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SOUS LA DIRECTION DE MARCO FASCIOLO



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Approximation et dérivation verbale des termes de couleurs Une explication pragmatique cognitive

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- **Author:** Saussure (Louis de)
- **Abstract:** This paper focuses on criterion V by Berlin & Kay (1969), which states that basic colour terms have a stable morphological distribution. Their example is English suffix *-ish*, which is acceptable only with basic terms (*grey, greyish*). Here we examine how this criterion fits with French, in particular through the French suffix *-âtre*, but also as concerns verbal derivation (*jaune, jaunir*). We suggest that the morphological facts, which confirm the intuition by Berlin & Kay, are consequences of cognitive, pragmatic, facts, linked both to how we deal cognitively with the conceptualization of colour categories (which is rigid, thus not subject to intensification, cf. Kleiber 2007, but at the same time covering a spectrum of nuances) and to the complexity of inferences that would suppose a divergence between specification and approximation if precise nuances are modified by the suffix, which disfavours the lexicalisation of such terms. These facts are also involved in verbal derivation.
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