

Hi, all--

This is a summary of how we decide if 2 identical Lexicon terms are zeroD's, written more for my benefit than for any other reason. Since we will now only be doing tagging in annual spurts, it will be helpful (to me, at least) to have a guide to refer to, as opposed to rereading the relevant sections of Quirk et al. (Q, hereinafter) & Huddleston & Pullum (HP hereinafter), & seeing how the previously-tagged files match up with their positions.

Both references use the term "conversion" for zeroD, & seem to be in overall agreement about the types of pairs this refers to, e.g. spy (V & N), humble (adj & V), release (V & N), calm (adj, V & N). Q takes a purely synchronic (Chris: non-historical) stance, & says that "it is irrelevant, from one point of view, whether the verb *release* preceded the noun *release* as an acquisition of English vocabulary" (p. 1009). So they would probably agree that we're OK to ignore the direction of derivation.

Q does, however, put forth some non-etymological ways a direction of derivation could be determined, if one wanted to:

- Semantic dependence of 1 on the other. *Net* is both a noun & verb, but the verb can only reasonably be defined in terms of the N. H&P agrees with this.
- Selection restrictions of verbs, e.g. *release*:

*His release was sudden/on Tuesday, etc.*

*His discovery/promotion/ etc. was sudden/on Tuesday, etc.*

Q and HP agree that the following are adjectives acting as NP heads, rather than nouns:

*The wealthy/kind/well-dressed, etc. are always with us.*

We consider them to be nouns, so the nouns & adjectives *wealthy*, *kind*, etc. would be zeroD pairs.

Our situation differs from both Q & HP in how the Lexicon is used, that is, it is text-oriented (as are most dictionaries, for that matter), whereas linguistic approaches tend to embrace spoken as well as written language. So homographs that are not also homophones will be picked up as potential zeroD pairs. Examples: *house* (N&V), *use* (N&V), *abuse* (N&V), *estimate* (N&V), *isolate* (N&V). In fact, we have not been consistent in the Lexicon, in how we regard these. *Use* & *estimate* have the zeroD nominalization marked in the Lexicon record; the others do not. Destinee tagged the zeroD file last year, & she did give yes-tags to a few verb/adjective pairs that are homographs, but with a shift in vowel quality, e.g. *marginate*, *ovulate*, *recombine*.

Neither Q nor HP would consider any of these to be examples of true conversion (or zeroD). HP calls them examples of a non-conversion category, Phonological Modification (pp. 1638-40); Q calls them Approximate Conversion (pp. 1017-1019).

The advantage to their approaches is that other minor pronunciation shifts are also considered Phonological Modification (or Approximate Conversion), like *shelf/shelve*, *belief/believe*, *bath/bathe*, etc. Where the Phonological Modification category of HP gets into murky territory,

is when they apply it to vowel lenition in such verb/noun pairs as *fragment*, *export*, *decrease*. Maybe the difference is more apparent to English ears.

This is not to say that we are doing this wrong; we have a different orientation & different goals. Nominalization --whether zeroD, suffixD or alternations like *believe/belief*-- operates without regard to the pronunciation of the noun & adj/verb so linked. ZeroD cuts across grammatical categories, & is not just a subtype of nomD. We have numerous examples of adj/adv zeroD pairs, especially those beginning with pre- or post-, e.g. *preleukemic*, *post-vagotomy*. Destinee's verb/adj pairs above (*marginate*, etc) are non-nomD zeroD's.

The only place we have applied strict homophony, is with spelling variants. So, the fact that we are tagging homographs as zeroD whether or not they are homophones, is only a slight irregularity, not a major one. If we opted to apply strict homophony to tagging zeroD homographs, the noun *use* is the would still be the nominalization of the verb *use*, but we would have to come up with a new Lexical Tools category, Phonological Modification (or the like). We could actually do this, if you want; that would cover pairs like *shelf/shelve*, etc. & also stress shift pairs like *insult*, *contract*, etc.

I am at least somewhat inclined to go with homography as the standard for zeroD tagging. (Setting aside unrelated words that might happen to be paired, as with other tagging.) Allen & Destinee, what do you think?  
--Lynn