

Towards a Derivation of Dutch Ont-Verbs

Anne-Li Demonie

Masaryk University (Brno)

SLBI

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Outline

Introduction

Uniformity of meaning

The structure of the prefix

Phrasal lexicalisation

Challenge of the structure

Roots

Three sample derivations

Conclusion

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Table 1: Derivational morphology in verbs: prefixes

prefix		base	gloss	verb	gloss
ver-	A	breed	'wide'	ver-breed-(en)	'widen'
	N	vel	'skin'	ver-vell-(en)	'molt'
	V	doe-n	'do'	ver-doe-(n)	'waste'
be-	A	vuil	'dirty'	be-vuil-(en)	'dirty'
	N	bos	'forest'	be-boss-(en)	'afforest'
	V	giet-(en)	'pour'	be-giet-(en)	'water'
ont-	A	hard	'hard'	ont-hard-(en)	'soften'
	N	bos	'forest'	ont-boss-(en)	'deforest'
	V	vriez-(en)	'freeze'	ont-vriez-(en)	'unfreeze'
P-	A	slank	'slim'	af-slank-(en)	'slim'
	N	burger	'citizen'	in-burger-(en)	'integrate'
	V	gooi-(en)	'throw'	in-gooi-(en)	'throw in'

Introduction

- ▶ Dutch *ont*-verbs display semantic dissimilarity, but share the same prefix:

- | | | | |
|--------|---|----|--|
| (1) a. | ont-tron-(en)
PFX-throne-INF
'dethrone' | c. | ont-hard-(en)
PFX-hard-INF
'make not hard' |
| b. | ont-boss-(en)
PFX-forest-INF
'deforest' | d. | ont-brand-(en)
PFX-fire-INF
'catch fire' |

- ▶ Three interpretations: removal (1a-b), reversion (1c) and inception (1d)
- ▶ Puzzle: Multiple homophonous prefixes OR 1 portmanteau prefix?

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Uniformity of meaning

- ▶ Removal and reversion interpretations can be abstracted to motions of a Figure entity *away from* a Ground state or location (cf. Figure/Ground in Talmy 2000)

Uniformity of meaning

- (2) a. Het volk ont-troon-t de koning.
The people PFX-throne-PRES.3SG the king
'The king_F is removed from the throne_G' ABLATIVE
- b. Het bedrijf ont-bos-t het Amazonewoud.
The company PFX-forest-PRES.3SG the king
'The forest_F is removed from the Amazone_G' PRIVATIVE
- c. Het Gentse Milieufrent ont-hard-t de
The Ghent Environmentfront PFX-hard-PRES.3SG the
voetpaden.
pavements
'The pavement changes from being hard_G (to being soft)'
REVERSATIVE

Uniformity of meaning

- ▶ Inchoative interpretation (partially) corresponds to a motion *towards* the thing/property denoted by the root.

Uniformity of meaning

- (3) a. Hoofdtelefoon op batterijen ont-brand-t op vliegtuig.
Headphones on batteries PFX-fire-3.SG
'The headphones_F change (from being normal) to being on fire_G' INCHOATIVE
- b. Het zaad ont-kiem-t.
The seed PFX-germ-3.SG
'The seed_F changes (from being a seed) to being a germ_G' INCHOATIVE

Uniformity of meaning

- ▶ Semantic dissimilarity can be explained away by semantics of directionality
- ▶ Directionality seems to emerge through prefixation (Baayen & Lieber 1993; Caha & Zikova 2021; Gibert-Sotelo 2017)

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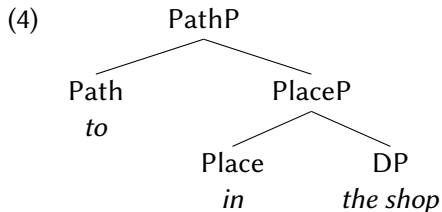
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The structure of the prefix

- ▶ Generally, directional expressions have the structure in (4) (Jackendoff 1983; den Dikken 2010; Koopman 2000):



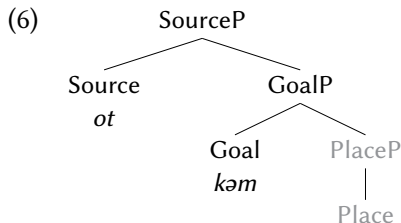
The structure of the prefix

- ▶ However, that is not fine-grained enough for morphologically complex markers, such as Bulgarian *ot-kəm*

(5)

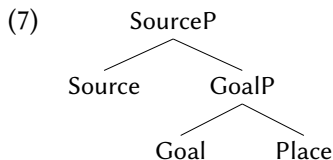
	Location	Goal	Source
Bulgarian	<i>pri</i>	<i>kəm</i>	<i>ot-kəm</i>

- ▶ Consequently, PathP has been decomposed (Pantcheva 2011):



The structure of the prefix

- ▶ For removal/reversion verbs: motion *away from* corresponds to a Source path



- ▶ Compositional semantics:
 - ▶ PLACE = set of points
 - ▶ GOAL = path with a condition imposed on the final point expressed by PLACE
 - ▶ SOURCE = path, reversion of GOAL path

The structure of the prefix

▶ Two more features (i):

▶ RES (Ramchand 2008)

- (8) a. Zijn wangen kleurden **rood**
his cheeks coloured red
- b. *Zijn wangen **ont**-kleurden **bleek**
his cheeks de-coloured pale
- (9) a. Ze hechten zich **vast**
they attach themselves solid
- b. *Ze **ont**-hechten zich **los**
they detach themselves loose
- (10) a. Hij koppelt de treinen **vast**
He couples the trains solid
- b. *Hij **ont**-koppelt de treinen **los**
he unsaddles the horse off

The structure of the prefix

- ▶ Two more features (ii):

- ▶ PLACE 2 (Svenonius 2010)

(11) a. De goochelaar tovert het konijn **weg** .
'The magician magics the rabbit away.'

b. De jongen is **weg** .
The boy is away.

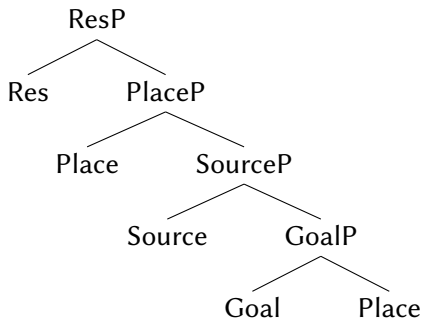
(12) a. S: Het volk onttroont de koning.
'The people dethrone the king.'

b. Par: Het volk haalt de koning (**weg**) **van** de troon.
'The king_F is being removed *away from* the throne_G'.

The structure of the prefix

- ▶ Final structure of *ont-*:

(13)



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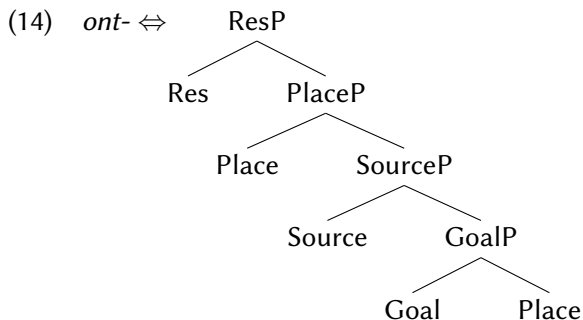
Conclusion

Phrasal Lexicalisation

- ▶ Nanosyntax:
 - ▶ EVERYTHING IS SYNTAX
The atoms (terminal nodes) of syntactic trees are single features. All combinations of morphosyntactic features arise as the result of (binary) Merge. Pre-syntactic feature bundles do not exist, they correspond to phrases assembled by syntax (Caha 2020).
 - ▶ PHRASAL LEXICALISATION
Syncretic morphemes point towards spellout of multiple features. Lexicalisation applies at the level of the phrase, not the terminal.

Phrasal Lexicalisation

- ▶ Following this logic, the single morpheme *ont-* can spellout at the level of ResP, and lexicalise all features that are contained within:



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Challenge of the structure

- ▶ For inchoative verbs, the structure in (14) seems unsuitable. The motion should be *towards* not a resultative *away from*.

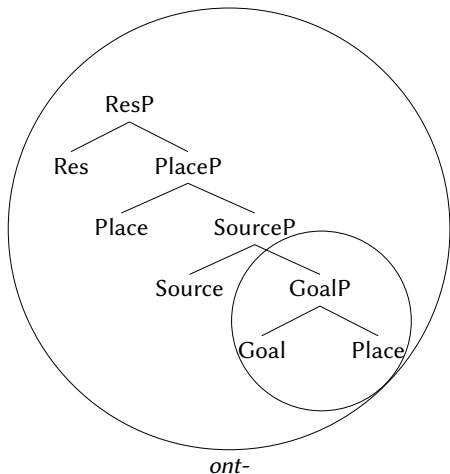
⇒ Possible solution:

- (15) *Superset Principle* (Starke 2009)
A lexically stored tree L matches a syntactic node S iff L contains the syntactic tree dominated by S as a subtree.

Challenge of the structure

- ▶ *Ont-* is able to spell out big structure, but also smaller parts:

(16)



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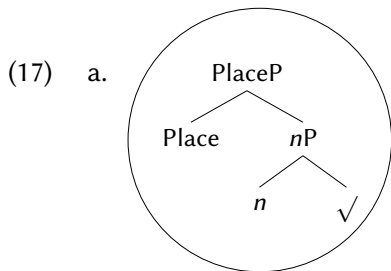
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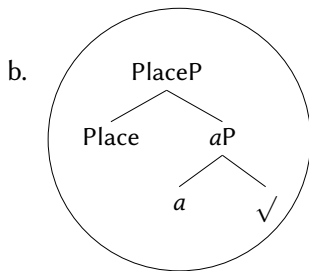
Conclusion

Roots

- ▶ Building on Fábregas (2022), who maintains locative structures for both the nominal and adjectival domain, I argue for the following roots in Dutch;
- ▶ In both domains, PLACE provides a set of points, a spatial region for nouns, and a region on a scale for adjectives



troon
bos
brand
...

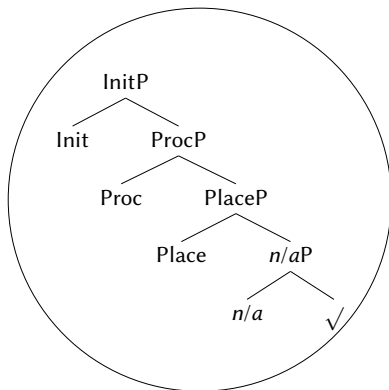


hard

Roots

- ▶ Additionally, I argue, with Vanden Wyngaerd et al. (2022) that the structures are bigger for those roots that can verbalise by themselves. INIT and PROC are part of some roots (Ramchand 2008):

(18)



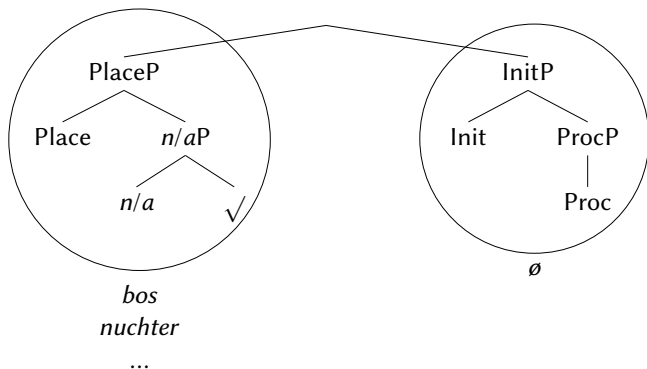
troon
brand

...

Roots

- ▶ For the ones that cannot verbalise on their own, I assume a zero verbaliser for now (Neeleman & Schipper 1993):

(19)



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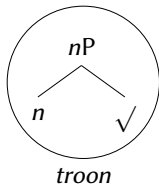
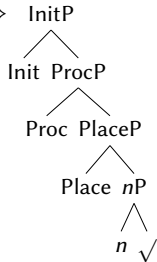
Three sample derivations

- ▶ REMOVAL/REVERSION + 'INDEPENDENT' VERBALISATION:
onttronen/ontharden
- ▶ REMOVAL/REVERSION + ZERO VERBALISER:
ontbossen
- ▶ INCEPTION:
ontbranden

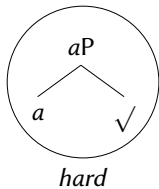
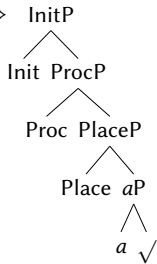
Three sample derivations

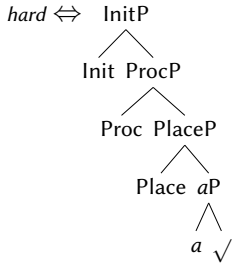
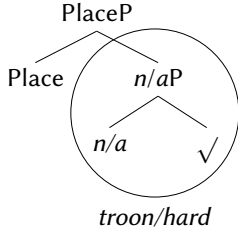
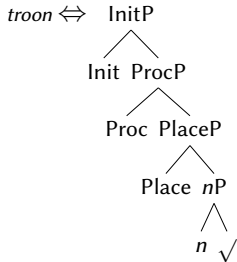
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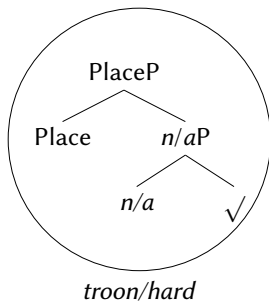
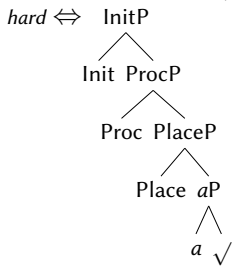
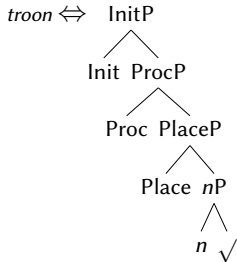
troon ⇔

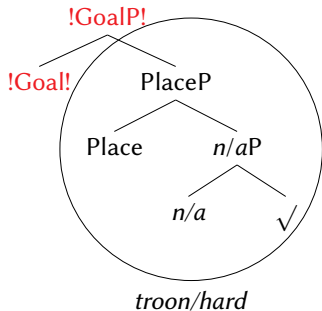
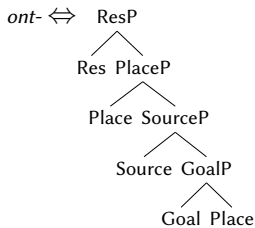
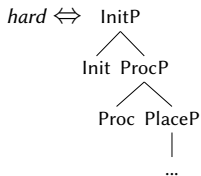
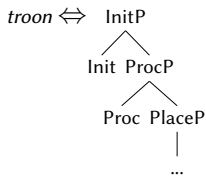


hard ⇔

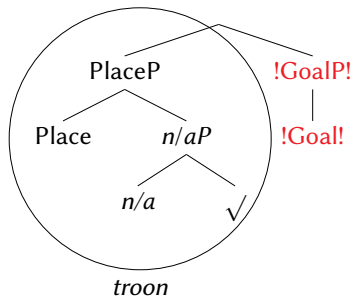
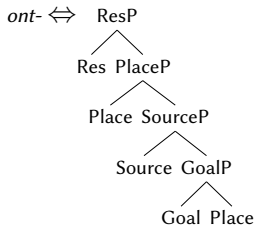
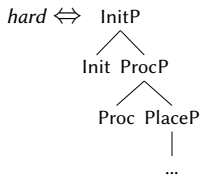
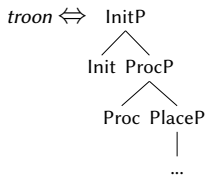




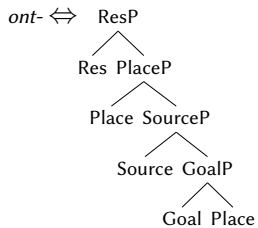
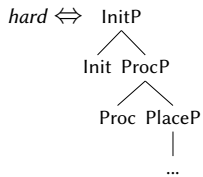
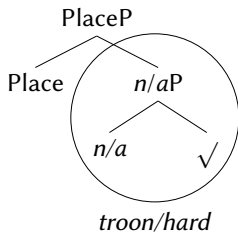
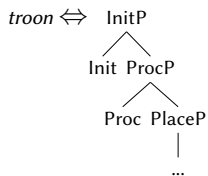




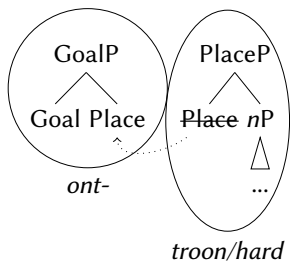
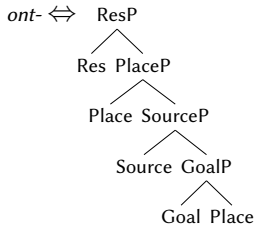
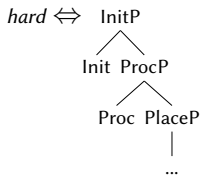
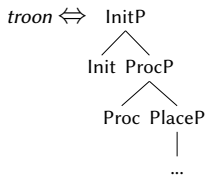
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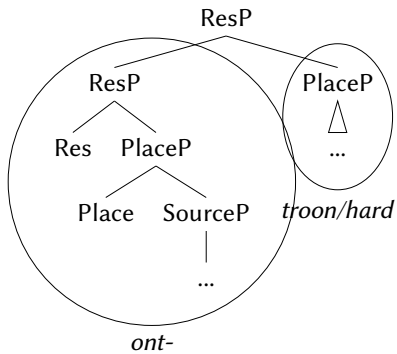
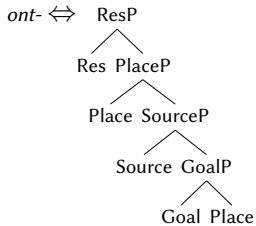
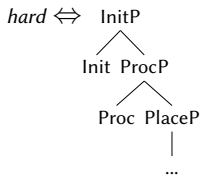
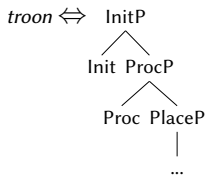


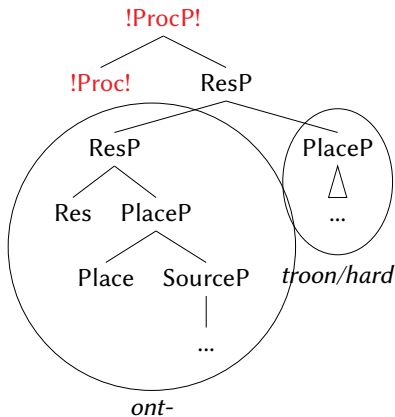
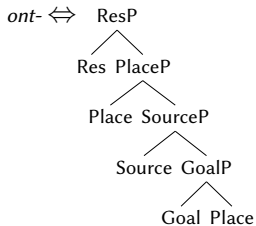
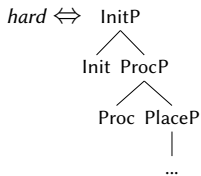
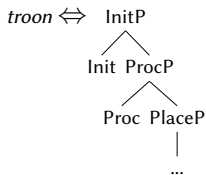
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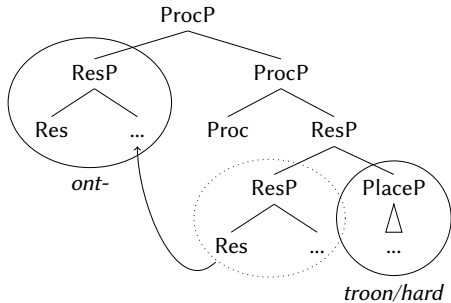
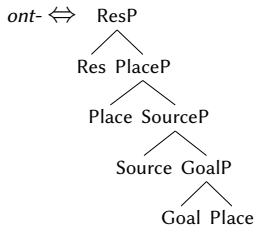
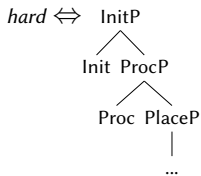
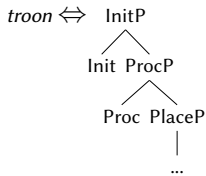
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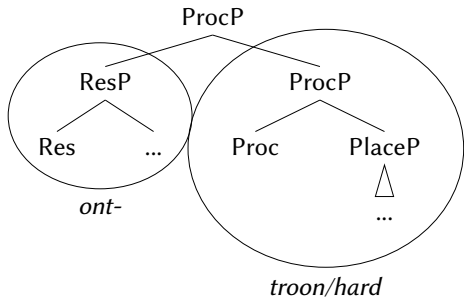
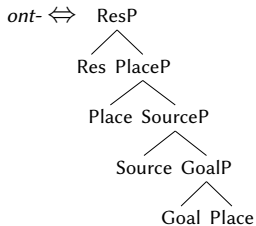
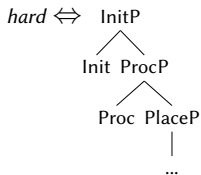
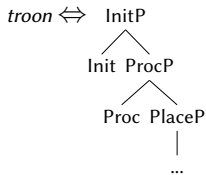


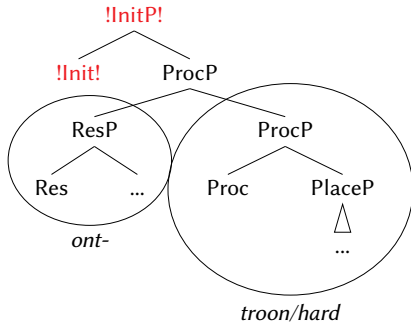
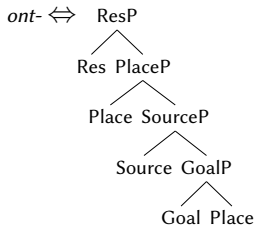
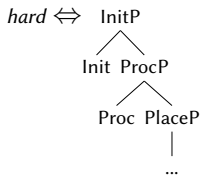
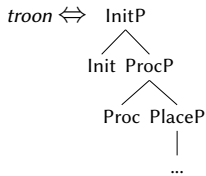


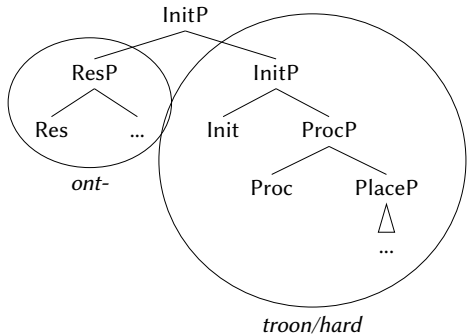
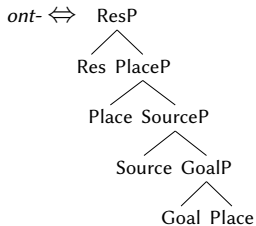
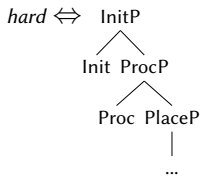
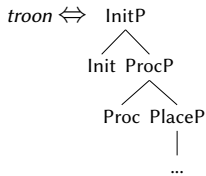


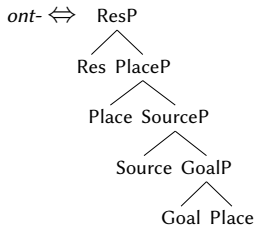
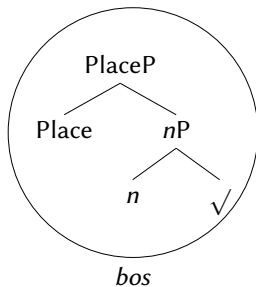
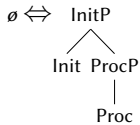
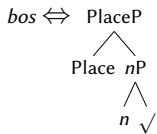
- ▶ LEXICALISATION ALGORITHM (Starke 2018)
 - a Merge F and spell out FP
 - b If (a) fails, move the spec of the complement of F and spell out FP**
 - c If (b) fails, move the complement of F and spell out FP
 - d If (c) fails, backtrack to the previous cycle
 - e If (d) fails, spawn a new derivation

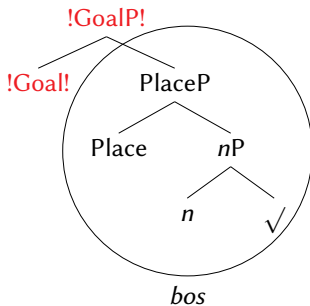
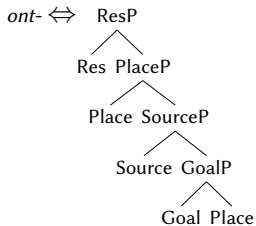
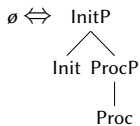
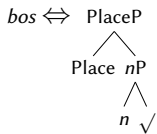


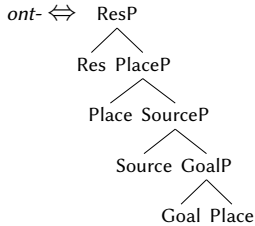
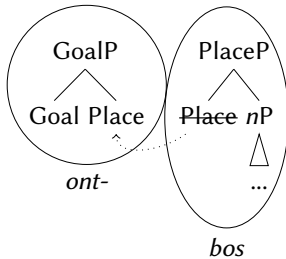
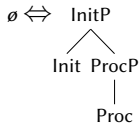
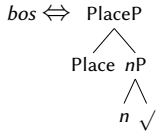


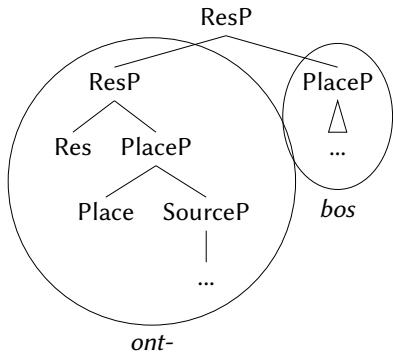
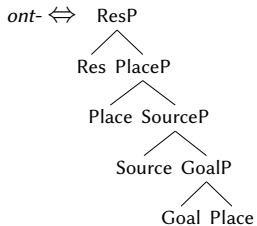
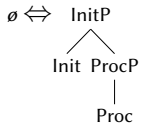
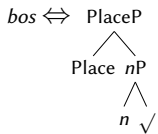


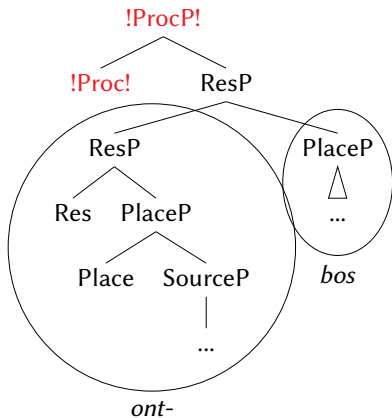
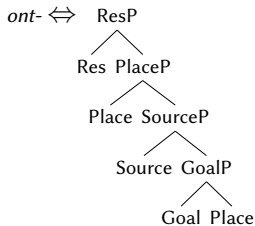
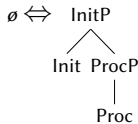
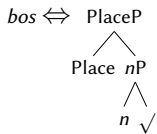


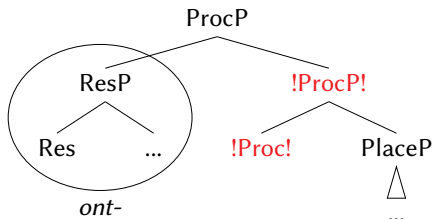
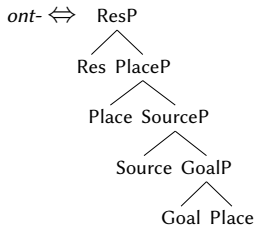
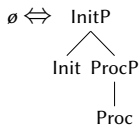
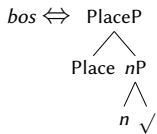


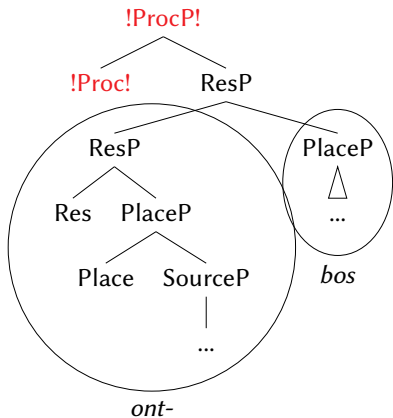
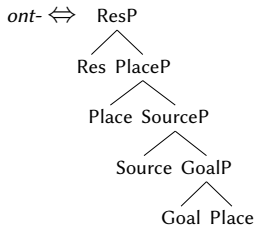
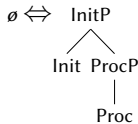
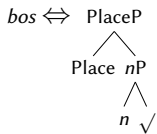


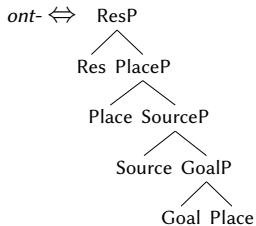
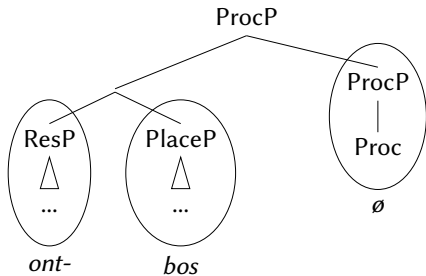
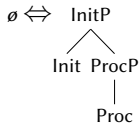
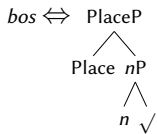


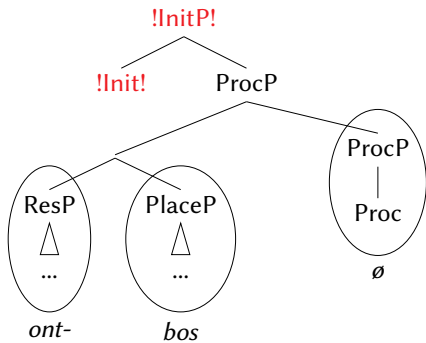
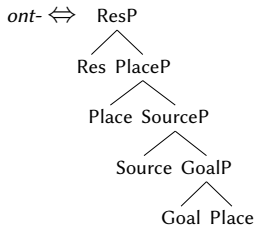
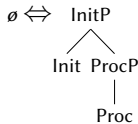
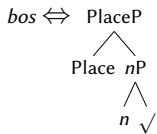


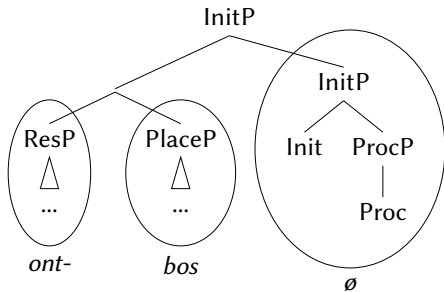
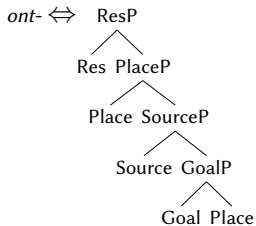
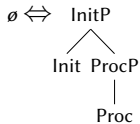
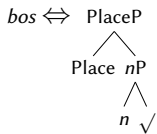


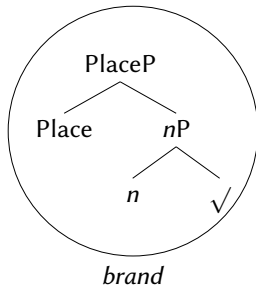
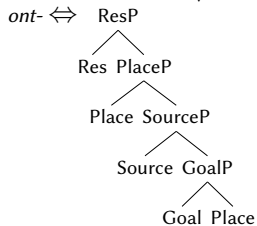
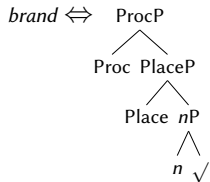


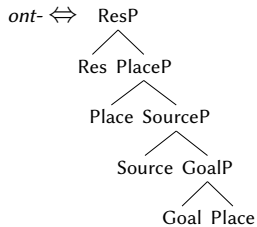
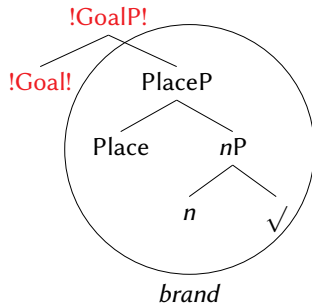
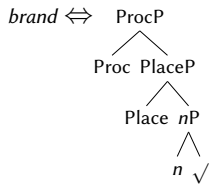


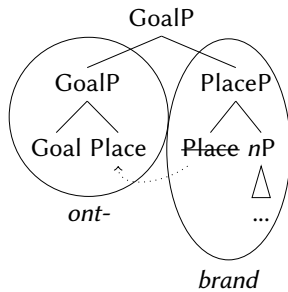
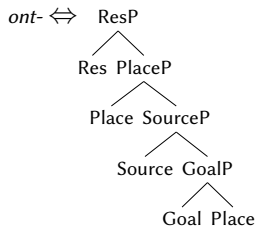
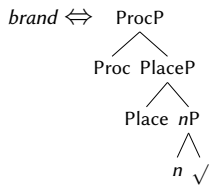


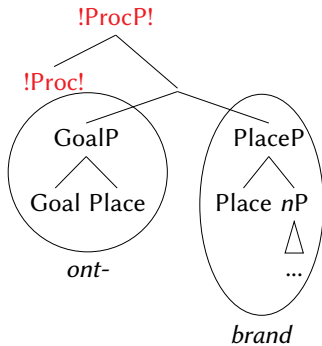
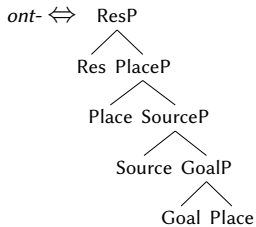
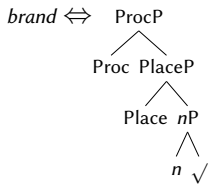


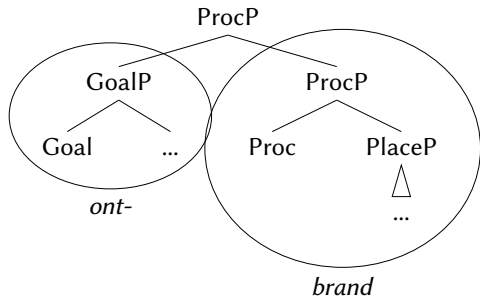
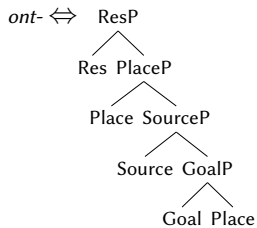
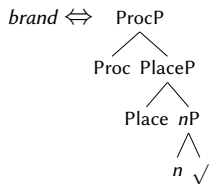












Outline

Introduction

Uniformity of meaning

The structure of the prefix

Phrasal lexicalisation

Challenge of the structure

Roots

Three sample derivations

Conclusion

Conclusion

- ▶ Form/meaning mismatch of derived *ont*-verbs can be explained away if:
 - ▶ it is assumed that *ont*-verbs denote either a motion away from or towards the root N/A, similar to directional expressions
 - ▶ this directional interpretation arises from the prefix which lexicalises both Source and Goal paths

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