Derivation of adjectives

Denominal adjectives

A primary distinction within adjective classes is between *qualitative* and *relational* adjectives. Qualitative adjectives express properties that *describe* entities and are typically gradable. In contrast, relational adjectives function to *classify* entities, denoting the domains to which they belong or specifying relationships with other entities, including those with argumental roles.

Relational adjectives

Relational adjectives, one of the more thoroughly researched classes of denominal adjectives, are semantically underspecified regarding the type of relationship they establish between the head noun and their base noun. The interpretation of this relationship adapts flexibly to contextual relevance. In this framework, the fundamental semantic role of relational adjectives is classificatory: they denote subtypes of the head noun by establishing connections with other entities. Unlike qualifying adjectives, which involve a content-rich relational function *R*, the relational adjective's link more closely resembles a semantically neutral preposition, such as *of* in English or *de* in Spanish.

The affixes involved in forming relational adjectives are:

- ***-iti***: *hlon(a)itë* 'phonetic', *ólamaitë* 'consonantal' (and so *erólamaitë* 'uniconsonantal', *attólamaitë* 'biconsonantal', *nelólamaitë* 'triconsonantal'). Earlier *aranaitë* 'royal' was likely replaced by the derivative of **-jā**: *aranya*; and the *hanuvoitë* 'male' with **vona* 'male'.
- ***-jā*** is the most represented suffix here. It can be seen with:
  - – consonantal nouns: *apacenya* 'of foresight', *tercenya* 'of insight', *elenya* 'stellar', *aranya* '[royal]', *ferinya* 'beechen', *arinya* 'early', and especially place-names: *amanya* '[of Aman]', *formenya* 'northern', *hyarmenya* 'southern', *númenya* 'western', *rómenya* 'eastern'.
  - – moraic nouns: *gávea* 'consonantal', *vénea* 'virginal', *essea* 'local'.
  - – derivative nouns: *lúmequentalea* 'historical', *ampanotalea* 'architectural', *ettelea* 'foreign', *farastea* 'of the chase', *lirustea* 'fit for singing', *nengwea* 'nasal', *yárea* or *yalúmea* 'olden'.
  - – pseudo-vocalic nouns: *entya* 'central', *enya* 'middle' (but see also *endea* 'middle').
- ***-(i)nā*** is particularly represented by:
  - – the material adjectives (which are however in the fuzzy area between relational and qualifying categories): *angaina* 'of iron', *taurina* or *toina* 'of wood', *sarna* 'of stone'. It could also include *cemna* 'of earth' (< *cén*), but it's more likely to show ***-ā*** (< *cemen*).

    - – derivative nouns: lambina ‘of tongue’, cunduina ‘princely’, parmaina ‘literary’, valaina ‘divine’.
- ***-ā*** with haplology is attested only in the earlier period, and includes *ómanda* ‘vocalic’, *toa* ‘woolen’, as well as mentioned above *cemna*, and in theoretical framework instances of moraic adjectives: *linda* ‘melodious’, *gúla* ‘occult’.
- Finally, the list also includes ***-(r)in***, that specializes only on demonyms[1]: *Eldarin* ‘of the Eldar’, *Telerin* ‘of the Teleri’, *Vanyarin* ‘of the Vanyar’, etc.

An example like ⟨ *taurina* ‘of wood’, *taurea* ‘forested’ ⟩ illustrates the tendency for *-jā* to convey a possessive reading more naturally. Thus, a hypothetical adjective like **lambea*, if it existed, would more likely mean ‘having a tongue’ rather than anything else. In fact, as will be detailed in the section on possessive adjectives, the suffix *-inā* is absent in contexts where a possessive reading is required.

> [1] With the exception of telperin, likely discarded.

Genitive II

In contrast to English, where the semantically empty preposition *of* serves as a counterpart to relational adjectives, Quenya employs a Genitive II case. Examples like *Eruva* ‘divine’ illustrate how this genitive can encroach upon adjectival functions. Although there is overlap between relational adjectives and the Genitive II case, a noun in the Genitive II case has a richer structure; it can, for instance, express a *numP* feature, as in *lambe Eldaiva* ‘language of the Elves’. Relational adjectives, being structurally impoverished, cannot convey such features — thus, *cunduina* ‘royal’, but not **cundurina*.

Qualifying adjectives

Unlike relational adjectives, qualifying adjectives project additional syntactic features that underlie their core properties:

- **Degree Modification**: Qualifying adjectives generally allow modification by degree, a feature unavailable in relational adjectives.
- **Predicative Function**: Qualifying adjectives function as predicates, introducing properties that can truthfully be attributed to a subject.
- **Stable Semantics**: Qualifying adjectives exhibit stable semantics, where each adjective aligns with a particular conceptual dimension. While relational adjectives leave the relationship with the head noun underspecified, allowing contextual interpretation, qualifying adjectives specify the dimension directly.

Four traditional categories of qualifying denominal adjectives can be identified: possessive adjectives (1), similitudinal adjectives (2), causative adjectives (3), and dispositional adjectives (4).

1. **Possessive**: *hloirea* ‘venomous’, *laistea* ‘ignorant’, *ómea* ‘voiced’.
2. **Similitudinal**: *vinima* ‘childish’, *lossea* ‘snowy’, *elvea* ‘starlike’.
3. **Causative**: *rávea* ‘roaring’, *gorta* ‘horrible’, *naicelea* ‘painful’.

4. **Dispositional**: *handa* ‘understanding’, *penda* ‘inclined’, *tinda* ‘glinting’.

The distinctions among these four classes — possessive, similitudinal, causative, and dispositional — do not correspond to syntactic projection differences. Instead, they reflect variations in the type of *p*P layer employed, corresponding to the specific “flavor” of *p* used in each case. These flavors represent distinct organizations within the conceptual semantics component, aligning with qualia structure theory (Pustejovsky, 1995). Each class of qualifying denominal adjectives corresponds to one of four qualia classes:

- *p*<constitutive> = ***poss*P**: possessive adjectives, reflecting the *constitutive* quale
- *p*<formal> = ***sim*P**: similitudinal adjectives, reflecting the *formal* quale
- *p*<agentive> = ***caus*P**: causative adjectives, reflecting the *agentive* quale
- *p*<telic> = ***dis*P**: dispositional adjectives, reflecting the *telic* quale

Qualia structure

Qualia structure organizes the conceptual interpretation of words as information stored within the lexical entries of linguistic exponents, rather than in the syntactic structure that they spell out. It encapsulates the minimal characteristics that define our understanding of the meanings of nouns and verbs. Pustejovsky (1995) identifies four types of qualia, each representing a different dimension of this conceptual information:

- **Formal quale**: distinguishes an object within a domain, including attributes like shape, dimensionality, color, magnitude, and orientation.
- **Constitutive quale**: expresses the relationship between an object and its parts or constituents, covering material and component elements.
- **Agentive quale**: denotes factors involved in the origin or creation of an object.
- **Telic quale**: relates to the purpose or function of an object, either in terms of an agent’s intended action or an inherent functional aim.

For example, a *book* encompasses, beyond its formal (*large, green, standing*) and constitutive (*cover, paper, ink*) properties, an *agentive* quale (the act of *writing* that created it) and a *telic* quale (its purpose of being *read*).

The four classes of qualifying adjectives correspond to the four qualia precisely because adjectives are not fundamental, primitive categories in natural languages. The selection among these qualia types is not left solely to the nature of the *p* exponent, as one might anticipate with purely conceptual semantics. These qualia distinctions are reinforced by specific affixes that directly map to respective qualia-based types of *p*, producing adjectives of only one kind: *-arwa* for possessive, *-vea* for similitudinal, *-cara* for causative, *-isa* for dispositional, etc.

Possessive adjectives

Possessive adjectives, broadly, denote attributes of an entity by associating it with a salient, constitutive element. This relation is generally limited to particular classes of concepts, as certain roots, notably those expressing events or animate beings, do not typically form possessive adjectives.

A significant portion of possessive adjectives is based on nouns referring to physical entities, further divided into five distinct sub-classes:

- – body parts;
- – items of clothing;
- – substances (produced by the body or otherwise);
- – physical entities that accompany, modify, or decorate an entity;
- – structural parts that form part of the internal structure of an object.

In addition to physical entities, non-physical concepts also provide bases for possessive adjectives. Common sub-classes of such nouns include:

- – capacities and abilities;
- – moral qualities;
- – mental states;
- – diseases and ailments;
- – other characteristics that describe an entity's intrinsic properties.

Possessive adjectives align closely with the constitutive quale by characterizing an entity through a salient aspect or property that forms part of its identity. This inherent connection explains why possessive adjectives involving nouns in this context often convey an inalienable possession reading, where the attribute is understood as an inseparable characteristic of the entity.

- **conversion**: *sauricumba* ‘foul-bellied’, *quingatelco* ‘bow-legged’, *raccalepta* ‘claw-fingered’, – all three from Treebeard’s speech, – but also *marta* ‘fated’, **vala* ‘powerful’, *galda* ‘polished’.
- ***-ití***: *maitë* ‘skillful’ (and many ‘-handed’ variations, e.g. *hyarmaitë* ‘lefthanded’), *manaitë* ‘blessed’, *ómaitë* ‘voiced’, *nírítë* ‘forceful’, *nítë* ‘dewy’.
- **-jā** is the most represented suffix here. It can be seen with:
  - – consonantal nouns: *attalya* ‘biped’, *fantarcenya* ‘perspicacious’, *herenya* ‘fortunate’, *nenya* ‘wet’.
  - – moraic nouns: *lómea* ‘gloomy’ (and *lilómea* ‘many-shadowed’), *mírea* ‘jeweled’, *ómea* ‘voiced’, *fínea* ‘dexterous’, *ondórea* ‘pitiless’, *pirucendea* ‘on the point of toes’, *rúzea* ‘wrathful’, *túrea* ‘mighty’, *lárea* ‘fat’, *mailea* ‘lustful’, *hórea* ‘impulsive’, *lingea* ‘with a musical sound’, *lillassea* ‘having many leaves’, *lilótea* ‘having many flowers’, *poldórea* ‘strong’.
  - – derivative vocalic nouns: *airea* ‘holy’, *coirea* ‘living’, *taurea* ‘forested’, *almárea* ‘blessed’, *hloirea* ‘venomous’, *nairea* ‘sorrowful’, *eressea* ‘lonely’, *caimassea* ‘sick’, *lintyulussea* ‘having many poplars’, *laistea* ‘ignorant’, *nemestea* ‘apparent’, *atalantea* ‘downfallen’.
  - – pseudo-vocalic nouns: *alalvea* ‘having many elms’, *lindornea* ‘having many oaks’.
- ***-ā***: *góla* ‘wise’, ringa ‘cold’, *russa* ‘red-haired’, *finda* ‘haired’, *melecta* ‘mighty’, *laica* ‘acute’, *túra* ‘great’, *raina* ‘smiling’, *ruina* ‘blazing’, *sincahonda* ‘flinthearted’.
- ***-nā***: *orna* ‘hasty’, *quinna* ‘crested’, *ambuna* ‘hilly’, *rína* ‘crowned’.
- ***-imā***: *vailima* ‘windy’, *nessima* ‘youthful’, *úvanima* ‘ugly’, *alima* ‘good’, *vórima* ‘faithful’.
- ***-inqua***: *alcarinqua* ‘glorious’, *erinqua* ‘single’.

- hapax: ***-wā***: *linyenwa* ‘old’; ***-rā***: *vára* ‘dirty’; ***-ŭ***: *hlúvö* ‘greasy’; ***-arwa***: *aldarwa* ‘having trees’.

Privative adjectives

In Quenya, privative adjectives can be derived through prefixation from possessive adjectives (like prefix *des-* in Spanish), or a specialized privative morpheme (***-less*** or ***-free*** in English):

- ***ú-*** or ***al-*** with possessive adjectives: *úmaitë* ‘unskilled’, *úvanë*, *úvanima* ‘ugly’, *úpahtea* ‘speechless’, *úfanwea* ‘unveiled’, *alómea* ‘voiceless’.
- ***ú-***, ***al-*** or ***ava-*** with nouns: *alahen* ‘eyeless’, *úpa* ‘dumb’ (lit. ‘mouth-less’), *avanóte* ‘numberless’. These three instances can also be additional examples of conversion.
- ***-lóra*** with nouns: *ómalóra* ‘voiceless’. This morpheme was likely replaced by *nec-*, *-enca*, later affixes mentioned in writing without attestation.

Similitudinal adjectives

Similitudinal adjectives are less frequent than possessive ones, as noted in various studies. Just as the notion of ‘possession’ in possessive adjectives is understood broadly — where Y *has* X — similitudinal adjectives interpret resemblance flexibly, following the pattern: Y *is like* X.

Among common nouns, the primary classes forming the bases for similitudinal adjectives include:

- – **animals**, especially those stereotypically associated with specific moral or physical qualities
- – substances, fruits, and other **natural entities** with prominent physical attributes
- – **social roles**, particularly professions or statuses tied to human attributes
- – **places** associated with stereotypical behaviors or inhabited by groups with characteristic properties
- – geometric **shapes**

While not exhaustive, these classes are the most prominent sources.

The primary interpretation of a similitudinal adjective is that Y shares a salient characteristic typically associated with nouns of the X class. Which specific property is highlighted is often underspecified, though color and shape are common. Additional properties, such as texture, size, flavor, and smell, may also be conveyed, with the interpretation often varying based on the subject the adjective modifies.

When the base noun denotes a human or other animate being, the highlighted property tends to involve abilities, moral qualities, or typical behaviors. For nouns indicating social status or occupations, a behavior-focused reading is almost obligatory; if the noun denotes an animal, both behavioral and physical traits are commonly inferred.

Similitudinal adjectives are associated with the formal quale, as the resemblance relation may encompass any distinctive property that sets the base noun apart within its domain, such as shape, size, color, or texture.

The affixes involved in forming similitudinal adjectives are:

- **conversion**: *laicalasse* ‘green as leaves’, *tornanga* ‘iron hard’.
- ***-itĭ***: *ruscuitë* ‘foxy’. To this category can also be allocated pronominal *sítë* ‘of this sort’, *taitë* ‘of that sort’.
- ***-jā***: *laurea* ‘golden’, *lossea* ‘snowy’, *mairea* ‘beautiful’, *úmea* ‘abundant’, *nieninquea* ‘like a snowdrop’, *oialea* ‘eternal’, *vilvarindea* ‘like a butterfly’, *pitya* ‘petty’. Here also belong adjectives on ***-vea***: *elvea* ‘starlike’.
- ***-(i)nā***: *lóna* ‘dark’, *lúna* ‘[dark]’, *cúna* ‘curved‘, *morna* ‘somber’, *culda* or *culina* ‘golden-red’, *tunga* ‘taut’, *malina* ‘yellow’, *culuina* ‘orange’, *telpina* ‘silver’.
- ***-imā***: *vinima* ‘childish’, *mírima* ‘very precious’.
- ***-ā***: *míra* ‘beautiful’, *fána* ‘white’, *rinda* ‘circular’, *tunda* ‘tall’, *yanda* or *yonda* ‘wide’, *helca* ‘icy’, *sinca* ‘[flinty]’, *felca* ‘[cavernous]’, *vea* ‘adult’, *helda* or *nilda* ‘friendly’, *norna* ‘tough’, *corna* ‘round’, *landa* ‘wide’, *rimba* ‘frequent’, *runya* ‘fiery red’.
- ***-ĭ***: *lissë* ‘sweet’, *lossë* ‘snowy’.
- ***-tā***: *olosta* ‘dreamy’, *telepta* ‘silver’.
- ***-rā***, ***-lā***: *téra* ‘straight’, *sára* ‘bitter’, *astula* ‘bony’; and ***-kā***: *tauca* ‘stiff’.

Causative adjectives

Causative adjectives, or effect adjectives, are derived when the base noun is understood as an effect produced or triggered by the subject. In these cases, the subject is considered to bring about the quality or state that the adjective describes.

The bases used in causative adjectives can denote either physical objects or eventualities. Within eventualities, there are three main distinctions:

- – **physical objects**: such as *laira* (‘shady’) or *ilucara* (‘omnificent’), where the subject causes the presence or manifestation of these objects or states.
- – **psychological states** (the most frequent): like *nairea* (‘sorrowful’), *naicelea* (‘painful’), or *gorta* (‘horrible’), where the subject induces a particular emotional or psychological state.
- – **events** and **processes**: including *tinda* (‘glinting’), *saura* (‘foul’), and *cuivea* (‘wakening’), where the subject initiates an event or ongoing process.

Causative adjectives align with the agentive quale, interpreting the subject as the catalyst for the state or effect represented by the base noun. In other words, the subject is the agent or cause behind the manifestation of the quality encapsulated by the adjective.

The affixes involved in forming causative adjectives are:

- ***-jā***: *rávea* ‘roaring’, *yaimea* ‘wailing’, *cuivea* ‘wakening’, *naicea* ‘cruel’, *naicelea* ‘painful’, *nairea* ‘sorrowful’.
- ***-ā***: *tinda* ‘glinting’, *laira* ‘shady’, *naira* ‘horrible’, *naica* ‘painful’, *gorta* ‘horrible’.
- ***-imā***: *írima* ‘desirable’, *lámina* ‘echoing’.
- ***-carā***: *ilucara* ‘omnificent’.

Dispositional adjectives

A dispositional adjective refers to the characteristic of having a tendency or inclination toward a specific behavior, which is understood in relation to the noun from which it is derived. The preferred bases typically either represent actions themselves or are nouns closely associated with events, as they can be seen as outcomes of those events. At its core then dispositional denominal adjectives activate the telic quale of the nouns they originate from. A disposition defines the subject by its inclination to engage in typical occurrences for which the base noun serves as a reference.

The affixes involved in forming dispositional adjectives are:

- ***-ā***: *handa* ‘understanding’, *penda* ‘sloping’ (and so *am(ba)penda* ‘uphill’), *zanya* ‘regular’.

Deverbal adjectives

The main grammatical difference between adjectives and verbs is that prototypically the latter denote events, that is, dynamic processes and changes, while the former are used to express qualities and relations with other entities. As such, deverbal adjectives, — perhaps the most described type of adjectives in the original sources, for Tolkien returned to them on several occasions, — lose the base’s verbal property of eventivity.

When attached to verbal bases, adjectival affixes typically reference either an argument of the base or the event itself. That is, deverbal adjectives typically prefer either a subject-referencing or an object-referencing interpretation.

The object-referencing adjectives include non-episodic modal adjectives and episodic participial forms of passive reading:

- **modal**: *cénima* ‘visible’, *mátima* ‘edible’, *cárima* ‘feasible’.
- **participial**: *alacarna* ‘well-done’, *rembina* ‘entangled’, *avanwa* ‘forbidden’.

The subject-referencing adjectives include non-episodic potential, dispositional and habitual adjectives, and episodic participial forms of active reading:

- **potential**: *firya* ‘mortal’, *himíte* ‘able to stick on’, *noroite* ‘capable of running’.
- **dispositional**: *cúvula* ‘flexible’, *nyárula* ‘apt to talk’, *tiríte* ‘watchful’.
- **habitual**: *melumatya* ‘honey-eating’, *coloite* ‘tolerant’, *melima* ‘affectionate’.
- **participial**: *vilwa* ‘fluttering’, *tirila* ‘watching’, *senda* ‘resting’.

Unlike denominal adjectival suffixes, the number of productive suffixes that turn verbs into adjectives in Quenya is not high. Next to past participles (***-nā*** and allomorphs), the suffixes ***-imā*** (‘-able’) and ***-itë*** (‘-ant’) are perhaps the most productive ones. The suffix ***-jā*** is also relatively productive with verbs. Beyond these cases, there are a number of unproductive suffixes or suffixes that are productive in other domains but not as deverbal adjectivizers.

Object-referencing adjectives

Modal adjectives

Modal passive adjectives are those that express the possibility or the necessity of undergoing a particular event. Adjectives built with *-able* in English are typical examples.

The affixes involved in forming modal adjectives are[1]:

- ⟨ ***μ*** ⟩ – ***imā*** or ***-timā***:
  - – on transitive verbs: *cárima* or **cartima* ‘feasible’ (and so *alcárima* or *lacárima* ‘impossible (to make)’, *ancárima* ‘easy’, *úcárima* ‘difficult’, *urucárima* ‘hard’), *cénima* ‘visible’ (and so *ascénima* ‘visible’, *hraicénima* ‘hard to see’), *cólima* ‘bearable’, *cúvima* ‘concealable’ or ‘flexible’, *quétima* ‘speak-able’ (and so *alqettima* [2] ‘unutterable’, *úquétima* ‘unspeakable’), *mátima* or **mastima* ‘edible’, *lamélima* ‘unlovable’, *nótima* ‘countable’ (and so *únótima* ‘countless’, *urnótima* ‘hard to count’), *nútima* ‘[lowerable]‘, *únyárima* ‘impossible to recount’, *úfantima* ‘not concealable’, *púlima* ‘liquid’ (i.e. ‘pour-able’), *alfárima* ‘impossible to pursue’, *tírima* ‘observable’, *túlima* ‘[bring-able]’, *túvima* ‘discover-able’, *yúlima* ‘drinkable’.[3]
  - – on unaccusative verbs: *fírima* ‘mortal’ (and so *alfírima* ‘immortal’), *nízima* ‘fragrant’, *férima* ‘ready to hand’.

> [1] There are also two erroneous instances of *-itĭ* in such role: *lacaraitë* ‘impossible’, *lanotoitë* ‘innumerable’, those are not considered further.
> [2] In the Middle Period ⟨ μ ⟩ could be either vocalic or consonantal, but in the Late Period it is firmly attested only as vocalic.
> [3] In the Middle Period the verbs that could not infix a mora were taking *-alimā*: *ortalima, alaninquitálima, istalima.* But there is no evidence of the epenthetic *-l-* in the Late Period: *tultaima, caltaima.*

The derivation of adjectives like *fírima* ‘mortal’ from unaccusative verbs *firë* ‘to die’ exemplifies how the suffix *-imā* functions to denote a patient or theme role in both transitive and unaccusative contexts. This observation aligns with generative views, which suggest that unaccusative verbs are structurally distinct from other intransitives because they possess an underlying object rather than a subject argument. This structural characteristic means that adjectives derived from unaccusative verbs with *-imā* are consistent in referencing the patient/theme, as is the case with *perishable* and *variable* in English, which similarly denote qualities of being acted upon or affected. Similarly in participial forms like *firin* ‘dead’ and *lanta* ‘falling’ unaccusative bases bear a conventionally passive marker.

The **deontic** reading does not seem to be productive in Quenya. Several instances of modal adjectives with the prohibitive prefix **ava-** are recorded: *avaquétima* ‘that must not be said’, *avanyárima* ‘what one must not tell’. Non-negated example is *rúcima* ‘terrible’ (i.e. ‘what must be feared’), but it could as well be an example of a causative adjective derived from an otherwise unattested noun, like *írima* ‘desirable’ (< *íre* ‘desire’) and *lámina* ‘echoing’ (< *láma* ‘echo’). There

are accidental cases or primary affixes ***-wā:*** *yelwa* ‘loathsome’; and ***-kā:*** *faica* ‘contemptible’.

Passive participial adjectives

Episodic participial adjectives differ sharply from modal adjectives in that they entail a specific event directly associated with the state they denote. Modal adjectives, like *mortal* or *edible*, express potential or necessity for involvement in an event (e.g., the possibility of *dying* or being *eaten*) but do not refer to any actual occurrence of that event. Thus, an *edible mushroom* can still be intact, and we simply state it is in principle safe to eat, based on its nature.

In contrast, episodic participial adjectives like *eaten* necessitate the existence of a specific event that has brought about the current state. An *eaten mushroom* has undergone the event of *eating*; this is inherent to the adjective’s meaning and reflects an irreversible change brought by that event. These adjectives therefore capture not only a state but also a completed process or occurrence that defines the entity's present condition. Such participial adjectives are called **resultant**.

The affixes involved in forming passive participial adjectives are:

- ***-nā:***
  - – on transitive verbs: *alacarna* ‘well-done’, *varna* ‘protected’, *nahamna* ‘summoned’, *hampa* ‘restrained’, *querna* ‘turned’ (and so *nuquerna* ‘reversed’), *nanca* or *nactana* ‘slain’, *raina* ‘netted’, *harna* ‘wounded’, *húna* ‘cursed’, *zanca* ‘split’, *hyarna* ‘compact’, *taina* ‘lengthened’, *yonna* or *yonda* ‘enclosed’, *nulda* or *nulla* ‘hidden’ (and also *halda* ‘hidden’), *alaquenta* ‘well said’ (and also *manaquenta* ‘blessed’), *tapta* ‘impeded’, *lecta* ‘released’, *pacta* ‘closed’, *quanta* ‘full’ (and so *penquanta* ‘full to the brim’), *sacta* ‘marred’, *canta* ‘shaped’ (as in *lassecanta* ‘leaf-shaped’), *yulda* ‘drunk’, *helda* ‘naked’, *rempa* ‘hooked’, *nóna* ‘born’, *nucumna* ‘humbled’, *colla* ‘worn’, *zanga* ‘crowded’, *zenna* ‘short’ (i.e. ‘cut short’), *tanca* ‘firm’, *tamna* ‘artificial’ (i.e. ‘crafted’), *palda* or *palla* ‘wide’ (i.e. ‘expanded’), *halda* or *halla* ‘tall’ (i.e. ‘extended’), *ʔmuina* ‘secret’, *pasta* ‘smooth’, *tanta* ‘double’, *melda* ‘dear’.
  - – on unaccusative verbs: *cuina* ‘alive’, *yerna* ‘old’, *lorna* ‘asleep’, *(a)valda* ‘excited’, *tumna* ‘deep’ (i.e. ‘going down’), *lanta* ‘falling’, *panta* ‘open’, *lumna* or *lunga* ‘heavy’.
- ***-in***:[1]
  - – on transitive verbs: *úharin* ‘unmarred’, *ur(u)carin* ‘made with difficulty’, *hwarin* ‘crooked’, *melin* ‘dear’.
  - – on unaccusative verbs: *qalin* or *firin* ‘dead’, *ilfirin* ‘immortal’, *locin* ‘bent’.
- ***-inā***:
  - – on transitive verbs: *rembina* ‘entangled’ (and so *aldarembina* ‘treemeshed’), *carina* ‘done’ (and so *lacarina* ‘undone’), *harina* or *hastaina* ‘marred’, *lerina* ‘free (of things)’, *racina* ‘stripped’, *estaina* ‘named’, *farina* ‘fugitive’, *calina* ‘illuminated’.
  - – on unaccusative verbs: *latina* ‘free (of land)’, *picina* ‘little’.
- ⟨ ***μ*** ⟩ – ***inā***: *rácina* ‘broken’, *rúcina* ‘confused’, *nótina* ‘counted’.
- ***-nwā:*** *avanwa* ‘forbidden’, *sinwa* ‘known’, *turyanwa* ‘fortified’, *alanwa* or *olinwa* ‘adult’, *enwa* or *nanwa* ‘existing’.

- ***-ĭ*** with prefixes such as ***aza-*** ‘easy to’, ***hrai-*** ‘hard to’, ***ú-*** or ***al-*** ‘not’: *ascenë* ‘easily seen’, *hraicenë* ‘hard to see’, *hrainotë* ‘hard to count’, *azalastë* ‘easily heard’, *únotë* ‘uncounted’.[2] This could also be reinforced with ***-jā***: *únotea.*
- ***-nŭ***: *lungö* ‘heavy’.
- ⟨ ***a*** ⟩ – ***ā***: *nauca* ‘stunted’, *raica* ‘crooked’, *nauta* ‘bound’.

Note that even though such adjectives as *zenna* ‘short’ or *palla* ‘wide’ lost their episodicity and became to express formal quale, they’re still considered together with other participial adjectives from etymological perspective.

> [1] In a single instance this affix showed a variant ***-ne:*** *urcarne.*
> [2] The occurrences of ⟨ *μ* ⟩ insertion were rejected: *asanótë, urunótë.*

Subject-referencing adjectives

Just like with object-referencing adjectives, in the category of subject-referencing adjectives we distinguish between episodic participial adjectives and non-episodic modal adjectives. The modal adjectives could further be split into a number of semantic groups: *potential* (‘able to do’), *dispositional* (‘likely to do’), and *habitual* (‘typically does’). It is often non-trivial to distinguish them without the context, however: only dispositional adjectives employ a unique for this category affix ***-ulā.*** Particularly, most habitual adjectives are differentiated only pragmatically based on the qualified noun.

Potential adjectives

Potential adjectives express the ability of triggering a particular event *(solve > solvent):*

- ***-ϑitĭ***:[1] *cenítë* ‘seeing’ (and *lacenítë* ‘blind’, i.e. ‘not able to see’), *yulunefítë* ‘amphibious’ (i.e. ‘able to breathe water’), *himítë* ‘able to stick on’, *noroitë* ‘capable of running’. In the Middle Period the suffix could optionally be extended with *-ma-: cara(ma)itë* ‘able to make’, *tulu(ma)itë* ‘probable’ (i.e. ‘able to come’).
- ***-jā***: *firya* ‘mortal’ (i.e. ‘able to die’), *ranya* ‘free’ (i.e. ‘able to wander’), *finya* ‘clever’ (i.e. ‘able to make things’, and so *leptafinya* ‘clever-fingered’).

> [1] Where *ϑ* stands for a ***thematic vowel***, traditionally called *ómataima* in the source materials.

Dispositional adjectives

Dispositional adjectives denote an inherent property of being prone to participating in a particular action. Crucially, this does not imply that the event has ever taken place in the past, or will take part in the future. In abstract terms, in a potential adjective, the entity has the necessary properties that *allow* it to participate in an event whereas, in a dispositional adjective, those properties are sufficient to guarantee participation in that event.

- ***-ulā:***[1] *cúvula* ‘flexible’, *nyárula* ‘apt to talk’, **matula* ‘edacious’.
- ***-ϑitĭ:*** *xiétë* ‘impermanent’ (i.e. ‘that is likely to pass’), *tirítë* ‘watchful’, *naitë* ‘true’ (i.e. ‘that is likely to be’).
- ⟨ ***a*** ⟩ – ***ā***: *maica* ‘sharp’ (and so *hendumaica* ‘sharp-eyed’), *hlaiwa* ‘sickly’.
- ***-jā:*** *canya* or *verya* ‘bold’ (i.e. ‘likely to dare’), *cotya* ‘hostile’, *lelya* ‘delicate’.

To this category also belong rare desiderative adjectives formed with a duplifix ⟨ ***i*** ⟩ – ***ā***: *soica* ‘thirsty’, *mína* ‘eager to go’, *maita* ‘hungry’.

> [1] In the Middle Period attested in fact as ⟨ *μ* ⟩ – *ulā,* as seen in some of the examples.

Habitual adjectives

Let’s consider an example like a forgetful child. It is clear by the meaning of this deverbal adjective that a dispositional paraphrase ‘that is likely to forget’ is not enough. It would be unfair to call someone forgetful if they were never actually known for forgetting something in the past. A paraphrase ‘that regularly forgets’ is more apt: this description is correct if and only if that child happened to forget something in the past, and better, did so regularly. This reading involves a semantic notion of habituality that is non-episodic (Carlson, 2011): the habitual statements are conditioned to be true in case of regular occurrences of the event, but that does not mean that it occurred in any given time span. Consider a situation John smokes: it is not sufficient to attest that John smoked in the last two days, only that he’s a smoker.

Habitual adjectives are almost exclusively restricted to human subjects, as in many cases the base verbs denote activities that only humans can perform. In other cases the habitual reading is available if the tendency is conceptualized as a personality trait.

- ***-ϑitĭ***: *caraitë* ‘active’, *coloitë* ‘tolerant’, *cuvoitë* ‘secretive’, *yuluitë* ‘drinking’.
- ***-jā*** in compounds: *melumatya* ‘honey-eating’, *saucarya* ‘evil-doing’.
- ***-imā*** of intensive meaning: melima ‘affectionate’, calima ‘bright’ (and so úcalima ‘dim’), norima ‘swift’[1], celima ‘fluent’, istima ‘wise’.[2]
- ⟨ ***a*** ⟩ – ***ā***: *zaura* ‘foul’, *taura* ‘mighty’.
- ***-lā***, ***-rā***: *saila* or *saira* ‘wise’ (and so *alasaila* ‘unwise’).

> [1] Erroneously used as *nórima* on one occasion.
> [2] An additional entry, *silma* ‘shining’ (< **silimā*), is the only example of syncope in such adjectives. However, it is only glossed as such in the Middle Period, and in the Later Period only nominal gloss remains.

Active participial adjectives

An expected counterpart to object-referencing adjectives, these active adjective are of general significance, not implying co-reference of time with the predicate.

- ⟨ ***a*** ⟩ – ***ā***: *méla* ‘loving’.

- ***-jā***: *úlea* ‘pouring’, *alatulya* ‘welcome’, *penya* ‘lacking’, *rilya* ‘glittering’, *alya* ‘rich’, *tolya* ‘prominent’, *sirea* ‘liquid’, *valya* ‘having power’.
- ⟨ ***μ*** ⟩ – ***imā***: *métima* ‘last’.
- ***-nā***: *penna* ‘lacking’, *hlinta* ‘swift’, *senda* ‘resting’, *nimpa* or *limpa* ‘drooping’, *rimpa* ‘rushing’, *neuna* ‘second’, *orna* ‘uprising’.
- ***-lā***, ***-rā***: *itara* ‘gleaming’, *caila* ‘bedridden’, *ceula* ‘living’.
- ***-ilā***: *laistila* ‘ignorant’, *tirila* ‘watching’, *itila* ‘glinting’.
- ⟨ ***μ*** ⟩ – ***ā***: *naraca* ‘rending’, *tereva* ‘fine’, *himba* ‘sticking’.
- ***-wā***: *arwa* ‘possessing’ (hence ***-arwā*** in possessive adjectives), *vilwa* ‘fluttering’, *vanwa* ‘gone’[3].

> [3] Later re-imagined as a perfective participle of *auta*.

Other grammatical categories

Other categories can also produce adjectives, though much less frequently. The result is typically a relational adjective.

- – **pronouns:** with ***-nā***: *hyana* ‘other’, *sana* ‘that’, *sina* ‘this’, *tana* ‘that’; with ***-ā***: *exa* ‘other’; with ***-jā***: *ilya* ‘each’, *imya* ‘same’, *ninya* ‘my’, *menya* ‘our’.
- – **numerals:** with ***-jā***: *erya* ‘single’, *minya* ‘first’, *attea* ‘second’, *neldea* ‘third’, etc.
- – **prepositions** and **adverbs:** with ***-jā***: *etya* ‘exiled’, *mitya* ‘interior’, *vea* ‘apparent’; with ***-ā***: *noa* ‘former’.
- – **adjectives** of degree: with **reduplication**: *mimíre* or *mimírima* ‘very beautiful’, *armemelda* ‘very dear’; with ***-i(n)kĭ***: *luinincë* ‘bluish’.

Basic adjectives

The truth is that the above analysis only scratches the surface of the adjectives available in the corpus. The majority of them cannot be linked to an underlying fundamental structure, and it is clear that Tolkien considered an adjectivizer to operate on the lexical root directly. Many if not all *ā* -adjectives mentioned previously likely belong here as well, and most of affixes appearing in adjectives are not involved in classical denominal and deverbal paradigms. These underived adjectives always contain a primary affix: *ā*, *ĭ* or *ŭ* by themselves or accompanied with an extension.

Extension \ Affix	*ā*	*ĭ*	*ŭ*
	✔	✔	✔
⟨ *μV* ⟩	✔	✔	✔

Extension \ Affix	*ā*	*ǐ*	*ŭ*
⟨ *μC* ⟩	✔	✔	*
n	✔	✔	
r	✔	✔	
t	(✔)	*	
j	✔		
k	✔		
l	✔		
w	✔		
⟨ *a* ⟩	✔		

In practice, due to historical developments, many of those patterns produce the same form, and without semantic content they become indistinguishable. Many disyllabic words that appeared before could be regarded as belonging to basic adjectives instead, but they won't be repeated in the examples below.

- **-ā**: *vana* 'fair-haired' (and so *ilvana* 'perfect', *úvana* 'marred'), *pia* 'little'. To this list also belong many adjectives derived from TALAT-root. Many of them appear in the Middle Period, and later were commonly analyzed as having one of the primary affixes: *parca* 'dry', *tulca* 'steadfast', *verca* 'wild', *tella* 'hindmost', *tarya* 'tough'[1], *talta* 'unsteady', *arta* '[noble]', *enta* 'another', *aina* 'holy', *alta* 'large', *anda* 'long', *aica* 'sharp', *maxa* 'soft', *mixa* 'wet', *tyelca* 'hasty'.
- **-ǐ**: *morë* 'black', *vanë* 'fair', *carnë* 'red', *parnë* 'bare', *varnë* 'russet', *vindë* 'pale blue'.
- **-ŭ**: **telö* 'last', **minö* 'slim'.

> [1] In the Late Period the phonological result would rather be *targa.*

Duplifixes

A duplifix is a combination of a traditional suffix with a use of non-concatenative morphology. We can distinguish two types:

1. **V-duplifix** with moraic addition to the **nucleus:** lengthening of the root-vowel, insertion of ⟨ *a* ⟩ or ⟨ *i* ⟩;

2. **C-duplifix** with moraic addition to the **coda:** lengthening of the final root consonant or homorganic addition to it.

Consonant	**Lengthening μL**	**Strengthening μs**
b	*bb > pp*	*mb*
d	*dd > tt, ld*	*nd*
g	*gg > kk*	*ŋg*
p	*pp*	
t	*tt*	
k	*kk*	
th	*tt*	
kh	*kk*	
m	*mm*	*mb*
n	*nn*	*nd*
ŋ	*ŋŋ > ŋg*	*ŋg*
l	*ll*	*ld*
r	*rr*	*rd*
s	*ss*	*st, ts*
w		*gw*
j		*gy*

The V-duplifix via lengthening occurs for all possible nuclei, and for the most of codas. Note that even though the primitive forms *mītha, nēthā* and *khīmā* are attested, the corresponding Quenya reflexes are either unattested, or changed their affixes: *mista, himba.*

- ⟨ ***μv*** ⟩ – ***ā***: *hróva* ‘dark brown’, *náva* ‘hollow’, *néca* ‘pale’, *tára* ‘wise’, *hráva* ‘wild’, **léra* ‘hard’, *céva* ‘new’, *héra* ‘principal’, *lára* ‘flat’, *láta* ‘open’, *léra* ‘free’, *mána* ‘blessed’, *míva* ‘tiny’, *náha* ‘narrow’, *níca* ‘little’, *nípa* ‘small’, *núra* ‘deep’, *hrúa* ‘evil’, *tára* ‘tall’, *úra* ‘large’, *yána* ‘wide’, *móla* ‘enslaved’.
- ⟨ ***μv*** ⟩ – ***ĭ***: *fánë* ‘white’, *mírë* ‘precious’, *mízë* ‘gray’.
- ⟨ ***μv*** ⟩ – ***ŭ***: *hlúvö* ‘greasy’.

C-duplifix via lengthening is relatively rare, and as a rule, for bases on *b, d, g, m, n* was replaced with strengthening. Historically both patterns yielded the same result for bases on *ŋ* → *ng*. Tolkien remarks: “only [*tt*], [*ss*], [*ll*] were common” (PE18/41), and in fact, only those combinations are attested in adjectival formations. C-duplifix via strengthening is significantly more common (Table 3).

- ⟨ **μs** ⟩ – **ā**: *amba* ‘more’, *lomba* ‘blind’, *orda* ‘profound’, *nenda* ‘wet’, *finda* ‘fine’, *ronda* ‘solid’, *runda* ‘polished’, *zanda* ‘firm’, *zinda* ‘gray’, *nanda* ‘back’, *hranga* ‘awkward’, *inga* ‘first’, *varanda* ‘sublime’, *voronda* ‘faithful’, *lusta* ‘empty’, *astalda* ‘strong’, *molda* ‘large’, *polda* ‘big’, *sarda* ‘hard’, *telda* ‘last’, *urda* ‘hard’, *minda* ‘prominent’.
- ⟨ **μʟ** ⟩ – **ā**: *titta* ‘little’.
- ⟨ **μs** ⟩ – **ǐ**: *fimbë* ‘slender’, *hlimbë* ‘slippery’, *limbë* ‘quick’, *rindë* ‘swift’, *zindë* ‘gray’, *nindë* ‘slender’, *ilin* ‘pale blue’ (from **ilindë*).
- ⟨ **μʟ** ⟩ – **ǐ**: *mussë* ‘soft’, *missë* ‘wet’.

Other primary affixes

An affix is considered primary if it can attach directly to a root without a thematic vowel. Some of them, like ***-jā*** and ***-nā*** are very productive in other categories, the others appear rarely.

- ***-jā***: *alya* ‘good’, *arya* ‘excelling’, *meletya* ‘mighty’, *mirya* ‘beautiful’, *netya* ‘pretty’, *nitya* ‘little’, *golya* ‘dark-haired’, *senya* ‘usual’, *vanya* ‘beautiful’ (and so *ilvanya* ‘perfect’), *vinya* ‘young’, *fanya* ‘white’, *forya* ‘right’, *hyarya* ‘left’, *inya* ‘female’, *marya* ‘pale’, *merya* ‘festive’, *milya* ‘soft’, *vinya* ‘pale blue’, *virya* ‘fresh’, *hraia* ‘awkward’.
- ***-nā***: *hyarna* ‘southern’, *cumna* ‘empty’, *moina* ‘familiar’, *núna* ‘western’, *forna* ‘northern’, *róna* ‘east’ (and so *orróna* ‘eastern’), *roina* ‘ruddy’, *torna* ‘hard’, *zorna* ‘steadfast’, *úna* ‘forlorn’, *malda* ‘yellow’, *cinta* ‘small’, *mista* ‘gray’.
- ***-nǐ***:[1] *pincë* ‘little’, *luinë* ‘blue’ (and so *menelluin* ‘sky-blue’), *lúnë* ‘blue’, *ninquë* ‘white’.
- ***-rā***: *yára* ‘old’, *oira* ‘eternal’, *mára* ‘useful’, *haira* ‘remote’, *véra* ‘personal’, *urra* ‘bad’, *úra* ‘nasty’, *gaira* ‘vast’, *maira* ‘precious’, *haura* ‘huge’, *aira* ‘holy’, *larca* ‘swift’, *arca* ‘narrow’, *nexa* or *nerca* ‘sharp’, *mixa* ‘sharp-pointed’, *naxa* ‘evil’.
- ***-rǐ***: *airë* ‘holy’, *vairë* ‘wavy’.
- ***-lā***: *olca* ‘bad’, *ulca* ‘gloomy’ (and so *henulca), faila* ‘generous’.
- ***-kā***: *aica* ‘dire’, *finca* ‘clever’, *laica* ‘green’, *lauca* ‘warm’, *loica* ‘failing’, *parca* ‘naked’, *ruxa* ‘wroth’, *turca* ‘strong’, *valca* ‘fierce’, *fauca* ‘thirsty’, *milca* ‘greedy’, *gwalca* ‘cruel’, *poica* ‘clean’, *tiuca* ‘fat’.
- ***-tā***: *fasta* ‘pleased’, *alahasta* ‘marred’.[2]
- ***-wā***: *finwa* ‘clever’, *lanwa* ‘limited’, *anwa* ‘real’, *hanwa* ‘male’, *atwa* ‘double’, *engwa* ‘sickly’, *mirwa* ‘precious’, *helwa* ‘pale blue’, *hizwa* ‘gray’, *malwa* ‘fallow’, *aiqua* ‘steep’, *voronwa* ‘enduring’, *laiqua* ‘green’, *raiqua* ‘angry’, *unqua* ‘hollow’.

> 1 Two more entries are attested only in CE and/or Sindarin: **incë* or **nimpë* ‘small’.
> 2 Those could be considered examples of **conversion** as a strategy of deverbal derivation with prefixes instead of *-ǐ*, but that analysis would put *azalaste* at odds with the rest of entries.

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