

DEVERBALISATION OF -ATION AND DEADJECTIVALISATION OF -NESS IN ENGLISH: A COGNITIVE SEMANTICS PERSPECTIVE

DEVERBALISASI -ATION DAN DEADJEKTIVALISASI -NESS DALAM BAHASA INGGRIS: SEBUAH PERSPEKTIF SEMANTIK KOGNITIF

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Abstract

This paper examines the English nominalising suffixes -ation and -ness from a cognitive semantic perspective, focusing on the processes of deverbalisation and deadjectivalisation. The study investigates these two abstract noun-forming suffixes as its primary objects of analysis and employs a descriptive-explanatory method to interpret the research data. Particular attention is given to how -ation and -ness interact with lexical and conceptual meaning in the formation of abstract nouns. Semantically, nouns derived with -ation typically express complex eventive or processual meanings, often involving argument structure and telicity that depend on the semantic properties of the verbal base. In contrast, -ness generally forms nouns that denote qualities or states abstracted from adjectival bases, exhibiting relatively stable semantic interpretations. The analysis is supported by six corpus-based evidence and semantic classification frameworks that differentiate eventive from non-eventive interpretations of derived nominals. In addition, the study draws on theoretical insights from lexical semantics and frame semantics to explain the semantic behaviour of these derivational patterns. The findings indicate that both suffixes demonstrate productive derivational processes associated with polysemy and morphological productivity, with their semantic outcomes influenced by the grammatical category of the base and patterns of language use. Finally, the paper situates these findings within broader discussions of English nominal semantics and word formation, highlighting their implications for understanding the lexical-semantic representation of derived words.

Keywords: conceptual meaning; deadjectivalisation; deverbalisation; lexical meaning

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji akhiran nominalisasi bahasa Inggris -ation dan -ness dari perspektif semantik kognitif, berfokus pada proses deverbalisasi dan deadjektivalisasi. Tulisan ini membahas kedua akhiran pembentuk nomina abstrak tersebut sebagai objek analisis utama dan menggunakan metode deskriptif-eksplanatori untuk menafsirkan data penelitian, khususnya bagaimana -ation dan -ness berinteraksi dengan makna leksikal dan konseptual dalam pembentukan nomina abstrak. Secara semantik, nomina yang diturunkan dengan -ation biasanya mengungkapkan makna peristiwa yang kompleks atau makna proses, yang sering kali melibatkan struktur argumen dan telisitas yang bergantung pada sifat semantik dari kata dasar verbanya. Sebaliknya, -ness umumnya membentuk nomina yang menunjukkan kualitas atau keadaan yang abstrak dari kata dasar adjektiva, dan menampilkan interpretasi semantik yang relatif stabil. Analisis ini didukung oleh bukti berbasis korpus dan kerangka klasifikasi semantik yang membedakan penafsiran peristiwa dari penafsiran non-peristiwa dari nomina

turunan tersebut. Selain itu, penelitian ini memanfaatkan wawasan teoretis dari semantik leksikal dan semantik bingkai (frame semantics) untuk menjelaskan perilaku semantik dari pola derivasional ini. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kedua akhiran tersebut menunjukkan proses derivasi produktif yang terkait dengan polisemi dan produktivitas morfologis, dengan hasil semantik yang dipengaruhi oleh kategori gramatikal kata dasar dan pola penggunaan bahasa. Terakhir, tulisan ini menempatkan hasil tersebut ke dalam diskusi yang lebih luas mengenai semantik nominal dan pembentukan kata Bahasa Inggris dan menyoroti implikasinya terhadap pemahaman representasi leksikal-semantik dari kata turunan.

Kata kunci: *deadjektivalisasi; deverbalisasi; makna konseptual; makna leksikal.*

Introduction

Nominalisation is the linguistic process through which verbs and adjectives are converted into nouns in English (Lieber, 2004; Bauer, Lieber & Plag, 2013; Grimm & McNally (2022)). As a derivational word-formation mechanism, it enables a verb or adjective to function as the base from which a new lexical category, most frequently a noun, is created through the addition of affixes. The resulting nominal forms often retain semantic and syntactic properties inherited from the base verb, including aspects of argument structure and event interpretation (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2013; Lieber, 2016). Among the most productive deverbal nominalising suffixes are -ation, -ment, and -al, which generate nouns expressing a range of meanings, such as events (e.g., election), results (e.g., production), and abstract concepts (e.g., refusal). The semantic interpretation of these derived nouns is influenced by both the structural characteristics of the base verb and broader semantic factors (Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 2005; Alexiadou, 2021). More

specifically, deverbalisation refers to the derivational process in which verbs serve as the source for forming lexical items belonging to another grammatical category, most commonly nouns, through morphological operations (Bauer et al., 2013; Andreou & Lieber, 2019; Alexiadou, 2021).

Deverbalisation is the morphological process in which a verb functions as the base for the formation of a new lexical item belonging to a different grammatical category, most frequently a noun, although derivation into adjectives or other lexical categories is also possible. In English, this process is commonly realised through suffixation using morphemes such as -ation, -ment, -al, and -er, producing forms such as examination, development, refusal, and trainer. These derived forms frequently preserve semantic and syntactic properties of their verbal bases, including elements of argument structure and event interpretation (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2013; Lieber, 2016). Linguistic studies have shown that deverbal nouns may express a variety of semantic

interpretations, including eventive meanings (e.g., the demonstration of the workers), resultative meanings (e.g., the production was impressive), and more abstract institutional or conceptual entities, with their interpretation determined by both structural configuration and contextual factors (Grimshaw, 1990; Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 2005).

Consequently, deverbalisation is best viewed as an interface phenomenon that integrates morphology, syntax, and lexical semantics, whereby nominalising morphology interacts with the semantic properties of the verbal root and the realisation of its arguments to produce multiple layers of meaning (Alexiadou, 2021). Rather than representing a simple shift in grammatical category, deverbalisation constitutes a complex derivational mechanism that restructures event representation and conceptual organisation within the English grammatical system. From a cognitive viewpoint: Nominalisation is a broader process of reification, where non-nominal structures are construed as entities. Deverbalisation is a subtype involving the reification of event structures. Deadjectival nominalisation, by contrast, reifies properties, not events. Thus: All deverbal nominalisations are nominalisations, but not all nominalisations are deverbal.

Deverbalisation involves the reconstrual of a relational process (profiled by a verb) into a thing-like conceptual entity through morphological marking[-], thereby reifying dynamic event structures for discourse manipulation (Langacker, 2008; Talmy, 2000). This process reflects a shift in profiling: the temporal unfolding of an event is backgrounded while a conceptualised event or its outcome is foregrounded as a nominal referent (Goldberg, 2019; Andreou, M., & Lieber, R. (2020).

Deadjectivalisation is a derivational process in which an adjective serves as the base for the formation of a noun, most commonly through the addition of suffixes such as -ness, -ity, and -th. The resulting nouns typically express qualities, properties, or states associated with the adjectival base (Bauer et al., 2013; Lieber, 2016). In English, deadjectival nominals such as happiness and stability represent abstract property concepts and, unlike many deverbal nouns, generally do not inherit the argument structure of verbs (Geeraerts, 2010). From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, deadjectivalisation can be viewed as a process of conceptual reification, whereby a gradable or scalar attribute is construed as a discrete conceptual entity that can function as an abstract referent (Langacker, 2008; Lakoff, 1987; Arche & Marín, 2021).

This derivational shift involves a change in conceptual profiling from the attribution of a characteristic (e.g., happy) to the conceptualisation of that characteristic as an abstract nominal entity (e.g., happiness). Such a transformation reflects broader cognitive processes of categorisation, conceptualisation, and semantic packaging that enable speakers to represent qualitative experience as an independent conceptual object in discourse (Goldberg, 2019). In the case of verbs, this process produces deverbal nominalisations, such as *examination* from *examine* (with suffix *-ation*), which has been widely studied for its dual interpretations—eventive and result-oriented readings (Grimshaw, 1990; Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 2005). These phenomena have been central to both formal and cognitive semantics research on word-formation and meaning construction in language systems (Langacker, 1991; Talmy, 2000). Beyond the distinction between eventive and result nominal readings, deverbal nominalisation also involves systematic changes in argument structure, aspectual interpretation, and referential status, which have been extensively examined in both formal and cognitive traditions.

For example, eventive nouns formed with the suffix *-ation* frequently preserve the argument structure of their corresponding

verbal bases, thereby permitting the overt expression of participants such as agents and themes (e.g., the examination of the patients by the doctor). In contrast, result nominals generally do not retain these argumental properties (Grimshaw, 1990; Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 2005). From the standpoint of cognitive semantics, this distinction arises from different patterns of conceptual construal. Eventive nominals foreground an unfolding process situated within a temporal framework, whereas result nominals conceptualise the same process as a completed, bounded entity (Langacker, 1987, 1991; Park & Park, 2017).

This process of reification exemplifies a broader cognitive operation in which dynamic events are transformed into abstract conceptual objects, thereby enhancing referential flexibility and promoting cohesion in discourse (Talmy, 2000). Furthermore, the productivity of nominalising morphology and the degree of semantic transparency exhibited by derived nouns are influenced by factors such as frequency of use and lexical entrenchment, providing empirical support for usage-based models of morphological development and word formation (Bauer et al., 2013; Goldberg, 2006). In cognitive semantics, language is understood not just as symbolic structure but as an embodiment of conceptualisation, where morphological

processes like nominalisation reflect shifts in mental construal of events and states (Langacker, 1987; Lakoff, 1987). This perspective foregrounds how suffixes like *-ation* and *-ness* interact with base verbs and adjectives to create new concepts that instantiate abstraction and reification of linguistic domains (Langacker, 1991; Johnson, 1987). Within more recent developments in cognitive and usage-based linguistics, nominalisation is further analysed as a process of conceptual packaging, whereby dynamic experiences are reorganised into manipulable conceptual units that serve discourse and epistemic functions.

From a cognitive-semantic perspective, the addition of the suffixes *-ation* and *-ness* involves more than a simple shift in grammatical category; it also reconfigures conceptual salience by transforming relational predications into entity-like conceptualisations. Langacker (2008) characterises this process as reification through profiling, whereby dynamic relations are construed as conceptual objects. Cognitive-functional theories further propose that nominalisation plays a crucial role in academic and institutional discourse because it enables speakers to represent actions, events, and qualities as stable conceptual entities that can be measured, evaluated, classified, and integrated into broader

networks of abstract knowledge (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). In addition, recent developments in cognitive construction grammar and usage-based morphology suggest that the productivity and semantic interpretation of nominalising suffixes arise from entrenched associations between linguistic form and meaning, which are reinforced through usage frequency, analogical processes, and schematic generalisation (Goldberg, 2019; Hilpert, 2014).

Accordingly, the suffixes *-ation* and *-ness* may be viewed as symbolic linguistic devices that encode conventional patterns of conceptual construal, supporting the cognitive-linguistic view that grammar and the lexicon constitute a unified continuum of meaning-bearing constructions rather than separate components of language (Langacker, 2008; Goldberg, 2019). The suffix *-ation* commonly yields nouns that can denote events, processes, or results, depending on how speakers conceptualise the base verb's semantics within context (Grimshaw, 1990; Lieber, 2004). For example, *examination* may retain an event interpretation (a process involving scrutiny) or a result interpretation (the exam as an object). The cognitive element lies in how conceptual frames are reorganised through derivation, enabling different interpretive profiles (Langacker,

1987; Talmy, 2000). More recent research further demonstrates that *-ation* nominalisations display gradient semantic behaviour shaped by lexical aspect, argument realisation, and discourse context.

Research grounded in corpus linguistics and usage-based approaches demonstrates that the interpretation of derived nominals as eventive or resultative is not governed by a rigid dichotomy. Instead, it is influenced by a range of interacting factors, including the telicity of the base verb, verb-class distinctions, and the frequency with which particular meanings become conventionalised in language use (Bauer et al., 2013; Plag, 2018). Within a cognitive-semantic framework, such interpretive flexibility is understood as the outcome of dynamic construal processes through which speakers foreground different aspects of a shared event frame according to their communicative intentions (Langacker, 2008). Constructionist models further maintain that repeated patterns of *-ation* nominalisation become established as schematic form–meaning pairings, enabling speakers to associate particular morphological forms with recurring semantic interpretations and thereby facilitating context-sensitive comprehension (Goldberg, 2019). Likewise, recent research in distributed morphology and lexical semantics has re-examined the

distinction between eventive and resultative nominals, arguing that the semantic contribution of nominalising morphology emerges through its interaction with the lexical properties of the root and its structural configuration. This perspective supports the view that derived nominals represent richly layered conceptual structures rather than merely reflecting a change in grammatical category (Alexiadou, 2021; Lieber, 2016).

Grammatically and morphologically, *-ness* nominalisations derive from adjectives, such as happiness from happy, and generally encode quality, property, or state (Bauer et al., 2013; Lieber, 2004). This suffix often involves a salient shift from graded adjectival meaning to an abstract noun category that speakers treat as stable conceptual entities (Langacker, 1991). Particular semantic treatments of adjectival nominalisation, including how mass versus count concepts emerge, have been discussed in lexical semantics scholarship (Geeraerts, 2010). One key cognitive theme in deverbal and deadjectival nominalisations is the profile shift—a core idea in cognitive semantics whereby affixation alters the domain of focus from a dynamic base to a conceptual construct (Langacker, 1987, 1991). This notion resonates with broader cognitive linguistic accounts that emphasise how

morphology encodes shifts in event structure, conceptual domains, and entity projection (Talmy, 2000).

Research in cognitive linguistics has demonstrated that nominalisation involves more than a morphological alteration, as it also reshapes the conceptual organisation of linguistic meaning. Rather than functioning solely as formal derivational products, nominalised forms reflect semantic reconstructions that affect how speakers conceptualise and mentally represent actions, events, and properties in discourse (Goldberg, 2006; Langacker, 1991). In academic and scientific communication, for instance, nominalisation promotes greater levels of abstraction by transforming processes into conceptual entities, thereby increasing informational density and facilitating the compression of complex ideas (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Recent developments in cognitive semantics have further expanded the analysis of nominalisation by examining the conceptual contribution of derivational morphology. In particular, studies have shown that deverbal suffixes such as *-ation* express meanings associated with eventualities, with the semantic interpretation of the resulting nominal being determined to a considerable extent by the lexical-semantic characteristics

of the underlying verb (Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 2005; Talmy, 2000).

In contrast to formal generative accounts that locate nominalisation in syntactic derivations (e.g., argument structure inheritance), the cognitive semantics perspective highlights semantic motivation—how meanings are construed and mapped during nominal formation, and how conceptual integration mechanisms operate across lexical and discourse levels (Langacker, 1987; Lakoff, 1987). Such integrative analyses stress the mental representation of derived nouns as central to cognitive semantic theory. The suffix *-ness* likewise provides fertile ground for cognitive investigation, especially where property nominalisation involves conceptual generalisation from descriptive qualities to abstract categories, often implicating prototype effects and category organisation (Geeraerts, 2010; Lakoff, 1987). While detailed formal accounts exist, cognitive analyses foreground gradient categories and meaning profiles that reflect prototype-based conceptual systems.

Recent scholarship has increasingly combined cognitive-semantic theory with corpus-based analysis and usage-based models to investigate the formation of nominal expressions in English.

This integrated approach explores how factors such as frequency of occurrence, morphological productivity, and contextual patterns shape the development and interpretation of derived nominals (Goldberg, 2006; Bauer et al., 2013). By bringing together cognitive and empirical perspectives, researchers are better able to explain how nominalisations formed with *-ation* and *-ness* emerge, become conventionalised, and fulfil communicative functions in English. Such an approach also provides broader insights into the semantic regularities and cognitive processes that underlie nominal formation across large-scale language use.

Method

This research employs a qualitative, usage-based methodology informed by the principles of cognitive semantics to examine the patterns of deverbalisation and deadjectivalisation associated with the English suffixes *-ation* and *-ness*. The study integrates corpus-linguistic analysis with conceptual-semantic interpretation to account for both observable distributional patterns and variations in meaning arising from different modes of conceptual construal. The linguistic data are obtained from the English-language newspaper The Jakarta Post, providing an authentic corpus

for identifying nominalisations formed with *-ation* from verbal bases and *-ness* from adjectival bases across a range of discourse contexts. The corpus-based component offers empirical evidence regarding the productivity, frequency, and contextual behaviour of these nominal forms, all of which are fundamental considerations within usage-based models of language (Bauer et al., 2013; Hilpert, 2014). By combining corpus evidence with cognitive-semantic analysis, the methodological framework reflects recent developments in cognitive construction grammar and usage-based morphology, which emphasise the importance of frequency, entrenchment, and repeated form–meaning associations in shaping morphological structure and interpretation (Goldberg, 2019; Plag, 2018).

The analysis is carried out through a three-stage procedure. In the initial stage, occurrences of nominal forms containing the suffixes *-ation* and *-ness* are identified and classified according to their semantic interpretations, including eventive, resultative, stative, property-related, and abstract entity meanings. The second stage involves examining each occurrence within its immediate linguistic context to evaluate the realisation of argument structure, aspectual characteristics, and discourse function, applying established criteria for

distinguishing eventive from resultative nominals (Grimshaw, 1990; Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 2005). In the final stage, the findings are interpreted using a cognitive-semantic framework that emphasises the notions of profiling, construal, and conceptual reification (Langacker, 2008). This analysis explores how derived nouns are conceptualised either as temporally unfolding events or as bounded conceptual entities, while also investigating the ways in which adjectival bases are transformed into abstract nominal representations of qualities and states.

To enhance the reliability of the analysis, the study applies inter-coder agreement procedures in the semantic classification of the data and validates the results through triangulation using frequency distributions and collocational patterns. In addition, the analytical framework incorporates recent advances in lexical semantics and morphological theory that examine the interaction between argument realisation and the multiple layers of meaning found in derived nominals (Alexiadou, 2021; Lieber, 2016). The integration of corpus-based evidence with a cognitively informed semantic perspective enables the study to offer a comprehensive explanation of how nominalisations formed with *-ation* and *-ness*

are produced, interpreted, and employed in contemporary English. This combined approach further demonstrates how these derivational forms function as mechanisms of conceptual restructuring rather than merely as instances of grammatical category change.

Result and Discussion

The following section presents a step-by-step analysis of the research data undertaken to address the research questions of this study.

Datum 1:

“The government’s recent legislation on urban development has sparked debate among civil society groups, who argue that effective public consultation must accompany any major policy change.” (The Jakarta Post — National Edition, July 15, 2025, p. A4).

Step 1: Extraction and Semantic Categorisation of *-ation* / *-ness* Forms

This distinction aligns with the event/result diagnostics proposed by Grimshaw (1990) and Levin & Rappaport Hovav (2005). The sentence contains two relevant *-ation* nominalisations:

1. Legislation
2. consultation

There are no *-ness* forms in this sentence.

Table 1. Semantic categorisation:

Token	Morphological Type	Semantic Type	Preliminary Interpretation
legislation	Deverbal (<i>legislate</i> + -ation)	Abstract entity / Result	Institutionalised body of laws or the act of legislating
consultation	Deverbal (<i>consult</i> + -ation)	Eventive	Process of consulting

Legislation is typically interpreted as a **result nominal** (a body of laws), though it historically derives from the act of legislating.

Consultation is more clearly **eventive**, referring to a process that must occur.

Step 2: Co-text Analysis (Argument Structure, Aspect, Discourse Function)

This distinction aligns with the event/result diagnostics proposed by Grimshaw (1990) and Levin & Rappaport Hovav (2005).

Legislation

Co-text:

“The government’s recent legislation on urban development...”

Argument structure diagnostics: The genitive phrase *“The government’s”* may signal either; Agent of the event (if eventive reading), or Possessor/source of the result (if result reading); the PP *“on urban development”* specifies thematic content, not an argument structure in the strict eventive sense.

Event vs. result test: Empowering the notion from Grimshaw (1990), these concepts exemplify that: No overt internal

arguments (e.g., *of NP*) are realised; The noun does not behave like an ongoing process; It functions as a referential entity that “has sparked debate.”

Therefore, **legislation** here functions as a **result nominal / abstract institutional entity**, not as an ongoing event. Aspectual properties; It is interpreted as temporally bounded and completed (“recent legislation”), reinforcing a **result state** rather than a process. Discourse function; It acts as the **grammatical subject** and discourse trigger for “has sparked debate,” serving as a reified policy entity that causes subsequent action.

Consultation

Co-text:

“effective public consultation must accompany any major policy change.”

Argument structure diagnostics: It implies participants (consulting authority + consulted public), though not overtly expressed; The modal verb *“must accompany”* indicates futurity or obligation, suggesting a required process.

Event vs. result test: It refers to an activity that should occur; It retains processual meaning (consulting people); It allows agent/theme interpretation implicitly. Therefore, **consultation** functions as an **eventive nominal**. Aspectual properties; It denotes a **durative and dynamic process**, not a static entity. Discourse function; It encodes a normative procedural requirement—framed as a necessary event accompanying policy change.

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Step 3: Cognitive Semantic Interpretation

From a cognitive semantic perspective, the two nominalisations illustrate different profiling operations (Langacker, 2008):

Legislation

Reified Institutional Entity; The dynamic process of legislating is **reified** into a bounded conceptual object; The nominal profiles the **resultant entity** within a broader institutional frame; The event frame (legislative deliberation, drafting, approval) is backgrounded; The noun functions as a stable referent in discourse, enabling causal chaining (“has sparked debate”).

This reflects **thing-like construal**: a

process reconceptualised as an abstract object.

Consultation

Profiled Process within a Policy Frame; The suffix *-ation* profiles the **processual dimension** of consult; The noun foregrounds an **event frame** involving interaction between government and public; Unlike legislation, the dynamic structure remains conceptually salient; This reflects **processual construal**, where temporal unfolding is maintained.

The example illustrates that the same nominalising suffix (*-ation*) can produce different conceptual interpretations depending on the mode of construal and the discourse context in which it occurs. From the perspective of cognitive semantics (Langacker, 2008) *Legislation represents a process of conceptual reification and abstraction, whereby an activity is construed as an institutional or abstract entity. Consultation, by contrast, highlights an eventive interpretation by foregrounding an ongoing process within a procedural framework.*

Table 2. Cognitive Contrast Between the Two Nominals:

Feature	legislation	consultation
Construal	Thing-like (reified)	Processual
Profiling	Result entity	Event structure
Temporal structure	Bounded/completed	Dynamic/durative
Discourse role	Causal trigger	Normative requirement

These observations indicate that do not possess invariant semantic values. deverbal nominalisations formed with *-ation* Rather, their meanings arise through the

interaction of the lexical-semantic properties of the verbal base, the realisation of argument structure, and the speaker's conceptual construal within a given communicative context.

Datum 2:

*"The writer reflected on the **awareness** of mental well-being in the workplace, urging employers to recognise that stress management improves both productivity and employee **happiness**."* (The Jakarta Post — National Edition, July 15, 2025, p. A4).

Step 1: Extraction and Semantic Categorisation of *-ation* and *-ness* Forms

The sentence contains the following relevant nominalisations:

1. **awareness** (*aware* + *-ness*)
2. **happiness** (*happy* + *-ness*)

Step 2: Co-text Analysis (Argument Structure, Aspect, Discourse Function)

Awareness

Co-text:

"it reflects on the awareness of mental well-being in the workplace"

Argument structure; The PP *"of mental well-being"* functions as a complement specifying the **content/theme** of awareness; No agent is overtly realised; It does not express event participants.

Event vs. result diagnostics, applying the idea of Grimshaw (1990) these ways of analysis can be elaborated as follow; Cannot take temporal modifiers like *during*, *for two hours* naturally; Does not license argument structure typical of eventive nominals; Refers to a cognitive condition rather than an action. It is categorised as a **state nominal / abstract entity**.

Table 3. Focusing strictly on *-ness* and comparable deverbal nominalisation patterns:

Token	Morphological Type	Semantic Type	Preliminary Interpretation
awareness	Deadjectival (<i>-ness</i>)	Abstract state	Cognitive state of being aware
happiness	Deadjectival (<i>-ness</i>)	Emotional state / abstract property	State of being happy

Aspectual properties; Non-dynamic; Atelic;

Conceptually continuous rather than temporally bounded. **Discourse function;**

Serves as the thematic object of reflection; Encodes an institutional or social condition requiring attention.

Happiness

Co-text:

"employee happiness"

Argument structure; Modified by possessive-like nominal *employee*; No internal argument structure. Event

diagnostics; Does not encode process; Refers to an emotional condition; Cannot easily take agentive complements. Categorised as a **state nominal / abstract property**.

Aspectual properties; Stative; Non-dynamic; Gradable conceptually. **Discourse function**; Functions as an evaluative outcome; Represents an institutional goal or measurable workplace value.

Step 3: Cognitive Semantic Interpretation

From a cognitive semantic perspective, the sentence contains three different construal types (Langacker, 2008):

Awareness → Reified Cognitive State

The adjective *aware* is reified through *-ness* into a **thing-like conceptual entity**. The dynamic experiential process of noticing or

perceiving becomes an abstract, discourse-manipulable object (“the awareness”). This reflects; **Reification**; Profiling of a **mental state**; Conceptual packaging of cognition into institutional discourse. The content frame (“of mental well-being”) specifies the conceptual domain.

Happiness → Abstract Emotional Entity

Happiness demonstrates prototypical *-ness* nominalisation; Gradable quality → abstract entity; Emotional experience → measurable workplace outcome; State reified into institutional value.

It reflects **property-to-entity transformation**, where an internal emotional state becomes a conceptual resource within corporate discourse.

Table 4. Cognitive Contrast Across Nominals:

Nominal	Construal Type	Dynamic?	Profiling	Discourse Role
awareness	Cognitive state	No	Mental condition	Topic of reflection
happiness	Emotional state	No	Abstract property	Desired outcome

The example demonstrates how nominalisation contributes to conceptual compression and the construction of institutional abstraction. In this context; *Dynamic* activities, such as managing stress, retain their process-oriented interpretation. *Psychological* conditions, represented by

awareness and happiness, are conceptualised as abstract entities through the process of reification.

These nominal forms facilitate formal and policy-oriented discourse by converting subjective experiences and mental states into stable conceptual entities that can be

discussed, evaluated, and systematically organised.

Datum 3

*“Visitors praised the festival for its **celebration** of local artistic **uniqueness**, saying it showcases Indonesia’s rich cultural tapestry like never before.”* (“The Jakarta Post — National Edition, July 15, 2025, p. A4”).

In cognitive semantic terms (Langacker, 2008), the sentence demonstrates varying degrees of **profiling shift and reification**, showing how morphology shapes conceptual structure in discourse.

Step 1: Extraction and Semantic Categorisation of *-ation* and *-ness* Forms

The sentence contains two relevant nominalisations:

1. **celebration** (*celebrate* + *-ation*)
2. **uniqueness** (*unique* + *-ness*)

Step 2: Co-text Analysis (Argument Structure, Aspect, Discourse Function)

Celebration

Co-text:

“praised the festival for its celebration of local artistic uniqueness”

Argument Structure; The genitive “its” links the celebration to *the festival* (possessor or host); The PP “of local artistic uniqueness” functions as an internal complement specifying the **theme**; The noun retains

Table 5. Semantic Dimensions of Deverbal (*-ation*)

Token	Morphological Type	Semantic Type	Preliminary Interpretation
celebration	Deverbal (<i>-ation</i>)	Eventive / institutionalised event	Act or event of celebrating
uniqueness	Deadjectival (<i>-ness</i>)	Abstract property	Quality of being unique

argument structure; *celebrate* (*someone celebrates something*) *celebration of X*. This aligns with eventive nominal diagnostics (Grimshaw, 1990).

Event vs. Result Diagnostics; Takes an “of”-complement (typical of eventive nominals); Refers to an activity embedded in the festival; Could combine with temporal modifiers (e.g., *during the celebration*).

Categorised primarily as an **eventive nominal**.

However, because it is embedded within “the festival,” it also partially refers to an institutionalised event, indicating mild result-like reification. **Aspectual Properties**; Dynamic; Temporally bounded (as part of the festival); Durative but episodic. **Discourse Function**; Functions as the object of

evaluation (“praised”); Highlights the **process dimension** of the festival rather than its physical structure; Serves as justification for positive appraisal.

Uniqueness

Co-text:

“local artistic uniqueness”

Argument Structure; Modified by adjectives (*local*, *artistic*); No internal argument structure; No agent or event participants. Event vs. Result Diagnostics; Cannot take temporal modifiers; Does not express process; Encodes a static conceptual property. Categorised as a **property nominal / abstract entity. Aspectual Properties**; Stative; Non-dynamic; Conceptually gradable. **Discourse Function**; Serves as the thematic content of “celebration.”; Encodes evaluative

meaning; Represents a cultural value rather than an action.

Step 3: Cognitive Semantic Interpretation

From a cognitive semantic perspective, the sentence illustrates two distinct construal operations (Langacker, 2008).

Celebration → Process Profiling with Partial Reification

The base verb *celebrate* profiles an interactional event. Through *-ation*, the process is; Reified into a nominal entity; Embedded within the broader frame of “festival”; Still retains event structure (via “of” complement). This demonstrates **process profiling**: the dynamic act remains conceptually foregrounded. The nominal allows the event to function as an evaluable entity in discourse.

Table 6. Deverbalisation and Deadjectivalisation of (-ation) & (-ness)

Feature	celebration	uniqueness
Base Type	Verb	Adjective
Construal	Process-focused	Property-focused
Dynamic?	Yes (eventive)	No (stative)
Argument structure	Retained via “of”	None
Discourse Role	Evaluated activity	Cultural value

In Langacker’s terms, the relational predication (*celebrate X*) is re-construed as a **thing-like conceptual unit**, while still preserving event structure in the background.

Uniqueness → Property Reification

The adjective *unique* profiles a scalar evaluative property. Through *-ness*: The property becomes an abstract entity; The dynamic act of perceiving distinctiveness is

backgrounded; The concept becomes discourse-manipulable. This is a clear case of **reification of a qualitative property**, transforming experiential judgment into an abstract cultural value.

Cognitive Contrast Between the Two Nominals:

The example illustrates the distinct discourse functions of nominalisations formed with the suffixes *-ation* and *-ness*: *Celebration* retains its eventive interpretation while simultaneously allowing the event to be conceptualised as an entity that can be described, evaluated, and discussed. *Uniqueness* transforms an evaluative attribute into a stable abstract concept that represents a culturally recognised quality.

Taken together, these nominalisations demonstrate how derivational morphology facilitates cultural abstraction and evaluative discourse by enabling dynamic artistic activities and aesthetic qualities to be represented as structured conceptual entities that can be referenced, analysed, and manipulated within public discourse.

Conclusion

The study of deverbalisation in *-ation* and deadjectivalisation in *-ness* within English linguistics can be fruitfully examined through a cognitive semantics approach, which views word formation as a reflection of conceptual

structuring rather than merely formal derivation. Deverbal nouns in *-ation* (e.g., construction, examination) typically profile an event, process, or resulting state derived from an underlying verbal base, highlighting how speakers reconstrue dynamic processes as conceptual entities (Langacker, 1987, 1991). In contrast, deadjectival nouns in *-ness* (e.g., kindness, darkness) encode abstract qualities by reifying adjectival properties into bounded conceptual objects, illustrating mechanisms of categorisation and abstraction central to cognitive linguistic theory (Lakoff, 1987; Geeraerts, 2010). From this perspective, both suffixes operate as cognitive tools that enable speakers to shift profiling from relational predicates (verbs and adjectives) to nominal entities, thereby facilitating conceptual reification and discourse reference. Consequently, the analysis of *-ation* and *-ness* formations reveals how morphological processes interact with event structure, prototype effects, and embodied meaning in the mental representation of lexical categories.

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