxo	*o x o*
panto	*panto(mime)*
paro[1]	unknown
paro[2]	*par(alytic)* + -o
parro, paro	*par(anoid)* + -o
pego	unknown
pervo	*perv* + -o
pheno	*pheno(barbital)*
phono	*phono(graph)*
pinko	*pink* + -o
pisso	*piss(ed)* + -o
pleuro	*pleuro-(neumonia)*
plonko	*plonk* + -o
pogo	*pogo (stick)*
po-po[1]	*po(lice)* redup.
po-po[2]	*p(rison) o(fficer)* redup.
popo	*po(sterior)* redup.
posho	*posh* + -o
povvo	*(im)pov(erished)*
preggo	*preg(nant)* + -o
premo	*prem(ium)* + -o
presbo	*Presb(ytarian)* + -o
prezzo	*pres(ent)* +-o
primo	*prim(e)* +-o
pro[1]	*pro(fessional)*
pro[2]	*pro(hibitionist)*
pro[3]	*pro(stitute)*
pro[4]	*pro(phylactic)*
pro[5]	*pro(file)*
pro[6]	*pro(bation) officer*
pro[7]	*pro(hibit)*
pro[8]	*pro(fessionally)*

lemma	etymon
propho	*prophylaxis*
provo	*prov(ost-marshal)* + -o
psycho	*psycho(path)*
puffo	*puff* + -o
purko	*perk (up)* + -o
pussio	*puss(y)* + -o
pyro	*pyro(maniac)*
rabbo	*rabb(it)* + -o
rabbit-o	*rabbit* + -o
rando	*rando(m)*
rango	*rang(atang)* + -o
rape-o	*rape* + -o
razzo	*ras(pberry)* + -o
reffo	*ref(ugee)* + -o
reggo	*reg(istration)* + -o
rello, relo	*rel(ative)* + -o
remo	*rem(edial)* + -o
rigmo	*rig(or) mo(rtis)*
rhino[1]	*rhinoceros*
rhino[2]	unknown
robo	*rob(itussin)* + -o
rollo	*roll* + -o
rubigo	unknown
rumbo	*rum* + -(b)o
rumpo	*rump* + -o
sado-maso	*sado-maso(chist)*
sambo, sammo	*san(dwich)* + -o
sano, sanno	*san(itary)*
sappo	*sap* + o
sarvo	*(thi)s + arvo*
schizo	*schizo(frenic)*
schmo	*schm(uck)* + -o
scrappo	*scrap* + -o
scripto	unknown
scruffo	*scruff* + -o
scumbo	*scumb(ag)* + -o
secko	*sex* + -o
see-o	*shoes* backslang
seppo	*sep(tic) (tank)* rhyming slang
servo	*serv(ice)* + -o
sexo	*sex* + -o
shappo	Fr. *chapeau*
sheepo	*sheep* + -o
sherlocko	*Sherlock* + -o
shino	*shine* + -o
sho-lo	*sho(rt) + lo(ng)*
sicko	*sick* + -o

lemma	etymon
silko	unknown
single-o	*single* + -o
skeeto	*(mos)quito*
skibo	unknown
skino	unknown
slango	*slang* + -o
smacko[1]	*smack(ed)* + -o
smacko[2]	*smack* + -o
smoko	*smoke* + -o
snako	*snak(e)* + -o
socko	*sock* + -o
sonno	*son* + -o
soro	*sor(ority)*
spacko	*spack(er)* + -o
spanko	*spank* + -o
spasmo	*spasm* + -o
spazzo	*spas(m)* + -o
speedo	*speedo(meter)*
squasho	*squash* + -o
starko	*stark* + -o
steno	*steno(grapher)*
stilo	*styl(e)* + -o
stinko	*stink(ing)* + -o
stoppo	*stop* + -o
strange-o	*strange* + -o
streepo	*strap* + -o
stupo	*stup(id)* + -o
suavo	*suav(e)* + -o
susso	*sus(tenance)* + -o
swacko	*swack(ed)* + -o
sypho	*syph(ilis)* + -o
teameo	*team* + (e)o
thicko	*thick* + -o
thingio	*thing(y)* + -o
thingo	*thing(umabob)* + -o
thrumbo	*thrum(s)* + -(b)o
troppo	*trop(ical)* + o
tondo	unknown
trosseno	backslang *one sort*
twisto	*twist(ed)* + -o
unco	*unco(rdinated)*
walyo	It. *uaglio*
weirdo	*weird* + -o
whacko, wacko	*whack* + -o
whammo	*wham* + *-o*
whocko	imitative
wide-o	*wide* + -o
winco, winko	*win(g) co(mmander)*
willco	*will co(mply)*
wino	*wine* + -o
wizzo, whizzo	*whizz* + -o
wombo	*wom(a)n* + *b(reast)* + -o
woppo	Sp. *guapo*
yerriso	*I hear so*
yobbo	*yob* + -o
yucko	*yuck* + *-o*
zonko	*zonk* + -o

José A. Sánchez Fajardo received his PhD in English Linguistics from the University of Alicante (Spain), where he is currently a researcher and a lecturer. He is one of the editors-in-chief of the *Alicante Journal of English Studies*. His latest publications revolve around the phenomena of morphological pejoration, analogy and lexical innovation, in which word formation is explored through constructivist and cognitive approaches. He has published several articles and book chapters in highly ranked journals (e.g. *American Speech*, *Lingua*, *English Today*, *Belgian Journal of Linguistics*, *Languages in Contrast*) and publishers (e.g. Bloomsbury, Brill, De Gruyter, Cambridge University Press, John Benjamins).

Address: José A. Sánchez Fajardo, Departamento de Filología Inglesa, Universidad de Alicante, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras I, Carretera de San Vicente del Raspeig s/n, 03690 San Vicente del Raspeig, Alicante, Spain. [email: jasanchez@ua.es]