# The debate on the nature of verbal nouns in Slavic languages: nominal or verbal?

## El debate sobre la naturaleza de los sustantivos verbales en las lenguas eslavas: ¿nominales o verbales?

**Nataliia Shcherbii**
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1431-9595
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.
**Oleksii Vorobets**
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3530-2581
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.
**Dariia Mytsan**
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1430-7121
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.
**Oksana Korpalo**
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7356-442X
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.
**Nataliia Kuravska**
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3069-9241
Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine.

**Abstract**

The article defines the status of verbal nouns in Slavic linguistics, focusing in particular on the diverse terminological apparatus in each of the Slavic languages and determining its verbal or nominal nature. The verbal nature of such constructions is analyzed based on the following features: regular and systemic nature of formation; retained aspectual correlation; constructions with the agent in the instrumental case, which are characteristic of the passive voice; retained reflexive formants; expressed uncountable actions, which makes it impossible to use a plural form; expressed categories of transitivity/intransitivity and nullified categories of tense, mood, and person. It is emphasized that the productivity of the usage of these forms in Slavic languages depends on the nominal (Russian, Polish) or verbal (Ukrainian, Slovak) nature of the language. The article also analyzes the usage of reflexive verbal nouns in modern texts.

**Keywords:** Category of aspect, nominal nature, reflexive formant, Slavic languages, verbal nature, verbal nouns.

**Resumen**

El artículo define el estatus de los sustantivos verbales en la lingüística eslava, centrándose en particular en el diverso aparato terminológico de cada una de las lenguas eslavas y determinando su naturaleza verbal o nominal. La naturaleza verbal de tales construcciones se analiza basándose en los siguientes rasgos: naturaleza regular y sistémica de la formación; correlación aspectual conservada; construcciones con el agente en el caso instrumental, que son características de la voz pasiva; formantes reflexivos conservados; acciones incontables expresadas, lo que imposibilita el uso de una forma plural; categorías expresadas de transitividad/intransitividad y categorías anuladas de tiempo, modo y persona. Se subraya que la productividad del uso de estas formas en las lenguas eslavas depende de la naturaleza nominal (ruso, polaco) o verbal (ucraniano, eslovaco) de la lengua. El artículo también analiza el uso de sustantivos verbales reflexivos en textos modernos.

**Palabras clave:** Categoría de aspecto, naturaleza nominal, formante reflexivo, lenguas eslavas, naturaleza verbal, sustantivos verbales.

**Introduction**

One of the most popular areas of modern linguistic research is the study of intercategorical relations, especially in the context of several languages. Verbal nouns belong to the hybrid parts of speech that combine categories that are typical for different classes of words, such as mood, tense, reflexivity, case, and number.

Under the term "hybrid verb forms" we partially qualify adjectives, adverbs, verbal nouns, forms with -no, -to and infinitives. This principle of analysis has not been tested to date, since the first time these forms were described in a single work on their joint interpretation, using material from various Slavic languages. Genetically, hybrid forms of the verb tend to be nouns. These forms have gone through a long way of verbalization – acquiring verbal properties, consolidating the semantics of action. In Slavic linguistics, these forms are to some extent related to each other by origin, common procedural meaning, and grammatical features.

From the point of view of grammatical meaning, the infinitive is close to verbal nouns, only the latter is subject to declension, while the former remains unchanged, thus being the so-called "fossilized case form of former verbal nouns" (Espersen, 1958, p. 159).

According to the semantic criterion, the above-described verb forms are characterized by a processual meaning that describes features related to changeability/invariability over time.

According to the word-formation criterion, hybrid verb forms are united by a procedural meaning that covers such conceptual features of other categories (subject, property) that are derived from the names of certain processes. Hybrid verb forms retain the suffixes and prefixes of the stem of the formative verb, which serve as formal indicators of the belonging of the formative verb to a certain grammatical type, and thus preserve the verb category, which, through the meanings of imperfection and completion, conveys the nature of the process, i.e. its integrity/integrity, limit/unlimited, effectiveness/ineffectiveness, completeness/incompleteness, continuity/immediacy, repeatability/uniformity.

The consideration of the verbal noun as a hybrid form of the verb with the semantic and grammatical approach will allow to prove its intercategory partitive status in Slavic languages.

The article identifies the status of verbal nouns in the context of Slavic linguistics, with the primary focus on the analysis of the terminological apparatus in the aspect of Slavic language formations. The theoretical

The debate on the nature of verbal nouns in Slavic languages: nominal or verbal? - Eduweb, 2024, abril-junio, v.18, n.2. / 238-250

**239**

and methodological foundation, in the form of the work of scientists in an extended time frame, allowed us to determine the verbal or nominal nature of the terminological apparatus. The definition of the verbal nature of linguistic constructions is given in the concepts of aspectual correlation, the nature of formation, the state of preservation of reflexive formants, the expressed uncountability of action, the categorical nature of time, mood, and person. After that, the analysis of the use of deverbal reflexive nouns in modern texts is given. The article proves that the productivity of the use of the studied forms in Slavic language formations is determined by the nominal or verbal nature of the language, with the first case being typical for Russian and Polish, and the second - for Ukrainian and Slovak.

**Theoretical background**

In the West Slavic linguistics, verbal nouns have been the subject matter in the works of the following linguists: M. Jelínek, H. Křížková, P. Karlík, J. Furdík, K. Buzássyová, F. Trávníček, J. Gebauer, B. Havránek, J. Puzynina, H. Safarewiczowa, A. Skopliev, in Eastern Slavic –N. Kostusiak, O. Kurylo, H. Kutnia, O. Petryk, K. Ponomarenko, O. Pchelintseva, N. Szczerbij, and more.

The term "hybrid verb-adjective forms" is usually associated with V. Vinogradov's grammatical concept of adjectives that combine features of completely opposite parts of speech – verbal and noun (Vinogradov, 2001).

The theoretical basis of the terminological theory of representation of process concepts is O. Peshkovsky's concept of mixed parts of speech, which consists in the formation of morphological structures that combine categories characteristic of different classes of words, such as mood, tense, reflexivity, case, number, and gender.

Mixed parts of speech are united, on the one hand, not only by their common origin and procedural meaning, but, on the other hand, by the category of the Slavic type, which primarily belongs to the verb, which creates preconditions for the inclusion of hybrid forms in the system of verbal functioning (Peshkovsky, 1938; Kostusiak, 2018). At the same time, mixed parts of speech are not characterized by the categories of person and mode of action, which opposes them to the personal forms, respectively, they are inflectional categories that have the ability to independently express the predicate, i.e. to describe something, some opinion or one's view on what is being discussed (Szober, 1969, p. 139).

However, it didn't result in their unified explanation or part-of-speech status, which necessitates a comprehensive study of the intercategorical relations of verbal nouns in Slavic languages, in particular against the background of the hybridity of this category as it combines features of diametrically opposite parts of speech.

**Research objective, methodology**

*The objective and goals* of the study consist in defining the concept of a verbal noun in Slavic linguistics, characterizing and comparing the structural and semantic features of verbal nouns in Slavic languages, and determining their verbal or nominal nature.

*Methods*. The specificity of the object and the tasks set have led to the complex use of methods used in modern linguistics and involving the interpretation of linguistic phenomena from a systemic linguistic perspective. In analyzing the theoretical foundations of the study, linguistic observation, description and the method of philological analysis were used. The comparative method made it possible to analyze verbal nouns as hybrid forms of the verb in Slavic languages, in which they have different means of expression. In order to classify different types of linguistic facts for the expression of word-formation, morphological,

semantic and syntactic features of verbal nouns in the system of Slavic languages, the typological method was used. The transformation analysis has identified semantic and syntactic similarities and differences between linguistic objects by establishing common and distinctive features as a result of their transformations. The component approach was used to study the semantic structure of the word, in particular, analytical forms. Quantitative analysis was conducted to determine the degree of typological productivity of structural and semantic units of analysis. The empirical method was useful in updating, correcting and supplementing certain linguistic provisions, in particular, in distinguishing the concept of hybrid verb forms.

The illustrative material was taken from literary texts using the method of continuous sampling from the national corpora of the Ukrainian (KUM) and Polish (NKJP) languages, as well as from the Internet to analyze modern colloquial variants.

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the information obtained in a clear way, specifying the main findings from the interpretation of the data in light of the theoretical references or the literature review. This section seeks to fulfill the objective of the investigation/ Presenta la información obtenida de manera clara, especificando los hallazgos principales a partir de la interpretación de los datos a la luz de los referentes teóricos o la revisión de literatura. Este apartado busca dar cumplimiento al objetivo de la investigación. / Apresenta la información obtenida de manera clara, especificando los hallazgos principales a partir da interpretación de los datos à la luz de los referencias teóricos ou la revisión de literatura. Este apartado busca dar cumprimento ao objetivo de la investigación.

## Analysis and discussion

Verbal nouns are notable for their complex nature, as they are considered a mixed, hybrid phenomenon due to the debatable part-of-speech status and intercategorical nature.

In Slavic linguistics, there is no clear terminology for verbal nouns. Ukrainian linguists traditionally call these forms *віддієслівні іменники* (Vykhovanets & Horodenska, 2004; Vakulenko, 2010; Kutnia, 2018; Kostusiak, 2018; Petryk, 2008; Piletskyi, 2002). O. Kurylo used the term *речівник* (Kurylo, 2008, p. 77).

The following terms are used in Polish: *odsłownik*, referring to these forms as verbal (Saloni, 2007), *rzeczownik odsłowny*, including these words in the verb paradigm (Mędak, 2004), *forma rzeczownikowa czasownika*; W. Doroszewski classifies the following forms as nouns (WSJP). Other Slavic languages use the following terms: ces. *deverbální substantivum*, slv. *izglagolski samostalnik*, bel. *аддзеяслоўныя назоўнікі*, bul. *отглаголни съществителни*) or "action noun" (lat. *nomina actionis*, rus. *имя действия*, slk. *dejové mená*).

Up to the end of the 20th century, the classical Czech linguistics predominantly included the action nouns ending with *-ni / -ti* into the verb paradigm (Tomíček, 1858; Gebaue, 1904, Bartoš, 1901, Čenský, 1888; Trávníček, 1951; Havránek & Jedlička, 1981) as an impersonal form of the verb alongside infinitives, participles, and adjectives. Since the mid-twentieth century, this concept has been criticized (Dokulil, 1982; Jelínek, 1968; Křížková, 1959; Kopečný, 1958), because verbal nouns represent a word-formation category close to inflection due to their virtually unlimited productivity, which makes a verbal noun a full-fledged noun (Dokulil, 1982, p. 16), which has become a conventional leading concept in Czech linguistics in the twenty-first century. Among verb forms, they occupy the most peripheral position.

Alongside this, in West Slavic linguistics, we find the narrower term "verbal noun" to denote only nominalized verbs ending with *\*-њje/-тьje* as a special subclass of nomina actionis, in particular: ces.

*podstatné jméno slovesné / verbální substantivum*, slk. *slovesné podstatné meno or dejové mená / verbálne substantívum*, sorb. *werbalny substantiw / słowjesny wěcownik* (in grammar books that are written in German – das Verbalsubstantiv, which denotes actional verb-derived constituents with the - *ni, - ti* formant, which has inflectional features of a noun and expresses the categories of gender, number, and case, but is also regularly derived from verb stems, inheriting the categories of aspect and reflexivity (*dotýkání se - dotknutí se, rozcházení se - rozejiti se*) (Just, 1914; Skopliev, 2018, p. 259).

J. Puzynina, the author of a comprehensive monograph on verbal nouns, follows other West Slavic linguists (Buzássyová, 1982; Furdík, 1967; Křížková, 1959; Karlík, 2004) and distinguishes two types of verbal nouns: 1) categorical substantivum verbale (*-anie, -enie, -cie, -ęcie*), which are close to the verb in terms of formal and semantic characteristics; 2) non-categorical substantivum deverbale, which are formed using various suffixes and are close to the noun (Puzynina, 1969, pp. 28-33).

In South Slavic languages, two types are also distinguished, particularly in Serbian, glagolske imenice and deverbative imenice, but regular forms are created only from verbs of the perfective aspect. Accordingly, the glagolske imenice type is interpreted as verbal form, and the deverbative imenice type covers non-categorical nouns formed from imperfective verbs that lose their semantic connection with the verb and acquire thing-denoting meanings (Klajn, 1998; Marič, 2010; Gradinarova, 1999).

In East Slavic languages, there is no division into categorical and non-categorical types: all such forms are considered as verbal nouns, which is the result of a word-formation approach to the consideration of this linguistic phenomenon, although the scope of verbal semantics in the lexemes varies (Pchelintseva, 2016). I. Vykhovanets and K. Horodenska consider the word-forming noun category of grammatical denotation of a thing within the noun, which is based on the transformation of nominalization. In this category, the researchers include predicative nouns (mostly verbal and adjectival), which nullify the original verbal categories and acquire grammatical categories of a noun (Vykhovanets & Horodenska, 2004, pp. 101-102).

For instance, following Z. Saloni and J. Puzynina, A. Skopliev separately distinguishes Czech categorical verbal formations ending with *-ni / -ti*, which are formally and semantically similar to the verb, and calls them verbal nouns (Skopliev, 2018).

J. Popel grants the verbal noun the status of a separate part of speech of a "hybrid type" (Popela, 1962, p. 136). We support the opinion of O. Peshkovskyi and J. Popel (Popela 1962) and identify hybrid verb forms that combine categories that are typical for different classes of words, such as mood, tense, reflexivity, case, and number (Szczerbij, 2022). Among them, we distinguish a verbal noun that is positioned in the ranges of both a noun and a verb.

Regarding a verb and a verbal noun, there is a long process of identifying similarities and differences in formal grammar, particularly in terms of semantics.

There are two types of nouns that are formed in terms of meaning (Doroszewski, 1963, p. 284): 1) predicative nouns like *słuchanie, mycie* and 2) subjectival nouns like *podanie* 'written request, document, statement', *nakrycie* 'table setting', *okrycie* 'coat', *zamknięcie* 'lock, padlock'. Similar opinions are expressed by Ukrainian linguists regarding subjectival nouns. Indeed, I. Vykhovanets and K. Horodenska argue that the acquisition of syntactic and morphological features of a new part of speech for the original word is sometimes followed by a semantic shift – partial or complete semantic convergence with another part of speech to which the word has syntactically and morphologically shifted. Thus, the verbal morphologized nominalization can have several degrees of transposition: syntactic, morphological, and semantic – which is why there is a large number of types of verbal nouns (denoting action, process, or state). The nouns formed as a result of verbal morphological nominalization have a common lexical semantics with the original

verbs, but different part-of-speech grammatical categories and formal-syntactic and semantic-syntactic functions. (Vykhovanets & Horodenska, 2004, pp. 115-116). M. Dokulil also distinguishes verbal nouns resulted from transposition as a special type of derivation, which consists in the formation of a linguistic unit that is identical in lexical content to the original one, but with grammatical features of another part of speech (Dokulil, 1982, pp. 259-260).

The verbal nature of such formations is confirmed by various features, in particular:

1) **Regular and systemic formation.** They are formed using a limited set of suffixes with a clear distribution that is determined by the structural characteristics of the original.

According to O. Pchelintseva's calculations, the Polish verbal noun can be formed from (almost) every verb and retains the categories of case and reflexivity; the Ukrainian noun can be formed from every fourth verb and retains most of the case indicators; the Russian noun is formed only from every sixth verb and loses case forms and reflexivity, cf: rus.: *повторение*; ukr.: *повторення і повторювання*; pol.: *powtorzenie i powtorzenie się / powtarzanie / powtarzanie się* (Pchelintseva, 2019, p. 34).

In Ukrainian, the following word-forming suffixes are used to form verbal nouns: *-нн(я)* (other options: -*енн(я), -інн(я), -тт(я);* they do not belong to verb forms but are distinguished as a special type of noun. They express only neuter gender and have unified case inflections.

Notably, in Polish, categorical verbal nouns (substantivum verbale) are formed from passive participles ending with *-any, -eny, -ty, -ęty* using the formants *-anie, -enie, -cie, -ęcie*. They are characterized by process-denoting meaning and the ability to retain suffixes and prefixes of the original verb, which act as formal indicators of belonging to a certain aspect. Their productivity does not stop, as evidenced by the formation of completely new verbal nouns from borrowings to denote modern information processes, such as: *esemesowanie, googlanie, facebookowanie, istalowanie, nagrywanie, pobieranie, blogowanie, instagramowanie, polubienie*. In Polish, due to the development of computer technology, the number of corresponding terms and derivatives with this meaning has increased in recent years, e.g.: *W dziedzinie produktów elektronicznych dominowało* **oprogramowanie** *oraz dzwonki do telefonów, znacznie wyprzedzając m.in. pliki muzyczne oraz ebooki. Natomiast wśród usług najczęściej znaleźć można było hosting,* **projektowanie i pozycjonowanie** *stron, porady i wywoływanie zdjęć* (Dziennik Internautów). About 200 verbs are exceptions to the formation of verbal nouns with *-nie, -cie* in Polish (Pchelintseva, 2016, p. 160), but in colloquial speech and in the Corpora, forms of these verbs are actively used; however, they're not recorded in dictionaries.

In Czech, verbal nouns are not formed from modal verbs, linking verbs, marked repetitive verbs such as *chodivát* (to go often, more than once), as well as from verbs with the meaning "to belong to something", as well as from verbs to say, to take place, to happen, and more (Skopliev, 2018, p. 19).

According to linguists, a significant number of verbal nouns came to Eastern Slavic languages from Old Bulgarian, where the *-ние* model was highly productive, e.g.: *съзьдание, отъвращение, съпасение, освяштение, искоушение* (Pychkhadze, 2011). In the nineteenth century, during the Bulgarian Revival and the formation of the literary Bulgarian language, a reverse process occurred: not only words but also entire word-formation models were borrowed from Russian into Bulgarian, including the very Bulgarian model of *-ние*, which had Old Bulgarian origin. As a result of this process of model return, many words ending with *-ние* appeared in the Bulgarian language, which initially functioned in parallel with the vernacular Bulgarian forms ending with -не (*съставление – съставяне*). These two types of verbal nouns even have the same plural form (*фіналния*), e.g.: *събрание – събрания, събиране – събирания*, although in colloquial speech, verbal nouns ending with *-не* can form the plural with the suffix *-та* (after -не-): *ядене – яденета* 'eating', 'meals'. Over time, many of these forms diverged in their meanings: in

The debate on the nature of verbal nouns in Slavic languages: nominal or verbal? - Eduweb, 2024, abril-junio, v.18, n.2. / 238-250

**243**

modern Bulgarian, nouns ending with *-ние* mostly acquired the meaning of a generalized result or a whole situation, or developed subject meanings, but nouns ending with *-не* denote a processual action and are semantically close to the verb (Andrejčin, 1978; Gradinarova, 1999; Pchelintseva & Volodarska, 2021).

In general, Bulgarian linguists agree that nouns ending with *-не* have a distinct verbal nature (Stoyanov, 1964, p. 408; Andrejčin, 1978, p. 364; Pъrvev, 1993, pp. 384-385). In contrast, nouns ending with *-ние* are irregular and semantically unpredictable.

The regularity of usage and systematic formation of verbal nouns depends on the nominal or verbal nature of the language. The Swedish linguist A. Lombard argued that nominal nature has been ingrained in the European way of thinking since the end of the nineteenth century, as a result of which we no longer only speak but also think with the help of noun phrases (Lombard, 1930).

The usage of noun phrases makes the text more precise, in particular, it shows a tendency to linguistic economy by condensing sentences, because noun phrases are shorter than their synonymous subordinate verb phrases, and a concise text is easier to read, understand, and memorize (Wierzbicka, 1962, p. 195; Bajerowa, 1980, p. 59).

Noun phrases have become widespread in Ukrainian under the influence of Russian, in which it has a deep historical tradition. The main syntactic difference between Ukrainian and Russian is the verbal nature of Ukrainian and the nominal nature of Russian (Nepyivoda, 1997). Nominal nature is also typical for other Slavic languages, including Polish, in which the share of noun phrases is constantly growing (Wierzbicka, 1962). This feature is also emphasized by Diana Wieczorek, who argues that Poles perceive the world in a more 'object-centered' way, while Ukrainians have an organic ability to see life in dynamics, movement, and convey it with a verb, the so-called 'verbalization' (Wieczorek, 1994, pp. 58-59).

Czech scientific writing is also typically object-centered, but to a lesser extent (Viková, 1976), and an even lower degree is typical for Slovak verbal nouns, which, like Ukrainian, were formed based on the vernacular (Selihei, 2014, p. 38).

2) **Retained aspectual correlation.** Verbal nouns inherit the grammatical category of aspect, which conveys the nature of the process, namely: integral / non-integral, effective / ineffective, starting / completed, repetitive / singular, limited / unlimited, continuous / instantaneous, and more (Ginzburg, 2012; Horpynych, 2004). Verbal nouns are characterized by their inability to be a formative unit for new words (which brings them closer to the inflected form).

Regarding modern Ukrainian, linguists have different opinions. For instance, some believe that the category of aspect in subjectival nouns is largely neutralized and deprived of the status of a grammatical category (Ponomarenko, 2008, p. 79). Others point out that the research has shown that the semantic structure of subjectival nouns resulting from the process of transposition retains not only the lexical meaning of the base verb, but also the grammatical aspect along with the acquisition of new categorical meanings (Yarmolenko, 2001, p. 83). Still others note that as a result of the morphological transition of a verb into a noun, the latter retains the category of aspect in a slightly modified form (Vykhovanets & Horodenska, 2004, p. 116). All of this complicates the practical usage of verbal nouns in professional texts, leading to the fact that authors choose one of the two related nouns ending with *-ння, -ття,* regardless of which verb (imperfect or perfective) it is formed from, most often the shorter one, and use it to denote "both completed and unfinished actions," while "the second one becomes superfluous, because it duplicates the semantics of the first one" (Piletskyi, 2002, p. 217), and is gradually falling out of usage (Ginzburg, 2011, p. 31).

The verbal nouns ending with -ння, -ття usually describe an action in its continuity, where verbal nouns correspond to imperfect continuous verbs; they can also denote the name of a short action, the name of an action as a result of a process, and the name of a thing, a place, where they correspond to perfective verbs or imperfective continuous verbs (Kurylo, 2008, p. 77).

In Polish, verbal nouns are mostly formed from both aspectual verb pairs, for example: *robienie – zrobienie, mycie – umycie, picie – wypicie, bicie – podbicie, pisanie – napisanie, malowanie – wymalowanie, otwieranie – otwarcie*.

In Russian, verbal nouns do not retain verbal aspect opposition in a systemic fashion: *изучать* 'to be learning' (imperf.) → *изучение* 'learning' ← *изучить* 'to have learnt' (perf.); they are formed only from every 6th verb, have an unpredictable semantic result, and cases *like чтение – прочтение* 'reading' make up no more than 10% of the entire corpus of deverbatives; such pairs usually contain only reflexes of the verbal category of aspect (Pchelintseva & Volodarska, 2021, p. 20; Peshkovsky, 1938). The reason for this is the historical development of the category of aspect in Russian, the loss of a range of verbal nouns that correlated with the perfective, certain restrictions on the formation of such forms from verbs with quantitative and temporal limits, as well as restrictions on nominalization and the disappearance of a vivid aspectual differentiation of derived verbal nouns. Aspectual indicators have been practically lost in Russian, since the surviving pairs of verbal nouns show a small degree of aspectual semantics. Accordingly, in the spoken language, those verbal nouns that do not show any kind of aspectual characteristics are used more frequently.

In Czech, verbal nouns with the suffixes -*nie (-ní) / -tie (-cie), -ti* (honění 'hunting') are regularly formed from both aspectual forms of the verb and consistently retain formal indicators and aspectual semantics, having a high degree of semantic predictability (Karlík, 2004). Aspectual correlation also remains consistent in Polish (Puzynina, 1969; Jędrzejko, 1993). Therefore, the East, South, and West Slavic languages at the systemic level demonstrate different degrees of preservation of verbal aspectuality.

In Bulgarian, verbal nouns, or as they are also called Bulgarian gerunds, are regularly formed only from imperfective verbs using -*nje (-ne)* (Šipka, 2000). From perfective verbs, such nouns are formed irregularly, and the grammatical and lexical semantics of such formations are rather unpredictable (Pchelintseva & Volodarska, 2021).

3) **Formation of constructions with an agent in the instrumental case, which is typical for the passive voice.** Verbal nouns can be paraphrases of sentences with predicates in both the active and passive voice. However, it is worth noting that a passive voice sentence is a result of a transformation of an active voice sentence without changing its meaning. This opinion is shared by the supporters of transformational-generative grammar, in particular J. Kuryłowicz (Kuryłowicz, 1977).

Verbal nouns in the diachronic aspect are transformations of the passive voice, as evidenced not only by the morphological structure of the verbal action noun, the base for which is a passive participle, but also by the similar form of the agent in both constructions, e.g.: *Słoiki, starannie myte przez aseptyczną ciotkę Mirosławę, ujawniały swe sekrety* (Jacek Dehnel); *Byłaś zbyt miła dla niego - powiedziałem, wycierając* **myte przez** *Renię naczynia* (Mariusz Ziomecki) – passive voice constructions used with a noun in the accusative case and a preposition przez. *Do snujących się dźwięków dołączył brzęk talerzy i sztućców, niesionych do* **mycia przez** *Lidkę* (Robert Urbański; Jacek Kondracki) – construction with a verbal noun of action with an agent in the accusative case and a preposition *przez*.

However, in Ukrainian, a construction with a verbal noun of action is used with an agent in the instrumental case, which is typical for passive constructions or participles, respectively: *Мокрі, липкі від поту люди зринали і не могли зринути з сонного очманіння, борсалися в тяжкій атмосфері, як на дні моря,*

The debate on the nature of verbal nouns in Slavic languages: nominal or verbal? - Eduweb, 2024, abril-junio, v.18, n.2. / 238-250

**245**

*наснаженій тухлим смородом, надміром вуглекисню, терпкими випарами давно не **митого милом** тіла…* (Sofiia Andrukhovych) – participial phrase. *Після **миття шампунем** машина набуде свого натурального кольору, тобто білого* (Viktor Savchenko) – construction with verbal nouns.

4) **Retained reflexive formants.** Among the Slavic languages, modern Polish is distinguished by the preservation of the reflexive formant się with verbal nouns of the categorical type. In the East and South Slavic languages, such forms are impossible. In Czech and Slovak, this tendency is also preserved, but to a lesser extent, e.g: slk. *rozbiehať sa* (to run off) – *rozbehnúť sa* (to have run off) → *rozbiehanie sa* – *rozbehnutie sa* (a run-off); ces. *dočasně zakrývat – zakrýt* (to temporarily close – to close) → *dočasné zakrývání – zakrytí* (temporary closure). As for related East Slavic forms, this interpretation is hardly applicable or even impossible, cf: ukr. *закривання – закриття* (closing – closure), but *витирання* (wiping) – ?; rus. *разбегание (\*ся)* (run-off, to run off) – ? A similar situation is observed in the South Slavic languages (Skopliev, 2018, pp. 259-260). According to F. Trávníček, J. Gebauer, B. Havránek, reflexivity in Czech verbal nouns is peripheral and optional, and dictionaries may not record reflexive forms of verbal nouns at all, as they are intended for practical usage (Gebauer, 1904, p. 402; Havránek & Jedlička, 1981, p. 268), e.g.: *A pak přišlo učení se fotografie — malířství — umění* (Jaroslav Němec). The reflexive clitic is retained with verbal nouns where its absence may cause ambiguity or confusion (Havránek & Jedlička, 1981, p. 268; Trávníček, 1951, pp. 1405-1406). Slovak occupies an intermediate position in terms of voice-based differentiation, in particular, the reflexive voice (Atsarkyna, 1993, pp. 141-146; Baláž, 1954, pp. 16-17).

H. Safarewiczowa also notes (Safarewiczowa, 1954, p. 332), that in Polish and Czech, unlike in Ukrainian and Russian, the reflexive pronoun is not merged with the verb, but functions freely in the sentence, although it is characterized by the phenomenon of desemantization as a pronoun: *Zmuszają do **obejrzenia się**, nawet do podążenia się za kobietą, które ich* używa (Janusz Leon Wiśniewski).

5) **Denoting uncountable actions, which indicates the impossibility of using the plural form.**
The category of number of verbal nouns is closely related to the category of aspect. One of the features of verbal nouns is the lack of plurality and the impossibility of using them with cardinal numerals, since the singular form accordingly denotes 'uncountable' actions, abstractness, and indefiniteness.

The usage of the plural form leads to nominalization of the lexical meaning, specification and, accordingly, loss of the actional semantics. For instance, in the following examples *Na razie o masowych odejściach z policji nie ma mowy* (Gazeta Krakowska); *Ani umierający, ani ten, kto mu towarzyszy, nawet jeśli asystował przy stu odejściach* (Krystyna Kofta) the verbal noun highlighted in bold denotes individual acts of action, understood as specific, calculable events. In the second sentence, the seme of nominality is reinforced by the usage of a cardinal numeral with it. *A jakież człowiek może mieć w państwowym sklepie życzenia, na państwowej posadzie i w ogóle, żeby tak powiedzieć, gdy również i życzenia są upaństwowione* (Wiesław Myśliwski) – the highlighted verbal noun has a nominal meaning.

Accordingly, we distinguish two types of verbal nouns: predicative nouns, which are used only in the singular and follow the aspectual semantics, and subjectival nouns, which, accordingly, lose their actionality and can be used in the plural; they are divided into several semantic subtypes: transformable; usable in plural; terms; mode of action; state; situations-actions, etc. In addition, several functions of the plural of verbal nouns can be distinguished, which is the subject of further research.

6) **Category of transitivity/intransitivity.** Verbal nouns are characterized by the verbal category of transitivity, which is expressed by the functional similarity of a noun in the accusative case by a transitive verb and a noun in the genitive case by verbal nouns motivated by transitive verbs: *malować obraz – malowanie obrazu, obserwować ptaki – obserwowanie ptaków.*

When a transitive verb is replaced by a corresponding verbal noun, the genitive case with the meaning of object by action nouns motivated by the transitive verb is a regular transformation of the accusative case with the meaning of direct object.

Some Polish verbs require only a verbal noun as an object, for example: *przerywać (badania), kontynuować (protest), rozpocząć (strajk), zmusić (do ustępstw), umożliwić (obserwację), odmówić (pójścia), zaplanować (kupno)*. Their Ukrainian equivalents are often paired with the infinitive: *Oni kontynuowali protest – Вони продовжували протестувати; Konieczność zmusza nas do ustępstw – Необхідність змушує нас поступитися; On zaplanował kupno nowego samochodu – Він запланував купити новий автомобіль.*

A number of Polish verbs can be used with an object in both infinitive and verbal noun forms, e.g.: *Kończyć tłumaczyć opowiadanie* або *Kończyć tłumaczenie opowiadania; Wolę chodzić piechotą* або *Wolę chodzenie piechotą; Pragniemy wyzwolić się z tego* або *Pragniemy wyzwolenia się z tego; Zdecydowałam się urządzić wycieczkę* або *Zdecydowałam się na urządzenie wycieczki; Pozwoliła zwiedzić okolice* або *Pozwoliła na zwiedzenie okolic.*

Polish verbal nouns in the role of modifier may require a verbal noun, but not an infinitive, as in Ukrainian, cf: *próba zrobienia (czegoś) – спроба зробити (щось); zezwolenie na wykorzystanie (czegoś) – дозвіл використати щось; przeszkadzanie w robieniu (czegoś) – перешкоджання робити щось; propozycja wygłoszenia (czegoś) – пропозиція виголосити (щось); możliwość zbadania (czegoś) – можливість дослідити (щось); szansa przetrwania – шанс витримати (вистояти, протриматися, вижити)* (Kravchuk, 2015, pp. 76-77).

7) **In verbal nouns, a number of verbal categories are nullified, in particular the categories of tense, mood, and person, since verbal nouns themselves do not have morphological means to convey information about the time of the action, i.e. they do not possess the semantics of interval.** This information is clear from the context and is expressed with the help of various elements. Constructions with verbal nouns most often indicate relative tenses. The temporal interpretation of verbal nouns depends on the semantics of the verbs from which these verbal nouns are derived. For instance, we distinguish the following tense values: present – imperfective verbal nouns; absolute present / past – imperfective verbal nouns; preceding or preceding / past – imperfective verbal nouns; sequence – imperfective and perfective verbal nouns. In the domain of expressing the category of tense, we observe neutralization, which unites relative and absolute tenses in verbal nouns as lexical units.

The formation of verbal nouns is largely regulated by the syntactic position, in particular by moving the "verb to the topic position in the information structure and formally to the syntactic position of the subject, whereby the formative verbs can have different person-tense and person-mood forms, which does not imply the presence of person-tense or person-mood features in derivatives. The tense, mood and person features are not represented at all in the formal structure of nouns with object-centered dynamic meaning.

**Conclusions**

Verbal nouns are complex hybrid formations that border on two parts of speech and combine categories characteristic of different word classes. They are formed with the help of a limited set of suffixes with a clear distribution. In Polish, they are characterized by a more systemic and regular formation, unlike in Ukrainian. The verbal nature of such formations is evidenced by the category of valence and transitivity / intransitivity inherited from the base, which at the level of syntagmatics affects their combinability and becomes a differentiating feature for distinguishing the components of the semantic paradigm of a polysemous verbal noun. The category of voice, in particular, reflexivity, is a feature of Polish that manifests

The debate on the nature of verbal nouns in Slavic languages: nominal or verbal? - Eduweb, 2024, abril-junio, v.18, n.2. / 238-250

**247**

itself in the preservation of the reflexive formant with verbal nouns and the expression of various meanings. The categories of gender and number depend on the semantic meaning of verbal nouns and determine their verbal or nominal nature.

## Bibliographic References

Andrejčin, L. (1978). *Basic Bulgar grammar*. Sofia: Science and Art. (In Bulgaria)

Atsarkyna, T. A. (1993). Ways of expressing return meanings in verbal nouns in West Slavic languages. *Studies on the verb in Slavic languages: Typology and confrontation.* Ed. by A. Bartoszewicz and J. Pietruchina. (pp. 141-146). Warsaw. (in Polish)

Bajerowa, I. (1980). *The influence of technology on the evolution of the Polish language*. National Institute of Ossoliński family. https://www.konin-pbp.sowa.pl/index.php?KatID=0&typ=record&001=KON+00210076727

Baláž, G. (1954). Abstract deverbs in Russian, Slovak and Czech. *Soviet linguistics*, *4*(1), 12-21. (in Czech).

Bartoš, F. (1901)*. New handbook of correct Czech*. Telči: By Emil Šolec, bookseller. https://acortar.link/vayb4Y

Buzássyová, K. (1982). Names of events and names of properties in the transpositional and nominative function. *Linguistic journal*, *33*(1), 21-35. https://www.juls.savba.sk/ediela/jc/1982/1/JC_1982_1_LQ.pdf

Čenský, F. (1888). *Brief practical grammar of the Bohemian language for Germans: with special consideration of military terminology in the examples used*. *3, verbesserte Auflage*. Prag: Verlag von Kober. (in Czech).

Dokulil, M. (1982). On the issue of word-species conversions and transitions, especially transposition. *Word and Ceremony*, *43*(4), 257-271. (in Czech)

Doroszewski, W. (1963). *Basics of Polish grammar*. (1th ed.). Warsaw: State Scientific Publishing House. (in Polish)

Furdík, J. (1967). On vide and binding in verbal nouns. *Slovak language, 32*(2), 65-74. (in Slovak)

Gebauer, J. (1904). Handbook of the Czech language for teachers and private study. (2nd ed.). Prague. *Czech Graphic Society "Unie".* (in Czech)

Gradinarova, A. (1999). *Semantics of Russian and Bulgarian Deverbal Nouns*. Sofia: Eurasia Academic Publishers, 142 p. (in Bulgarian).

Havránek, B., & Jedlička, A. (1981). *Czech lexicon. (4th ed.).* Prague. (in Czech)

Ginzburg, M. (2011). The species opposition of verb nouns to the designation of objective processes in Slavic languages. *Ukrainian language*, *2*, 30-43. http://tc.terminology.lp.edu.ua/TK_Work/hinzburg_2011_Ukrainska_mova_N2_vydove_protystavl enn'a_.pdf

Ginzburg, M. (2012). Linguistic basis of the theory of presentation of process concepts in the Ukrainian language. *Ukrainian Scientific Terminology*, *4*, 29-39. http://tc.terminology.lp.edu.ua/TK_Work/hinzburh_2012_UNT_N4_proces_pon'ann'a_.pdf

Horpynych, V. (2004). *Monograph of the Ukrainian language*. Kyiv: Academy. ISBN: 966-580-179-1

Jędrzejko, E. (1993). *Nominalizations in the system and texts of the modern Polish language*. Katowice: University of Szląsk. (in Polish)

Jelínek, M. (1968). Functions and development of syntactic condensers in Slavic languages. *Questions of Slavic syntax. II, Proceedings of the symposium "Structural types of Slavic sentences and their development".* Bauer, Ja. (Ed.). (1st ed.). (pp. 389-395). Brno: J. E. Purkyně University. (in Slovak)

Just, M. (1914). About word-making in Serbšćinje. *Časopis Maćica Serbskeje, 67*(1), 59-79. (In Poland)

Espersen, O. (1958). *Philosophy of grammar*. Publishing house foreign literature. (in English)

Karlík, P. (2004). Microsyntax of Czech deverbal names. *Proceedings of the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Brno, 53* (A52), 71-81. (in Czech)

Klajn, I. (1998). Grammatical and lexicographical status of glagolitic imenica from a non-smoking glagol. *Scientific meeting of Slavists in the Days of the Wolf, 27*(2), 149-158. (in Czech)

Kopečný, F. (1958). *Basics of Czech composition.* Praha: State Pedagogical Publishing House. https://acortar.link/AE2Mj2

Kostusiak, N. (2018). Categorical features of verbal nouns. *Linguistic studies: collection of scientific papers, 35*, 39-47. https://doi.org/10.31558/1815-3070.2018.35.3

Kravchuk, A. M. (2015). *Polish: grammar with exercises. Textbook for higher educational institutions*. Kyiv. ISBN: 9786175981108

Křížková, H. (1959). On the problem of verbal nouns in Russian in comparison with English. *Russian language, 9*(5), 195-203. (in Czech)

Kurylo, O. (2008). *Attention to modern literary language*. (2nd ed.). Kyiv: Solomiya Pavlichkos publishing house "Osnovi". ISBN: 966-500-134-5

Kuryłowicz, J. (1977). *Problems of Indo-Europaean linguistics. Wrocław.* (in French)

Kutnia, H. V. (2018). Verbal nouns as secondary predicates of process: structural-semantical, word-forming and grammatical features. *Visnyk of the Lviv University. Series Philology, 68,* 77-87. https://doi.org/10.30970/vpl.2018.68.8909

Lombard, A. (1930). *Nominal constructions in French modem*. Uppsala. https://acortar.link/BVVsKx

Marič, B. (2010). *Syntactic derivation in the modern Russian language in comparison with Serbian.* Unpublished Pfd dissertation. University of Belgrade. (in Serbian)

Mędak, S. (2004). *Dictionary of conjugation forms of Polish verbs.* Kraków. (in Polish)

Nepyivoda, N. F. (1997). *The language of scientific and technical literature*. Kyiv: Funktsion. -stylist, aspect. International Finance Agency LLC.

Piletskyi, V. (2002). Names of objectified actions in scientific and technical terminology. *Bulletin of the Lviv Polytechnic National University. Series "Problems of Ukrainian Terminology", 453*, 215-221. https://acortar.link/yCrnm7

Petryk, O. (2008). Verbal nouns of objective action: structural and morphological aspect. *Literature and culture of Polissya, 43*, 144-151. http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/Ltkp_2008_43_22

Peshkovsky, A. M. (1938). *Russian syntax in scientific coverage: textbook*. 6th ed. Moscow: Uchpedgiz. (in Russian)

Ponomarenko, K. (2008). Deverbative in the semantic-syntactic structure of the sentence. *Donetsk Bulletin of the Scientific Society named after T. Shevchenko, 22*, 73-87. https://acortar.link/sdTU3z

Pchelintseva, O. (2016). *From the verb to the name: aspectuality in Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish deistviia names*. Sankt-Peterburh. ISBN: 5020396125, 9785020396128

Pchelintseva, O. (2019). Functional and grammatical peculiarities of Ukrainian verbal nouns with the meaning of action comparing to other Slavic languages. *Terminological Bulletin, 5*, 33-40. https://doi.org/10.37919/2221-8807-2019-5-4

Pchelintseva O., & Volodarska, T. (2021). Bulgarian verbal action noun against the background of other Slavic languages. *LANGUAGE: Codification·Competence·Communication, 2*(5), 18-29. https://er.chdtu.edu.ua/bitstream/ChSTU/4013/1/18-29_Pchelintseva_Volodarska.pdf

Pychkhadze, A. A. (2011). *Translation activity in pre-Mongol Rus: Linguistic aspect.* Moscow: Manuscript monuments of Ancient Rus. https://cir.nii.ac.jp/crid/1130282272751755392

Popela, J. (1962). To word types in Czech. *Slavica Pragensia, IV,* 129-137. (in Czech)

Pъrvev, Kh. (1993). *Slightly glocal forms*. A Grammar of the Contemporary Bulgarian Language. (pp. 372–386). Sofyia: Publishing House of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. (in Bulgarian)

Puzynina, J. (1969). *Names of activities in contemporary Polish (word formation, semantics, syntax)*. Warsaw: National Scientific Publishing House, Dissertations of the University of Warsaw. https://acortar.link/mY2vJI

Safarewiczowa, H. (1954). "Reflexive" nouns in Polish. *Polish language, XXXIV*(5), 332-348. (in Polish)

Saloni, Z. (2007). *Polish verbs. Variety*. Dictionary. Warsaw: Common Knowledge. ISBN: 8321413722, 9788321413723

The debate on the nature of verbal nouns in Slavic languages: nominal or verbal? - Eduweb, 2024, abril-junio, v.18, n.2. / 238-250

**249**

Selihei, P. (2014). Substantivity versus verbality: in search of the golden Mean. *Linguistics,* 4, 36-55. https://movoznavstvo.org.ua/component/attachments/download/296.html

Šipka, D. (2000). The status of the verb nominative. *Collection of MS for Philology and Linguistics. Novi Sad*, *XLIII*, 641–645. (in Czech)

Skopliev, A. (2018). Verb or noun? (from the history of the study of the linguistic status of the Czech verbal noun). *Scientific notes of V. I. Vernadsky Taurida National University. Series: "Philology. Journalism"*, *29*(68), 17-25. http://nbuv.gov.ua/UJRN/UZTNU_filol_2018_29%2868%29_4_6

Stoyanov, S. (1964). *Grammar of the Bulgar language. Phonetics and morphology.* Sofia: Science and art. https://books.google.com.ua/books/about/Gramatika_na_bulgarskiya_knizhoven_ezik.html?id=vEKXQwAACAAJ&redir_esc=y

Szczerbij, N. (2022). Hybrid verb forms in Polish and Ukrainian. *Language Guide*, *1*, 147-163. https://doi.org/10.33896/PorJ.2022.1.8

Szober, S. (1969). *Grammar of the Polish language*. Warsaw: State Publishing House Scientific.

Tomíček, J. S. (1858). *Czech Language: the first (theoretical) part.* (5th ed.). Praha: By Bedřich Tempský, 231 p. (in Czech)

Trávníček, F. (1951). *Grammar of written Czech: in 2 parts.* (3th ed.). Praha: Slavonic publishing house, II, 617-1497. https://acortar.link/Zhlula

Vakulenko, M. (2010). Problems of using verbal nouns in the Ukrainian scientific language. *Studia Linguistica: a collection of scientific papers for the 80th anniversary of the professor's birthday Nikitinoi Fionilly*, 4, 353-359. Ed. I. O. Holubovska. K.: VPTs "Kyivskyi universytet". https://acortar.link/l9rV3u

Vykhovanets, I., & Horodenska K. (2004). *Theoretical morphology of the Ukrainian language.* Kyiv: Academic grammar of the Ukrainian language. ISBN: 966-7671-60-7

Viková, V. (1976). Characteristics of vocabulary of professional style from the quantitative point of view. *Word and Ceremony*, *37*(4), 318-328. (in Slovak)

Vinogradov, V. (2001). *Russian language (Grammar teaching about the word): Training manual*. (4th ed.). Moscow: Russian language. https://library.navoiy-uni.uz/files/русский_язык_грамматическое_учение_о_слове_by_виктор_владимирович.pdf

Vusyk, H., Pavlyk, N., Lipych, V., Alieksieieva, L., & Hlazova, S. (2022). The word-forming motivation for lexical innovations in the cognitive space (based on ukrainian- and english-speaking sources). *Amazonia Investiga*, *11*(52), 232-239. https://doi.org/10.34069/AI/2022.52.04.25

Wieczorek D. (1994). *Ukrainian Perfect -no, -to versus the Polish Perfect*. Wrocław. (in Polish)

Wierzbicka, A. (1962). Hypotax and nominal constructions in the development of the Polish language. *Literary Memoir, 53*(1), 195-216. (in Polish)

Yarmolenko, H. A. (2001). The category of the meaning of the species in the semantic structure 'nomina agentis'. *Proceedings. Series: Philological sciencesm*, *31*, 83-85.