03 — Morphology and word-formation

Lexicology and Lexicography — Course Website

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Outline

1. **Lexical innovation**: How do new words arise and what are the key types?

2. **Morphology vs word-formation**: What's the distinction and scope?

3. **Inflection in Present-Day English**: What inflectional morphemes exist?

4. **Morphological building blocks**: What are morphemes and their categories?

5. **Morphemic processes**: How do derivation and compounding work?

6. **Non-morphemic processes**: What are conversion, clipping, blending, back-formation, and acronyms?

7. **Practice**: How can we analyse word structure?

Introduction

Lexical innovation

How do new words arise?

Lexical innovation

How do new words arise?

Kerremans (2015)

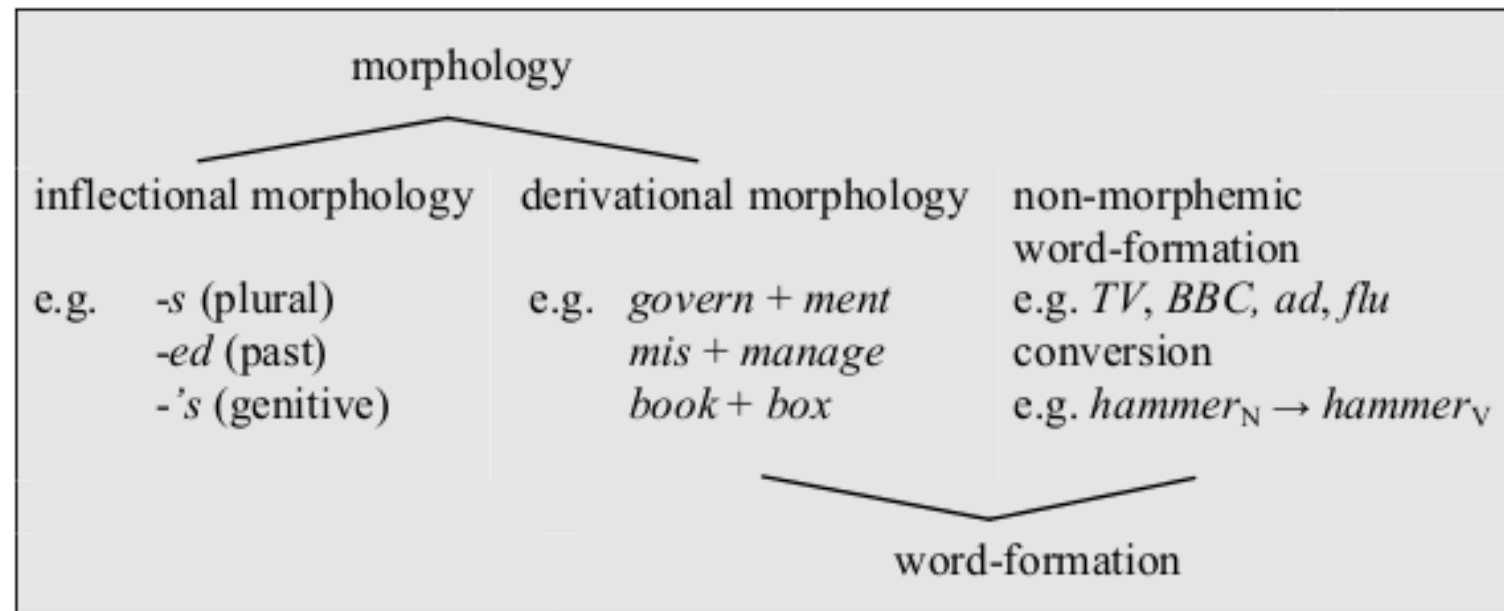|		meaning old	new
form	old	x	*subprime*
	new	*snowicane*	*detweet*

Morphology vs word-formation

What is the difference between morphology and word-formation?

Morphology vs word-formation

What is the difference between morphology and word-formation?

Schmid (2016)

morphology		
inflectional morphology	derivational morphology	non-morphemic word-formation
e.g. -s (plural) -ed (past) -'s (genitive)	e.g. *govern + ment* *mis + manage* *book + box*	e.g. *TV, BBC, ad, flu* conversion e.g. *hammer*$_N$ → *hammer*$_V$
	word-formation	

Inflection in Present-Day English

Which inflectional morphemes exist in Present-Day English?

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Schmid (2016)

word class	morpheme	functions/meanings
noun	{plural}	marking of plural
	{genitive}	marking of genitive; possession, part-of etc.
verb	{3rd person}	3rd person singular present
	{ing}	present participle
	{ed$_1$}	simple past
	{ed$_2$}	past participle
adjective	{er}	comparative
	{est}	superlative
numerals	{th}	ordinal number

Morphemic word-formation processes

Morphological building blocks

Which types of morphemes are there and how do they differ?

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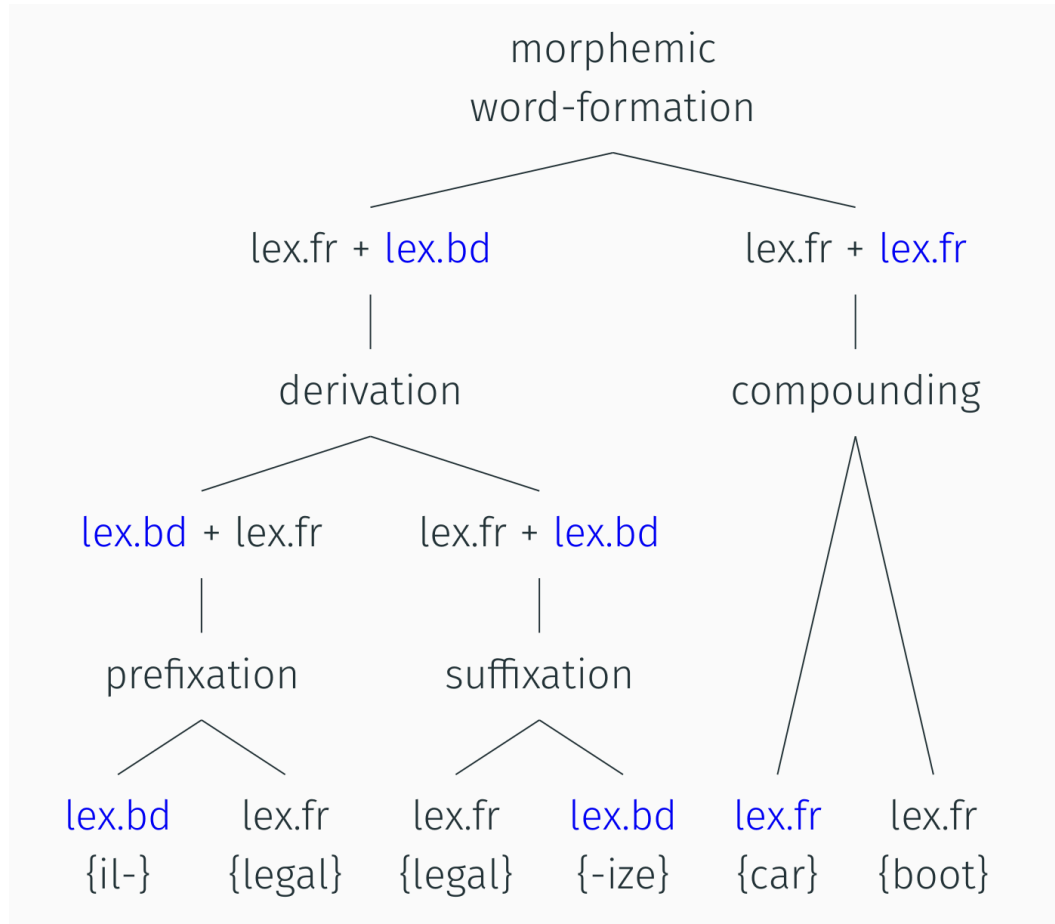
Schmid ([2016](#))

morpheme class	attributes	examples	
lexically free (lexemes, roots)	• semantically auto-nomous • open class • inflecting (except for interjections)	N: Adj: Adv: V lex: Interj:	{head}, {key}, {part} {green}, {pale}, {nice} {fast}, {well}, {here} {plan}, {teach}, {pass} {ouch}, {damn}
grammatically free (lexemes, func-tion words)	• not autonomous, relational • closed class • not inflecting	V aux: Pron: Prep: Conj: Num:	{will}, {must}, {have} {she}, {which}, {why} {of}, {in}, {at} {and}, {that}, {as} {one}, {thousand}
lexically bound (derivational affixes)	• (more or less) open class • create lexemes with discrete meaning • usually change word class (suffixes) • closer to the stem	prefixes: {re-}, {dis-}, {post-} suffixes: {-er}, {-ify}, {-ment}	
grammatically bound (inflectional suffixes)	• closed class • create word-forms with unchanged meaning • always maintain word class • further away from the stem	for Ns: for Vs: for Adjs: for Nums:	{plural}, {genitive} {3rd pers. pres. sg.}, {ing}, {ed$_1$}, {ed$_2$} {er}, {est} {th}

Overview of morphemic word-formation processes

Which morphemic word-formation processes are there?

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Which morphemic word-formation processes are there?

Exercise: conducting a morphological analysis

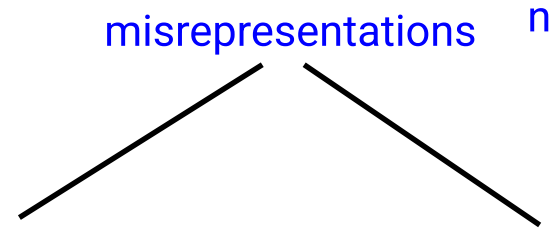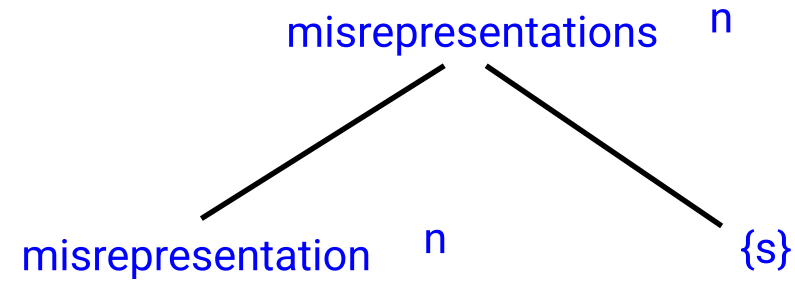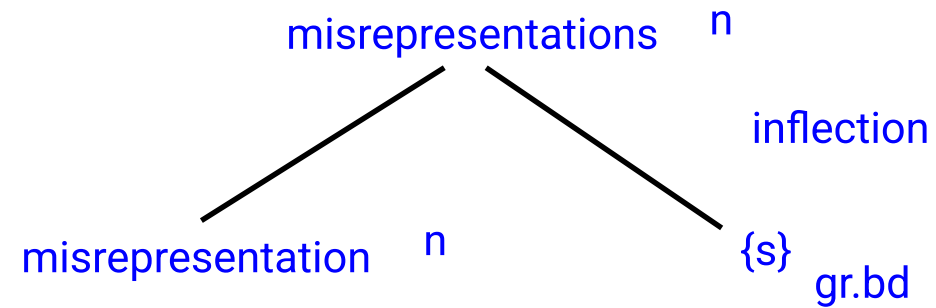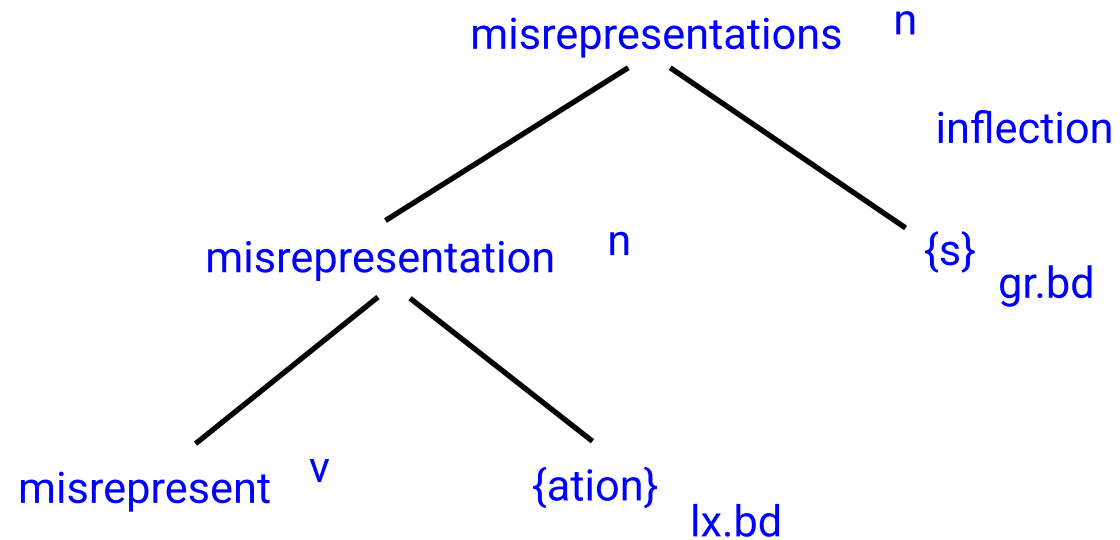Provide a full morphological analysis for the word *misrepresentations*.

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misrepresentations

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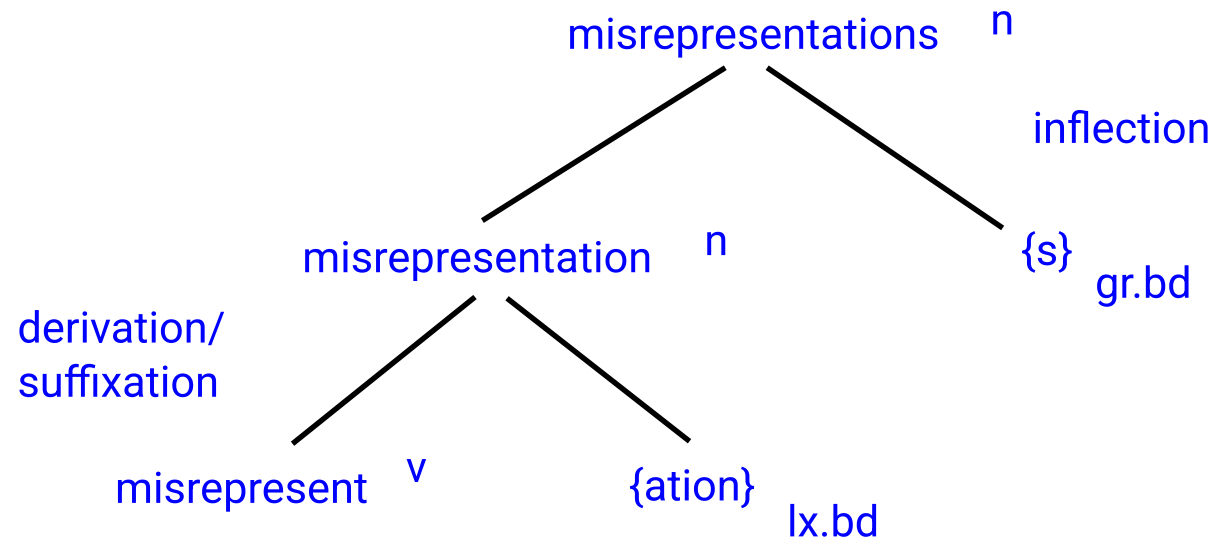
misrepresentations n

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misrepresentations n
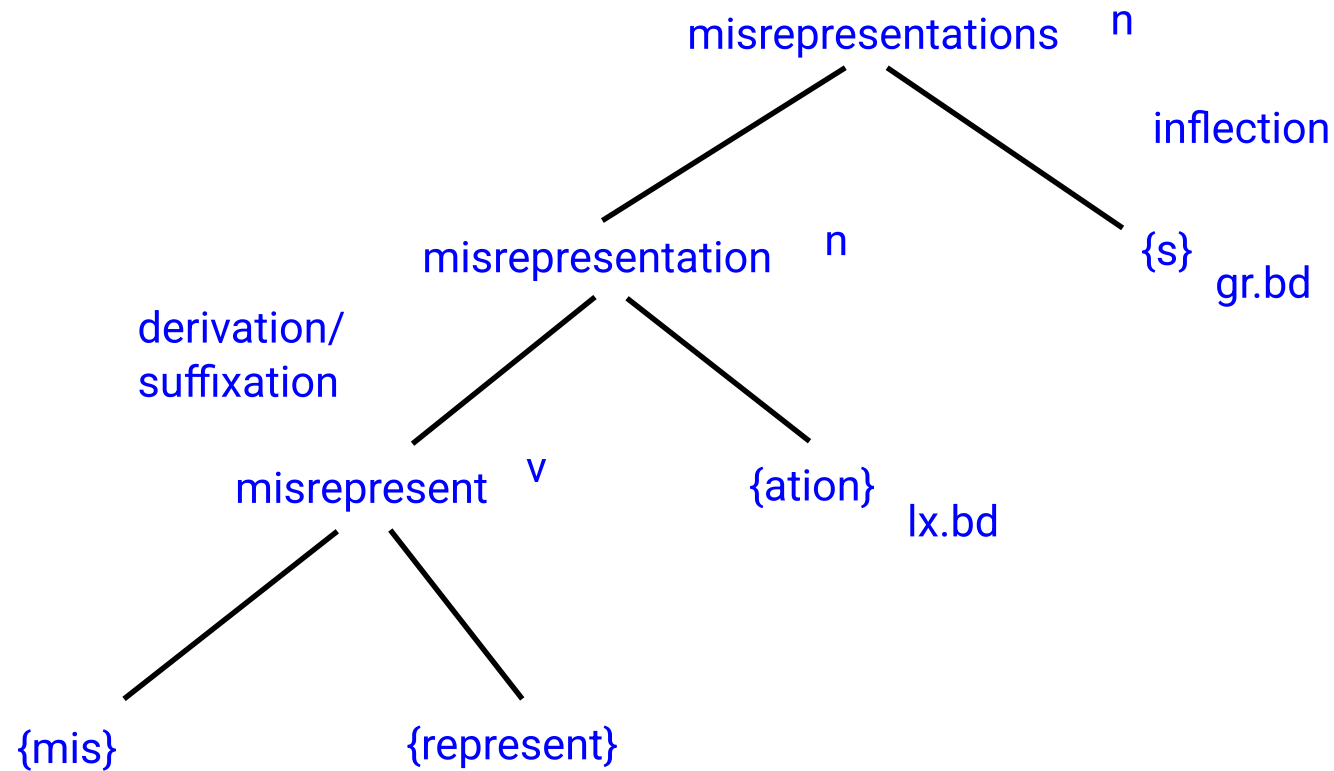
misrepresentation n

inflection

{s} gr.bd

Exercise: conducting a morphological analysis

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Exercise: conducting a morphological analysis

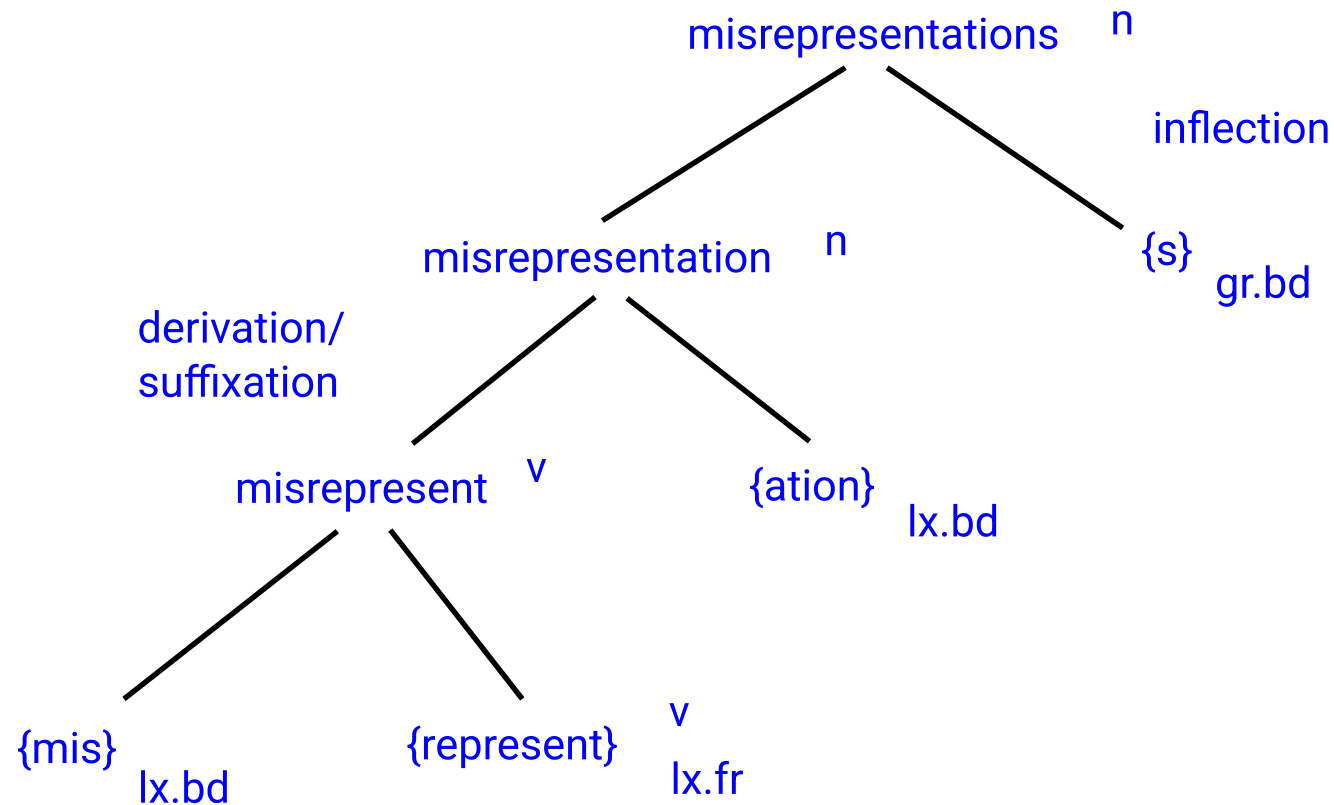Provide a full morphological analysis for the word *misrepresentations*.
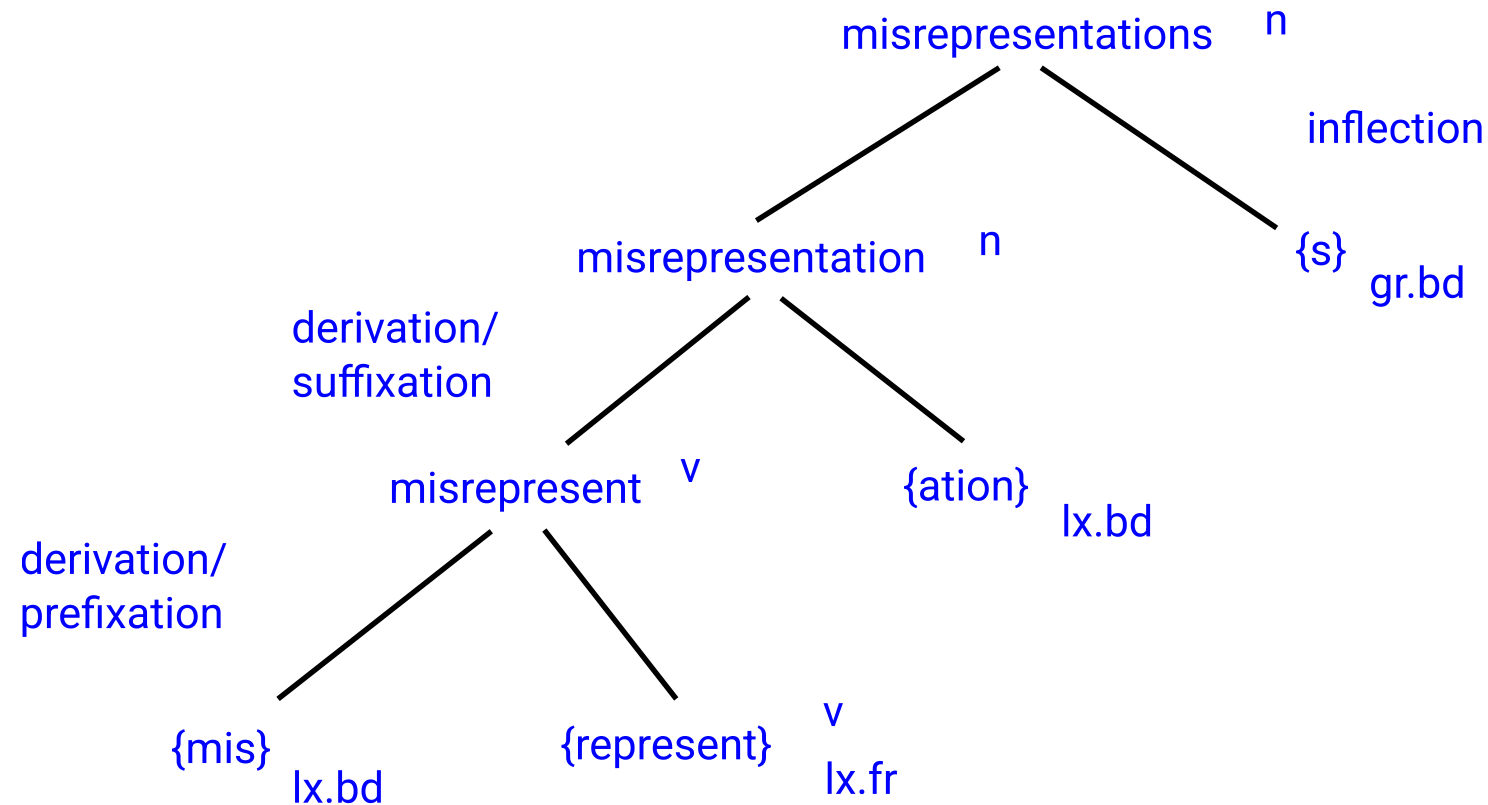
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Non-morphemic word-formation

Overview

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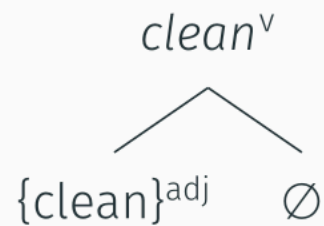| Process	Features	Examples
clipping	parts of words are deleted without a change in meaning	*bike, exam, fridge*
blending	forms and meanings of words are merged	*smog, brunch*
acronyms	shortened form retaining the initial letters of compounds or other fixed sequences of words; pronounced as *words*	*NATO, laser, AIDS*
initialisms/ alphabetisms	shortened form retaining the initial letters of compounds or other fixed sequences of words; pronounced as *sequences of letters*	*CNN, OED, USA*
back-formation	word-class-changing word-formation process which deletes a morpheme or morpheme-like element; longer form pre-existing	*babysit/^{V} < /babysitter*
reduplication	rare word-formation process repeating a word or word-like element either identically or in a slightly varied form	*walkie-talkie, hip-hop*

Zero-derivation / conversion vs derivation

What is the difference between zero-derivation and conversion?
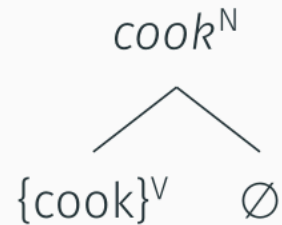
Zero-derivation / conversion vs derivation

What is the difference between zero-derivation and conversion?

Definition: Creation of a new lexeme by changing the word class of an existing word without the addition of an overtly marked suffix.
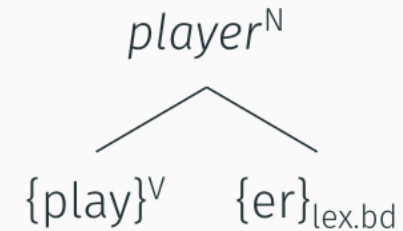
Zero-derivation: Adj > V

$clean^V$

{clean}^{adj} $\varnothing$

Zero-derivation: V > N

$cook^N$

{cook}^{V} $\varnothing$

cf. derivation:

$player^N$

{play}^{V} {er}$_{lex.bd}$

Compounding vs blending

Compound types

Type	Structure	Example	Paraphrase
endocentric	AB is a type of B	'apple pie'	'an apple pie is a type of pie'
exocentric	AB is neither A nor B, but C	'egg head'	'an egg head is not an egg nor a head, but a person'
copulative[1]	AB is both A and B	'singer-songwriter'	'a singer-songwriter is sb. who is both a singer and a songwriter'

Formal properties of blends

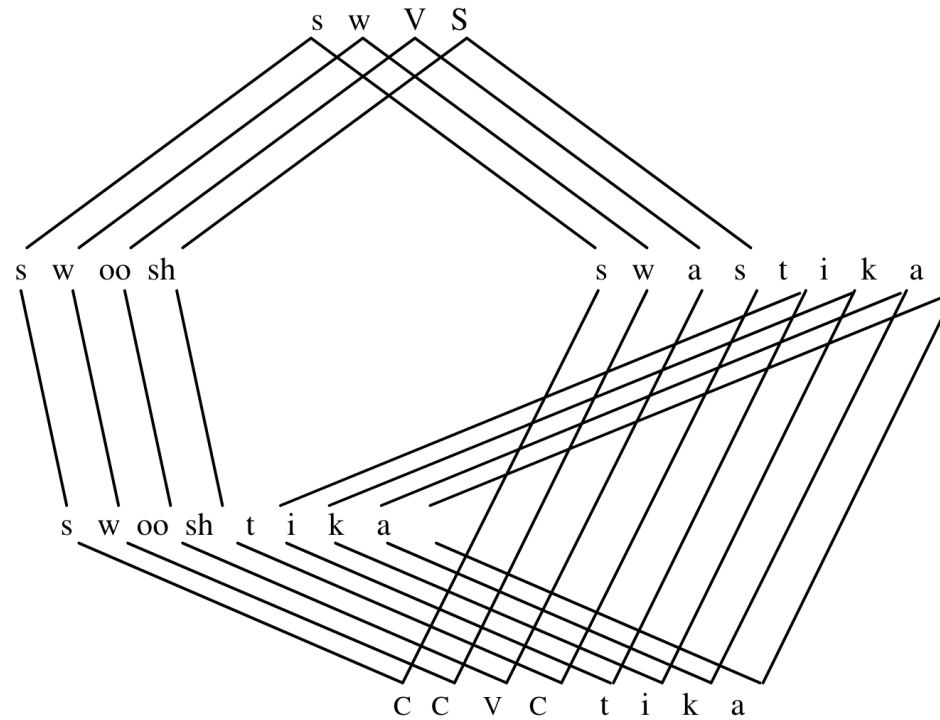*swooshtika* − derogatory reference to Nike logo

Figure 1. Phonological Relations in an English Blend

Kemmer (2003)

Semantic properties of blends

glitterati

Quiz: classify word-formation processes

Interactive version

Max challenge attempts exceeded. Please refresh the page to try again!

Interactive version on Wayground.

Reference answers

Word	Process/type
friendship	derivation
distasteful	derivation (prefix + suffix)
washing machine	compounding (endocentric)
redneck	compounding (exocentric)
singer-songwriter	compounding (copulative)
paperback	compounding (endocentric)
cook (N) ← *cook* (V)	conversion
to Google (V)	conversion
fridge	clipping
Brangelina	blending
swooshtika	blending
sightsee	back-formation
LOL	acronym/initialism

Morphemic vs non-morphemic WF – summary

	morphemic	non-morphemic	examples
building blocks	morphemes	parts of words	*br + unch*
combination	adding morphemes	removing parts	*in flu enza*
serialization	concatenative	interspersed	*CHuckLE x snORT*
regularity	clear rules, predictable patterns	heterogeneous, high variability	*Brangelina*
cognitive processing	largely unconscious	conscious coining	*BBC*

Further reading

- Bauer, Laurie. 2022. *An Introduction to English Lexicology*. Edinburgh University Press.

- Lipka, Leonhard. 2002. *English Lexicology: Lexical Structure, Word Semantics and Word-Formation*. Tübingen: Narr.

- Schmid, Hans-Jörg. 2016. *English Morphology and Word-Formation - an Introduction*. 2nd ed. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.

References

Kemmer, Suzanne. 2003. "Schemas and Lexical Blends." In *Motivation in Language: Studies in Honor of Günther Radden*, edited by Günther Radden and Hubert Cuyckens, 69–97. J. Benjamins Pub. Co.

Kerremans, Daphné. 2015. *A Web of New Words*. Bern: Peter Lang. https://doi.org/10.3726/978-3-653-04788-2.

Schmid, Hans-Jörg. 2016. *English Morphology and Word-Formation - an Introduction*. 2nd ed. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.