

Tagungsankündigung / Conference Announcement

“Back-formation in a new theoretical universe” (workshop at the 20th IMM) (September 1–4, 2022; Budapest, Hungary)

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Keynote speaker: Franz Rainer (Vienna University of Economics and Business)

Traditionally, the phenomenon of so-called back-formation occupies only some lines in introductory textbooks in word-formation, and, with few exceptions, it is discussed even more sparsely in theoretical works. Its borders are fuzzy, and that it is not clear what we should consider genuine cases of back-formation, by contrast with ‘canonical’ derivation. Classic examples include most often cases of affix (suffix) deletion as *burglar* → *burgle* or *baby-sitter* → *baby-sit*. However, both a purely formal criterion or an etymological / diachronic one are probably insufficient. It is likely that semantic and structural criteria also play a role in the interpretation of a morphological relation as being an instance of back-formation.

We call for proposals devoted to both theoretical issues and concrete case studies of back-formation in any language, and theoretical perspective. A non-exhaustive list of possible issues to be addressed is the following:

- What is back-formation? Does it correspond to a theoretically relevant notion for linguistics (morphology, lexical semantics, lexicography...)?
- Is back-formation a well-defined set of phenomena? How to determine its borders and content?
- What are the properties of back-formation? What is its relation to subtraction, clipping and other similar phenomena?
- Should back-formation as a diachronic phenomenon be distinguished from back-derivation as a synchronic process on a par with other word-formation processes?
- Is back-formation a universal phenomenon or is it limited to a subset of languages (e.g. to agglutinating morphology)?

- Is back-formation limited to derivation, or should it include inflectional analogical phenomena?
- Are there cognitive / acquisitional cues that allow distinguishing back-formation from other morphological phenomena?
- What can corpus linguistics – and more generally electronically available data-bases – tell us with regard to the consistence and to the measurability (productivity, frequency, etc.) of backformation?

Call for Papers is already closed.

http://www.nytud.hu/imm20/workshops/Gaeta-WS-Backformation_IMM2022.pdf