

README for antonymic adjective noun combinations

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This manual contains information about the analytic scheme for the analysis of adjective-noun combinations based on data from the British National Corpus. The data file was originally generated by Simone Löhndorf (2013) and revised by Carita Paradis (2024). The research was funded by The Swedish Research Council (grant no 2007-2409)

The data set analysed is found in the file called <adjectival_uses>. The file name indicates that only adjectival uses of the words are included in the data file. Adverb uses of the same lexical forms have been excluded. The choice of adjectives for this study is based on many extensive studies of antonym use in text as well results of studies of these and other words in experimental settings carried out during the past decade.

Table 1. The 21 antonym pairs: their meaning dimensions and lexical forms.

DIMENSIONS	antonym pairs		DIMENSIONS	antonyms pairs	
AGE	<i>young</i>	<i>old</i>	SIZE	<i>little</i>	<i>big</i>
APERTURE	<i>closed</i>	<i>open</i>	SPEED	<i>slow</i>	<i>fast</i>
BEAUTY	<i>ugly</i>	<i>beautiful</i>	STRENGTH	<i>weak</i>	<i>strong</i>
EXISTENCE	<i>dead</i>	<i>alive</i>	TEMPERATURE	<i>cold</i>	<i>hot</i>
FULLNESS	<i>empty</i>	<i>full</i>	TEMPERATURE	<i>cool</i>	<i>warm</i>
HARDNESS	<i>soft</i>	<i>hard</i>	TEXTURE	<i>smooth</i>	<i>rough</i>
HEIGHT	<i>low</i>	<i>high</i>	THICKNESS	<i>thin</i>	<i>thick</i>
LENGTH	<i>short</i>	<i>long</i>	WEALTH	<i>poor</i>	<i>rich</i>
LUMINOSITY	<i>light</i>	<i>dark</i>	WEIGHT	<i>light</i>	<i>heavy</i>
MERIT	<i>bad</i>	<i>good</i>	WIDTH	<i>narrow</i>	<i>wide</i>
SIZE	<i>small</i>	<i>large</i>			

The data set consists of a good 500 randomly selected occurrences of each of the above adjectives in their contexts in the BNC (some 21,000 occurrences in total). The sentences in the written part of the corpus data and the corresponding chunk for the spoken were manually coded with respect to the parameters described below. We discriminate between different senses, such as *light* (‘not dark’) and *light* (‘not heavy’) as in Table 1, but not metaphorical uses, say *hard* (‘not easy’) since we operationalize sense boundaries in terms of the adjectival properties in relation to the meaning dimension they evoke irrespective of whether the instantiation is concrete or abstract. There are 21 pairs, but only 41 adjectives because *light* has two partners but one form.

The file includes 8 fields that are relevant for potential researcher. They are listed below with examples (Exclude Comment, Subcategory and Adjective sense)

Adjective: small

Noun: car

Noun ontology: 1st

Adjective ontology: scalar

Metaphor: basic

Position: attributive

Polarity: pos

Sentence: This is an excellent small car.

All occurrences have been analysed and interpreted with respect to how they are used in the actual texts in the BNC. A complete and detailed description of the data set and the method of analysis can be found in

Paradis, C., Löhndorf, S., van de Weijer, J., & Willners, C. (2015). Semantic profiles of antonymic adjectives in discourse. *Linguistics*, 53(1), 153-191. <http://doi.org/10.1515/ling-2014-0035>