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Non-deverbal nominalizations and events

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Event Semantics

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Overview: Event-related Nominalizations

- Events → eventualities: events and states
- Participants of events or whole events selected by nominalizing affix
- Research tends to focus on verbal bases (e.g. Barker 1998; Kawaletz & Plag 2015)
  - e.g. *employ* in *employee* (Barker 1998), *reassure* in *reassurement* (Kawaletz & Plag 2015)

Overview: Event-related Nominalizations

- Event inherited from base verb (Plag et al. 2018)
- Event in verb in its semantic representation (e.g. Löbner 2013)

→events and event participants selectable for nominalizing affix

- Example: base: *to employ*, derivations: *employer*, *employee*
- Nominalizing suffix creates different meaning of derivative
  - by selection of event
  - by participant in the event of the base word

Overview: Event-related Nominalizations

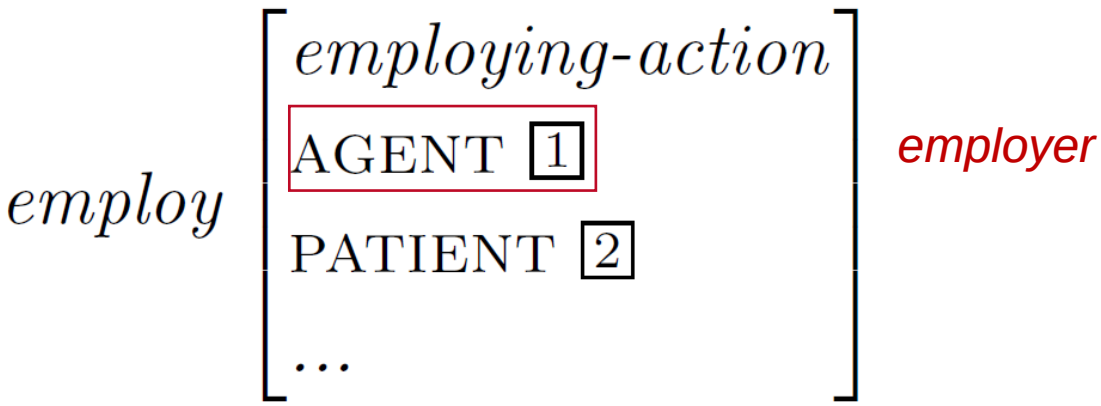
- Example derivations from *to employ*

- Partial frame for Verb *to employ*

$$employ \begin{bmatrix} employing\text{-}action \\ \text{AGENT } \boxed{1} \quad \textit{John} \\ \text{PATIENT } \boxed{2} \quad \textit{Paul} \\ \ldots \end{bmatrix}$$

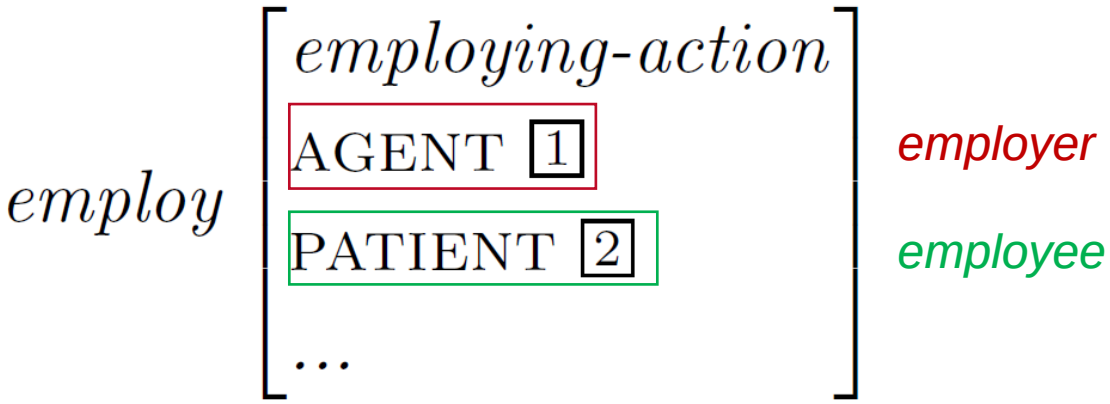
Overview: Event-related Nominalizations

- Example derivations from *to employ*



Overview: Event-related Nominalizations

- Example derivations from *to employ*



Overview: Non-verbal bases

- What about formations like *debtee*, *biographee*?
- Many nominalizing suffixes also attach to non-verbal bases (Plag 1999, 2004; Bauer et al. 2013)
- What do we know about non-verbal bases?
- “the verbal relation is implied by context or can be inferred from the nature of the non-verbal base. […] Such interpretations follow from the sort of activities that the base nouns could conceivably be involved in.” (Bauer et al. 2013: 233)

Research Question(s)

- Is it possible to find an event in the semantics of non-verbal base words?
- If yes, how can we model the semantic representation of these eventive structures in the non-verbal base?
- Focus on nominal bases and *-ee* derivations

Goal

- Investigate how non-verbal bases used for nominalizations
- Identify eventive elements in non-verbal bases
- Demonstrate interaction of elements in semantic representation of base and derivative
- Indicate change of reading(s) from base to derivative
- Use frame semantics (e.g. Löbner 2013; Plag et al. 2018)

Data collection

- Data from BNC (Davies 2004) and COCA (Davies 2008)

debtee
biographee
covenantee
absentee
bargee
counselee

Data collection

- Oxford English Dictionary (OED 2018) checked for possible base forms

- Bases which occur both as a verb and as a non-verbal category checked by frequency
  - COCA (Davies 2008) and COHA (Davies 2010) frequencies for possible base forms
  - As soon as the verbal base represents over 30% of all tokens of the base forms → base excluded

charge	**Tokens**	**Percentage**
V	8265	31
other	26469	69

Numbers COCA

Data set size

- Data set includes mostly nominal bases; adjectival bases also attested

- *-ee*
  - 26 derivatives
  - 24 nominal bases
    - E.g.: *debtee*, *biographee*, *covenantee*
  - 2 adjectival bases
    - E.g.: *absentee*, *secondee*

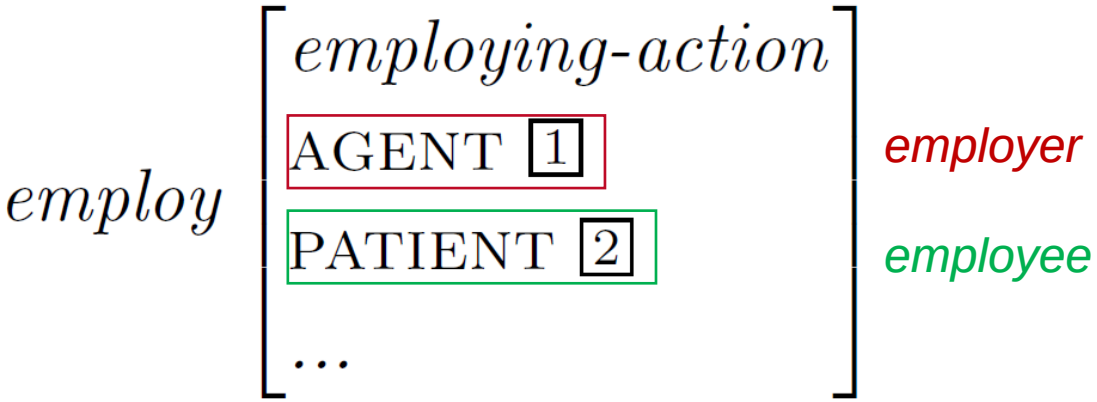
Frame Semantics

- Possible to model semantic representation of base word and derivative
- Indicate different readings from base to derivative
- Make “inferred” eventive elements in base selectable for nominalizing suffix

Restrictions –*ee*

- Requires/selects non-volitional and sentient participant in event of base word (Barker 1998)

- Example: *employee*

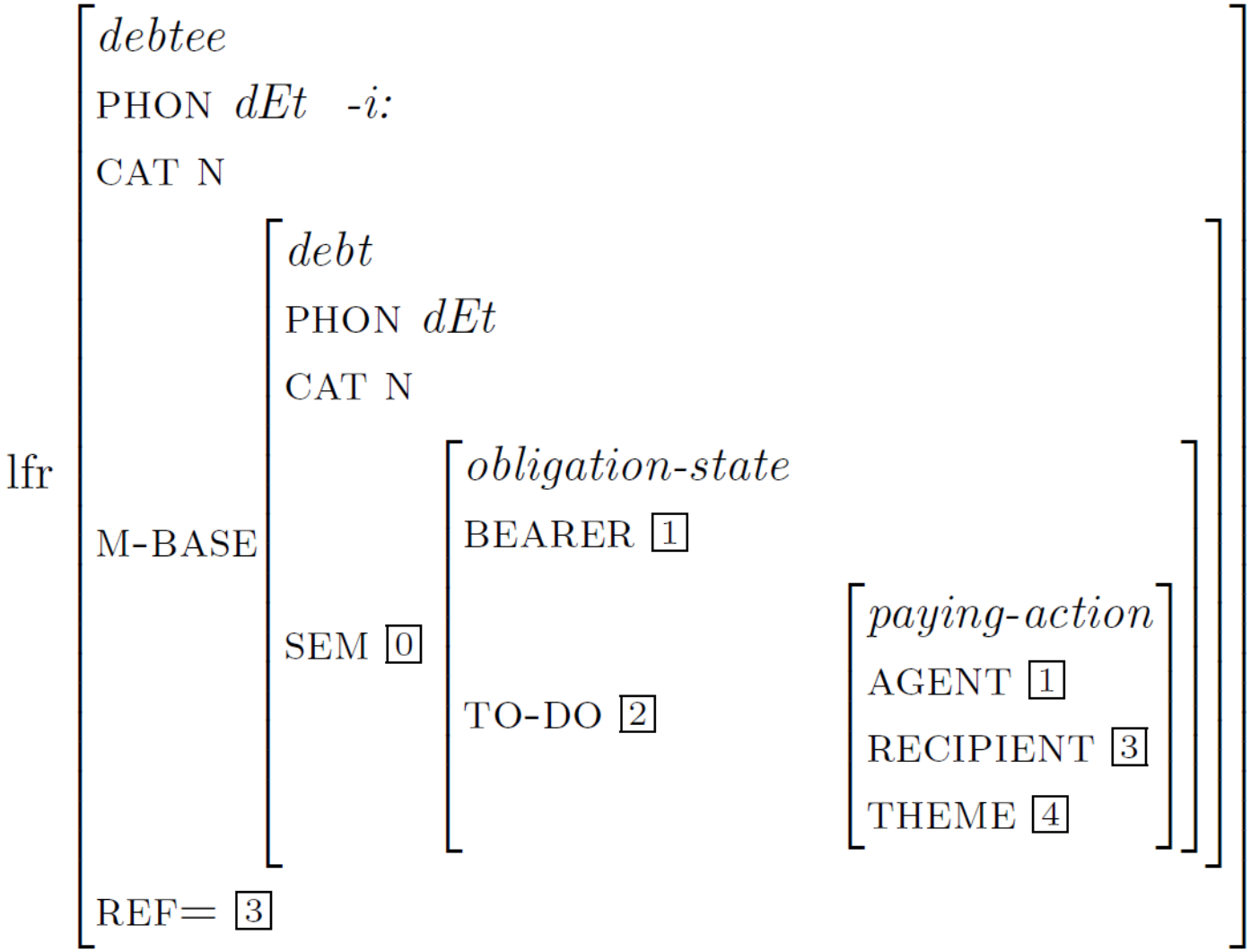


Example Analysis *debtee*

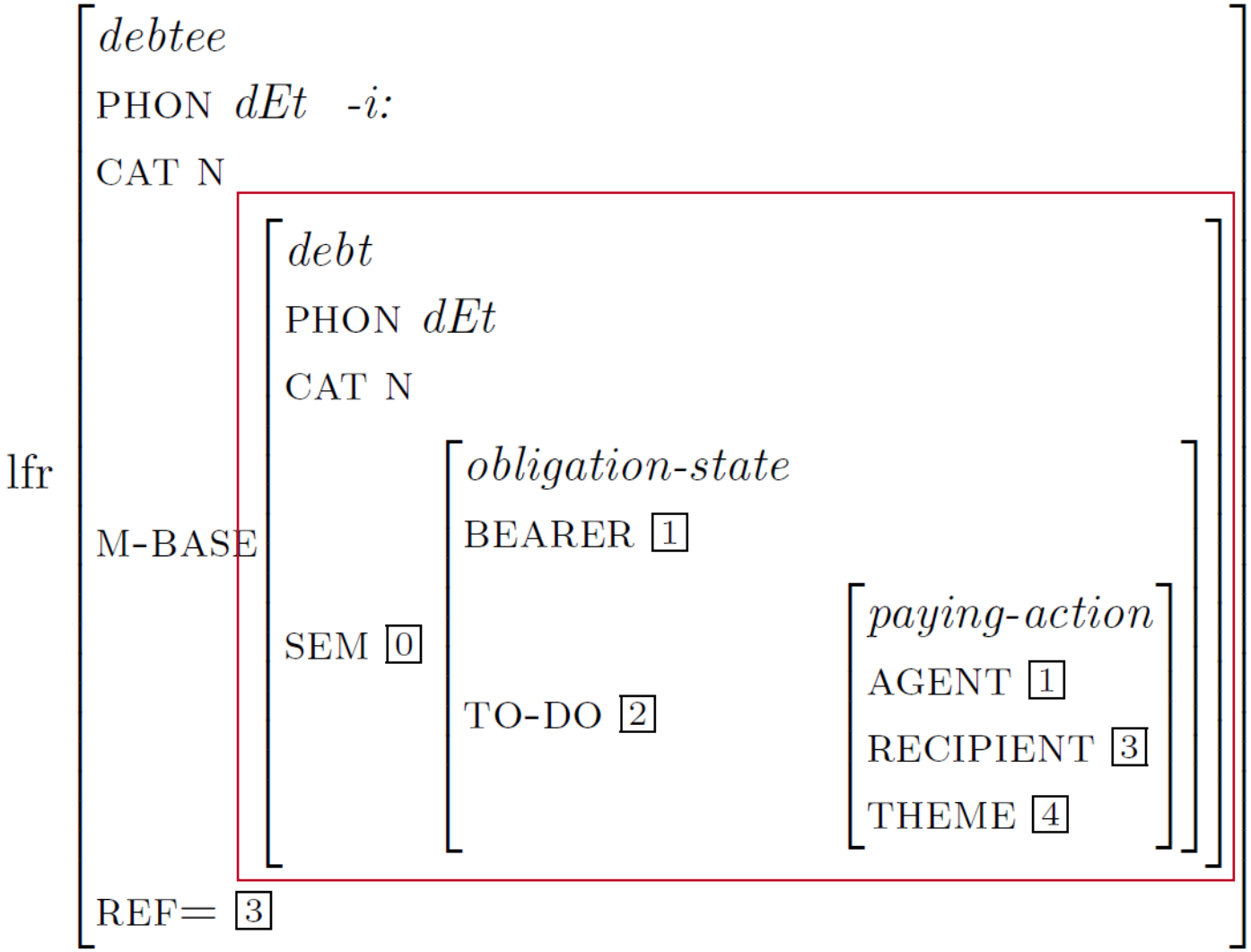
(1) *The '**debtee**' is an old word for the creditor or payee*. (BNC)

- Base *debt* not clearly eventive at first sight
- OED definitions debt:
  - 1. "That which is owed or due: a sum of money or a material thing; a thing immaterial."
  - 2. "A liability or obligation to pay or render something; the condition of being under such obligation."
- Second definition denotes a state → *debt* as *obligation-state*
- *Debtee* is the person who gets something back

Example Analysis *debtee*



Example Analysis *debtee*



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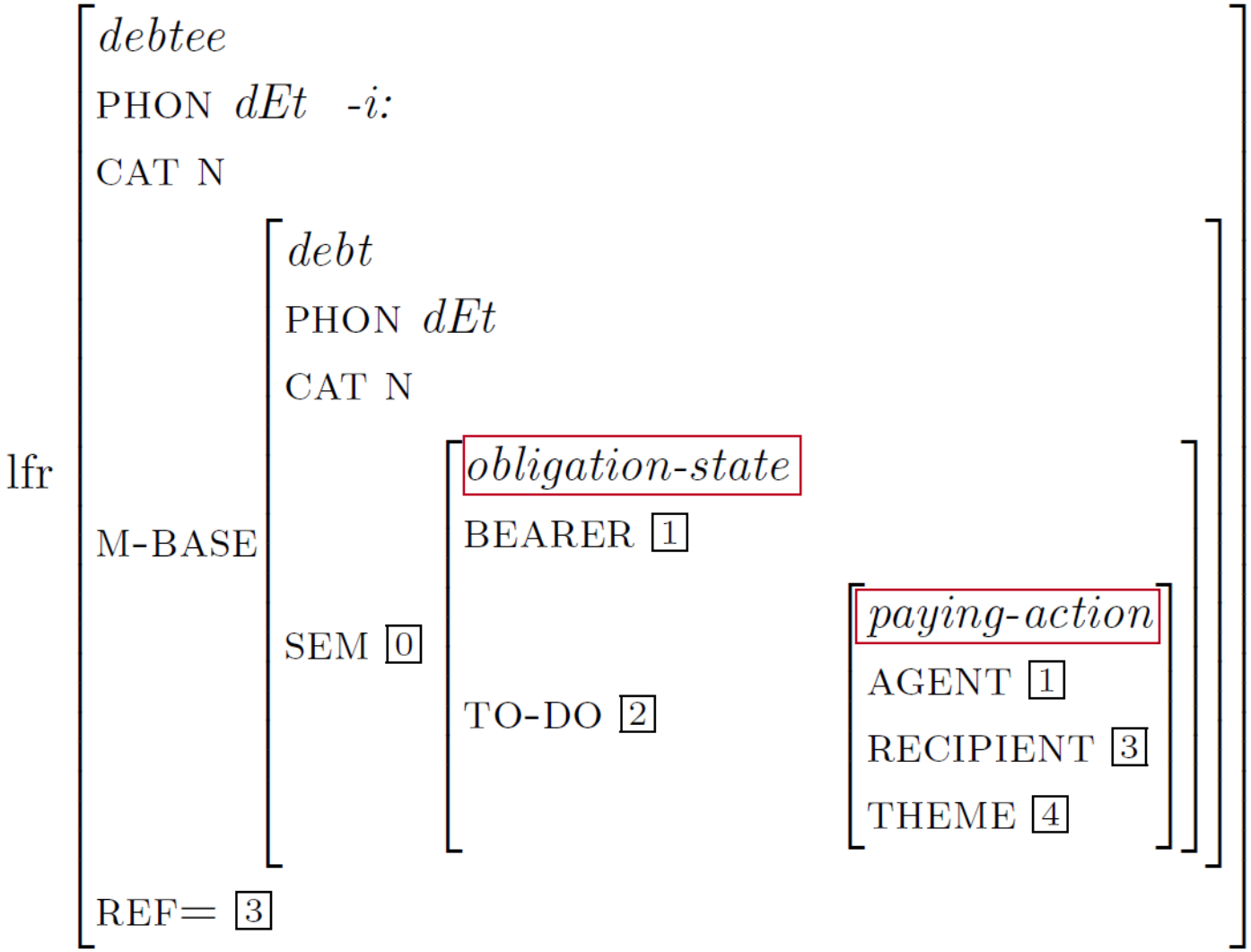
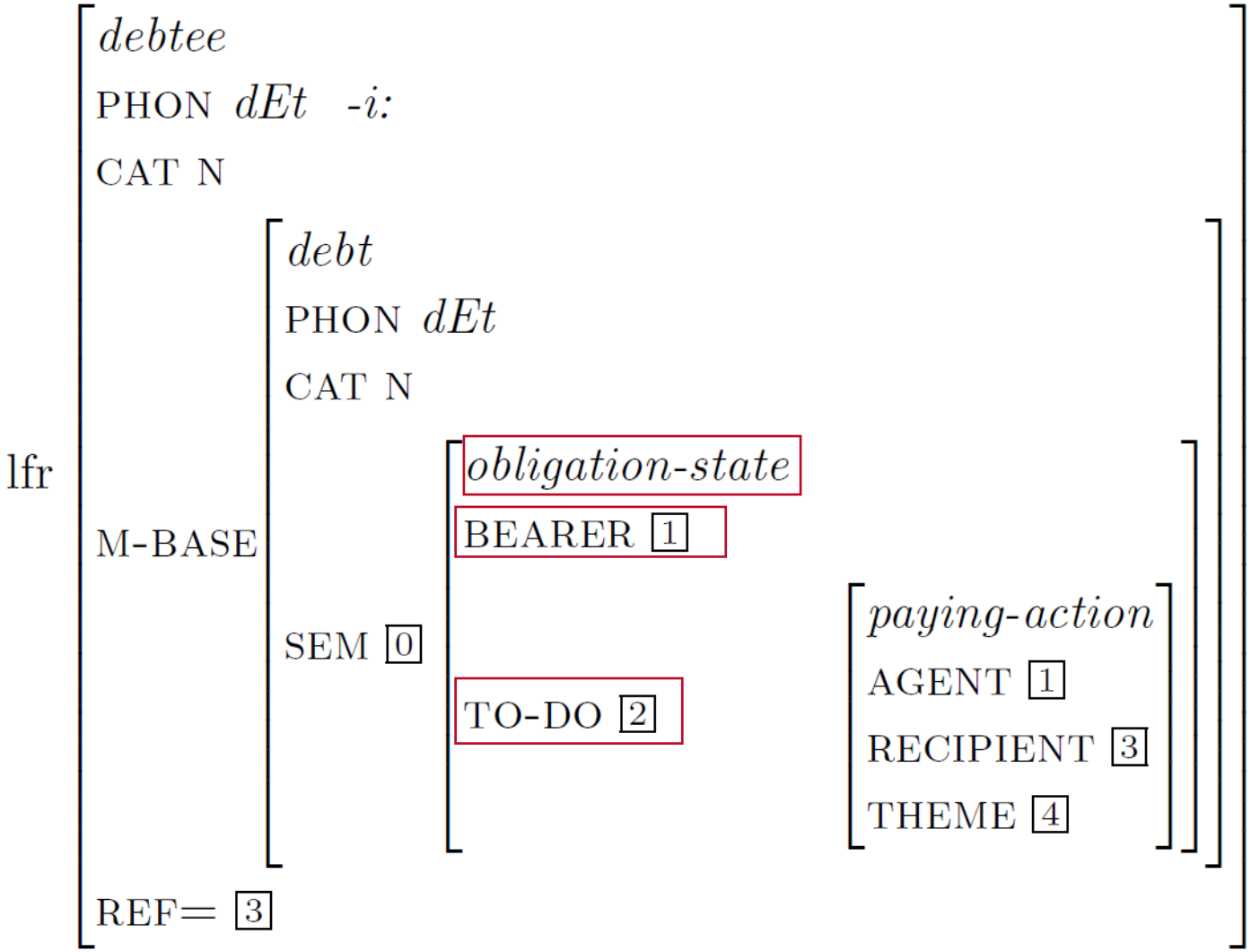
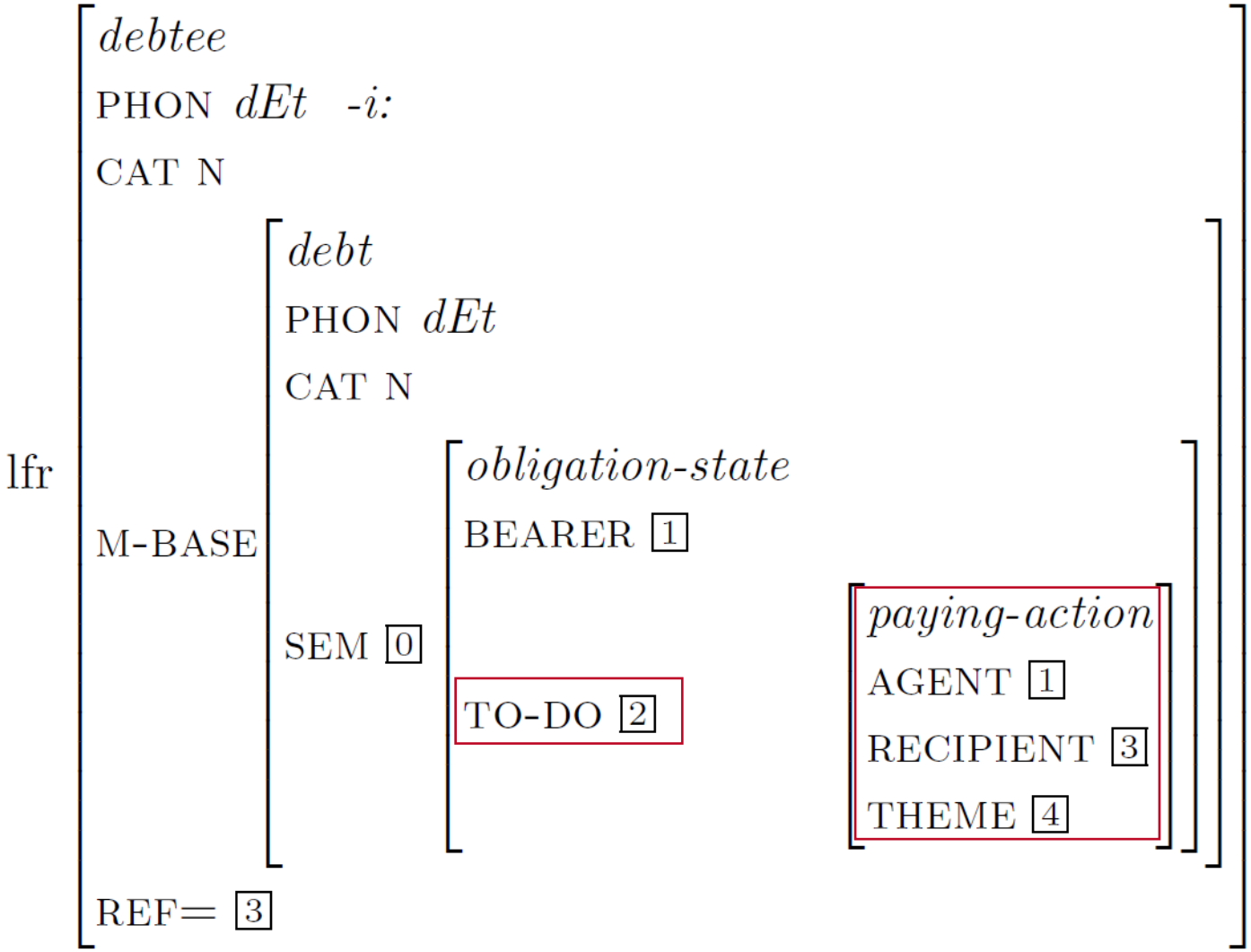


2 events in base

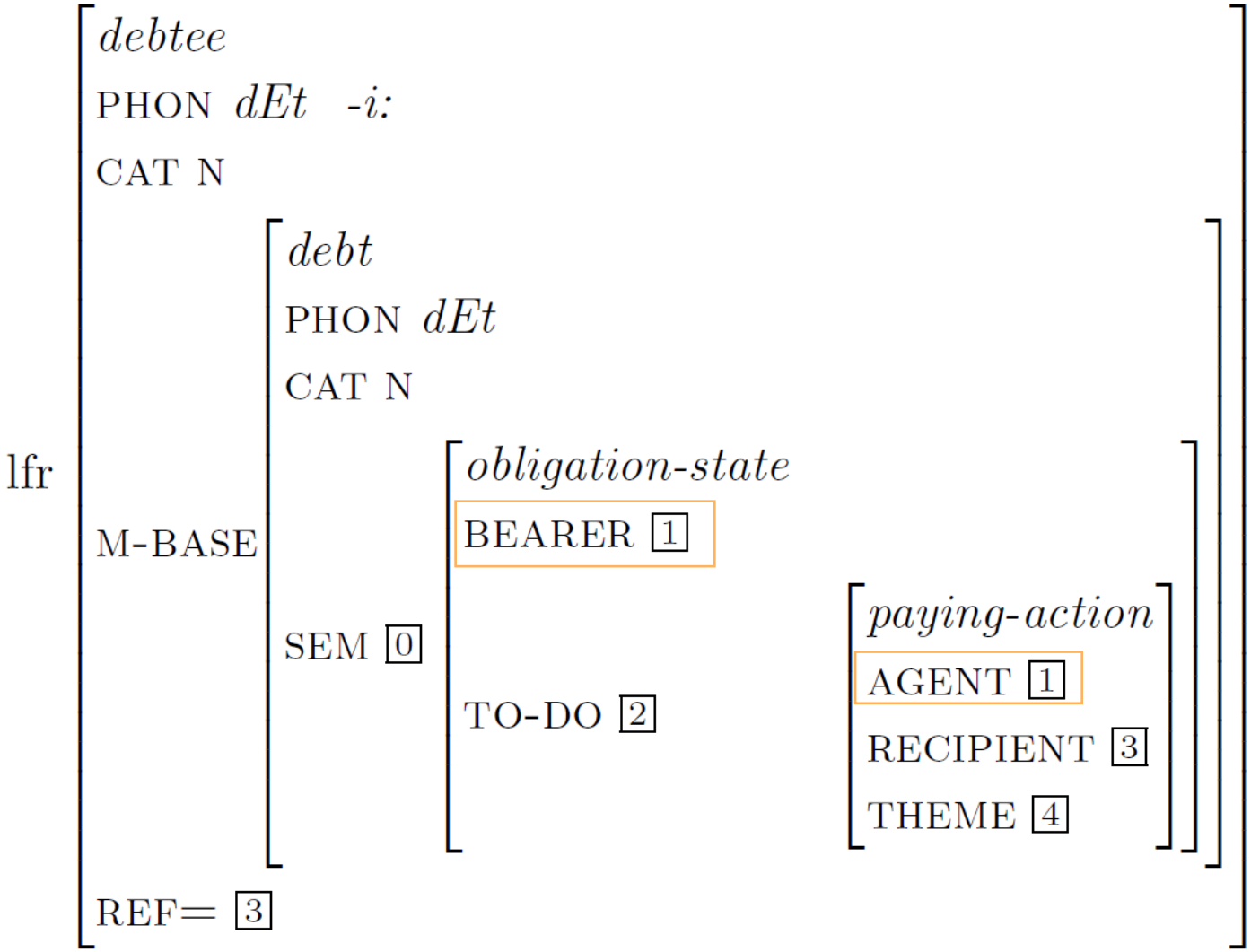
Example Analysis *debtee*



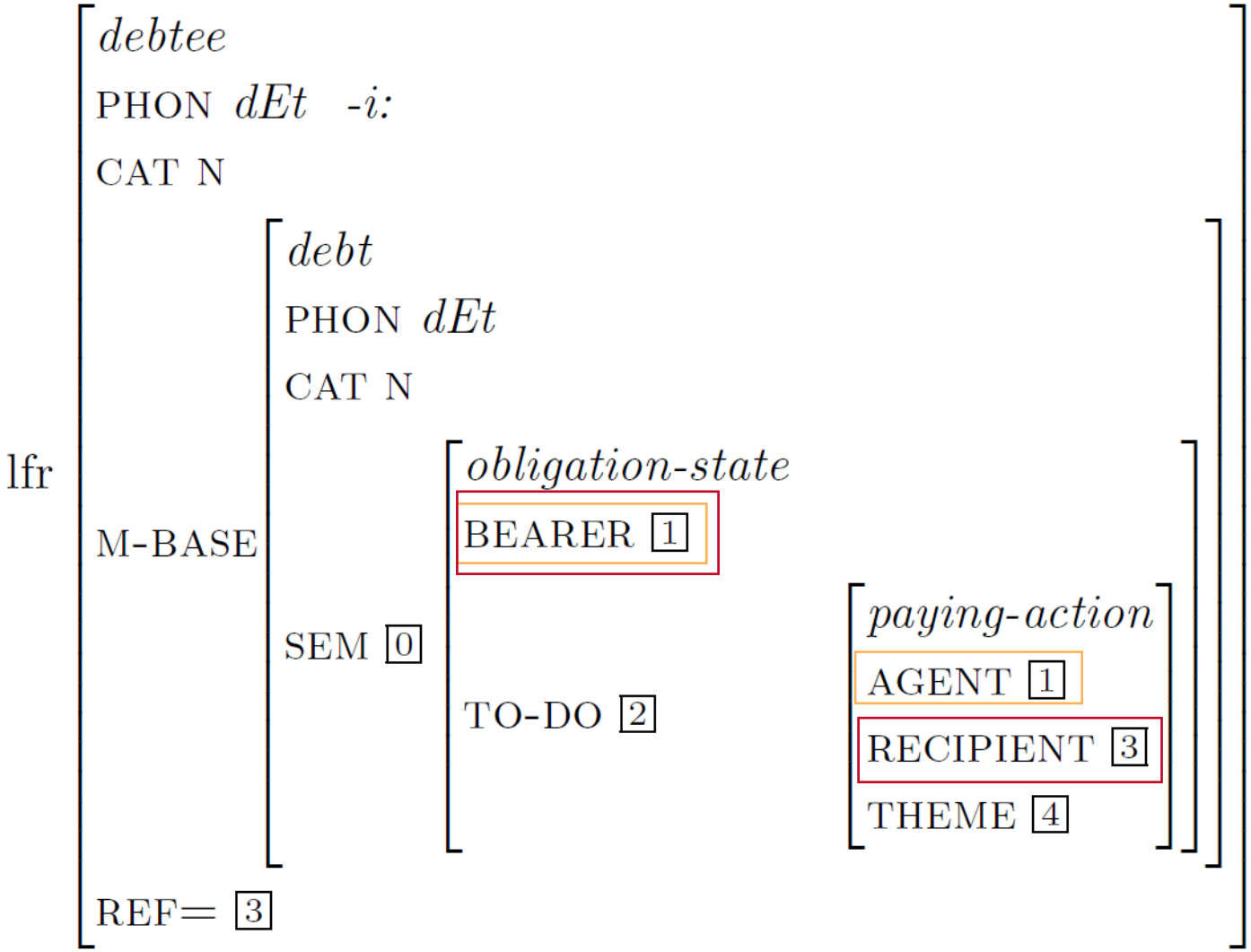
Example Analysis *debtee*



Example Analysis *debtee*

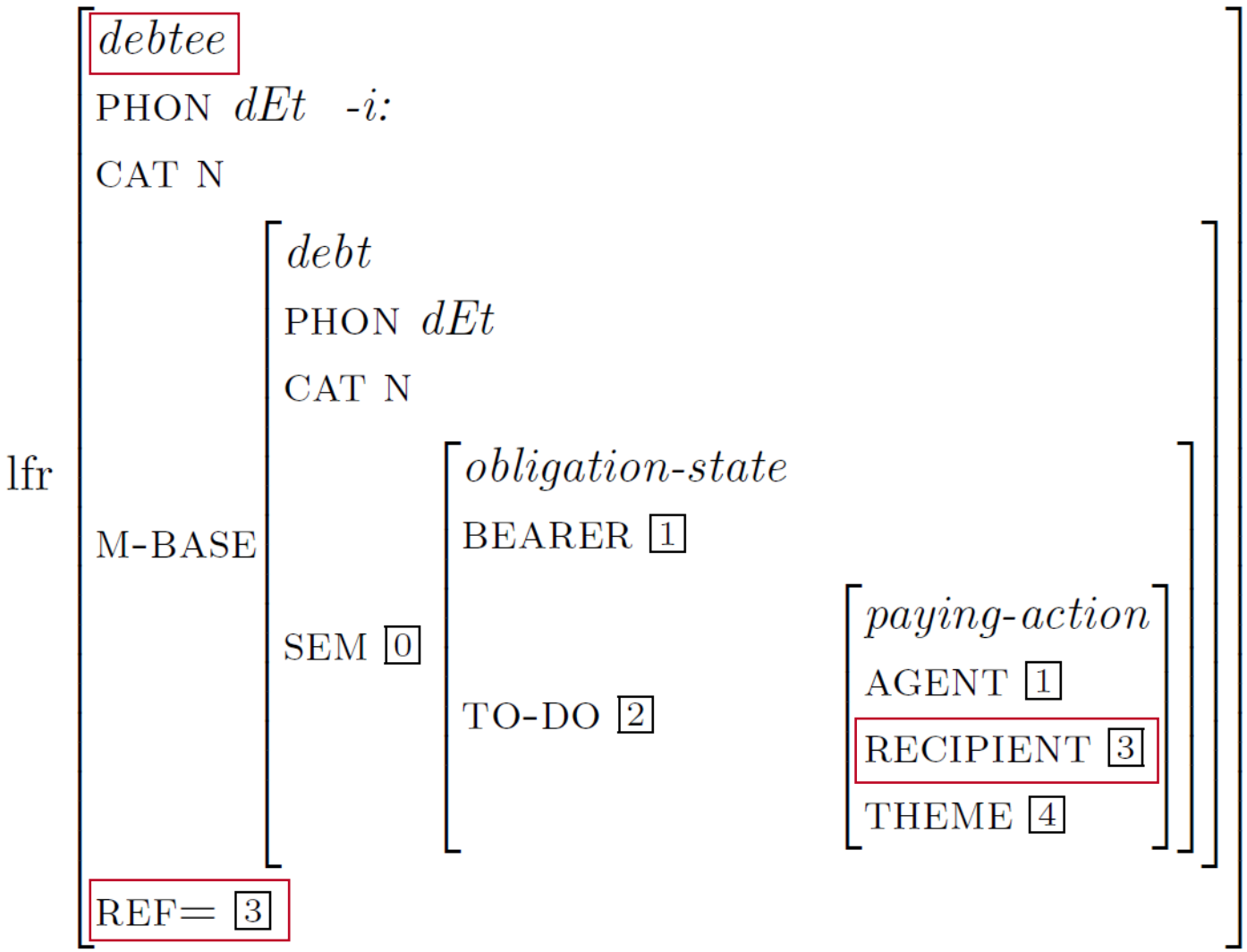


Example Analysis *debtee*



Problem: which of these two possible participants in red is the one selected by the affix?

Example Analysis *debtee*



Fits definition of *debtee*

Open Points

- *-ee/-er* resemblance

- Exceptions possible
  - E.g. can select AGENT-argument of intransitive verbs (Barker 1998)
  - Example: *escapee* although *escaper* also exists (Barker 1998)
  - Example: *bargee* → *the bargeman*

- Analogical effect as verbal bases more frequent

- Event/participant selection dependent on depth of embedding

Further Research

- Event approachability for all types of derivates in *–ee*
  - E.g. *biographee, covenantee, counselee*
- Model adjectival bases
  - E.g. *absentee*
- Model other nominalizing suffixes *-age*, *-ance*, *-ation*, *-er*, *-ment*, *-ure*
- Include N-V conversion
- Find possible generalizations for suffixes in isolation and for whole process
- Restriction event selection when more than one event in base

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Thank you!