

PROCESS-EVENT SEMEME VERBAL NOUNS IN THE FRENCH LANGUAGE

Victoria MASCALIUC,

Ph.D. student

(Alec Russo State University of Bălți, Republic of Moldova)

Abstract: *Verbs of action and their derivatives (verbal nouns) are in strong connection. The class of verbal nouns is characterized by a set of features that determine the link with the verbal ancestor. Although the process of verbal nouns' formation is similar for all the representatives, they are different in character. Some of them form the nucleus and the others form the periphery of the verbal noun class. The core representatives are the verbal nouns that render the meaning of process-event. These verbal nouns are analyzed in the present article.*

Keywords: *verbal noun, nucleus, periphery, process-event sememe, verb of action.*

The term *verbal noun* appeared not very long ago to refer to the nouns that have derived from the verbs of action. This is explained by the fact that these two classes have been studied separately. I believe that the verbal nouns should be analyzed only referred to the primary root it has derived from. This approach allows using some classifications of the verbs of action for the nouns that have been created. Still, the derived verbal nouns are different in character. There are nouns that form the core of the class, as they carry the meaning of action (causality [+/-], direction towards the object [+/-], processuality [+]) and the periphery of the class, as they carry partially the mentioned meanings.

It is worth mentioning a series of verbal nouns that form the nucleus of the verbal noun class and they carry the following sememes:

- process-event;
- daily activity;
- mental activity.

The article focuses on the verbal nouns that carry the process-event sememe. The nouns denote this type of sememe form the nucleus of the class; it means they are characterized by causality [+/-], direction towards the object [+/-] and processuality [+]. The number of these nouns in French is big. They are formed by means of affixation, the most common suffixes are:

- *age* (*sciage, tan(n)isage, pliage, bronzage, brassage* etc.);
- *ment* (*remplacement, commencement* etc.);
- *tion/sion* (*mécanisation, nationalisation, centralisation, condensation, compression*).

Diachronically, the nouns formed by means of adding suffix *-age* are of masculine gender. Some of the *-age* nouns are borrowed (*pulsation, condensation, compression*) and some are formed on the ground of the French language:

- *ajustage* – appeared in 1350 with the meaning ‘action d’ajuster les mesures, les monnaies’, derived from *ajuster* by adding the suffix - *age*, the last formed from *adjustamentum*;
- *vernissage* - appeared in 1849 with the meaning ‘action d’enduire de vernis’, formed from the verb *vernir* by adding the suffix - (*iss*)*age*, the last borrowed from English *varnishing day* [DHEF,TFLi].

In order to determine the semantic structure of the nouns that form the process–event sememe, I have applied the *semic analysis*, proposed by V. Kazakov (1973) and E. Koreakovtseva (1985). The conclusion that I have come to is that most of the analyzed nouns contain the archisememe *action* that proves that these nouns have maintained the verbal meaning:

- *tan(n)isage* – ‘action d’ajouter du tanin’;
- *tissage* - ‘action de tisser’;
- *raffinage* - ‘action de raffiner’;
- *brassage* - ‘action de mélanger des métaux’;
- *bronzage* - ‘action de bronzer’;
- *condensation* - ‘action de rendre plus dense’ [PL].

A number of nouns contained in their semantic structure the archisememes *opération*, *travail*, *rôle*, *mission*, *fonction*, that make the processuality [+] characteristic visible:

- *sciage* - ‘opération qui consiste à scier un matériau’;
- *raffinage* - ‘opération qui consiste à épurer le sucre, le pétrole, l’alcool, etc.’;
- *pliage* - ‘opération par laquelle on plie la feuille pour obtenir le format voulu’;
- *fraisage* - ‘travail des métaux à la fraise’;
- *ajustage* - ‘opération qui consiste à donner à une pièce une certaine dimension’;
- *ensilage* - ‘méthode de conservation des produits agricoles’ [PL].

There are nouns that carry a double meaning (that of action and of result). These characteristics make me conclude that the nouns have carried the genetic verbal meaning and, at the same time, developed one more:

- *chromage* - ‘action de chromer le résultat de cette action’. For example: *Le chromage de la gravure augmente considérablement sa durée* (*La Civilisation écrite*, 1939) [apud TFLi];
- *compression* - ‘action de comprimer, le résultat de cette action’. For example, Ex. *Mes pieds gonflés autant par la compression du cuir que par la chaleur* [TFLi].
- *râtelage* - ‘action de râtelier, le résultat de cette action’. For example: *Les râteliers-faneurs (...) sont susceptibles d’effectuer deux opérations différentes: le fanage et le râtelage* (*La Civilisation écrite*, 1939) [apud TFLi].

The diachronical analysis of the nouns that render the meaning of chemical, physical or any other processes proves that these nouns passed

through expansion and restriction of meaning, but they carried throughout centuries the primary meaning of action:

– *expansion of meaning*: *mécanisation* - appeared in 1870 with the meaning 'le fait de rendre semblable à une machine'; in 1949 it has the meaning 'emploi généralisé de la machine comme substitut', formed from the verb *mécaniser* by adding the suffix *-tion*; *dorage* - appeared with the meaning 'action de recouvrir d'or (un bijou, un objet, une surface)' or 'the result of this action'; in 1752 it has the meaning 'action de dorer une pâtisserie', formed from the verb *dorer* by adding the suffix *-age*; *matage* - appeared with the meaning 'action de refouler une matière assez malléable'; in 1873 and 1876 it has the meaning 'action de passer de la colle de parchemin sur une dorure', formed from the verb *matir* by adding the suffix *-age* [DHEF, TFLi].

– *restriction of meaning*: *sciage* - appeared with the meanings 'action de scier', 'travail de celui qui scie' in 1294 (*soiage*); in 1368 it has the meaning 'bois qui provient d'une pièce de bois refendue dans sa longueur'; in 1922 it has the meaning 'action de débarrasser le diamant des gangues qui l'enveloppent', formed from the verb *scierà* by adding the suffix *-age*; *gerbage* - appeared with the meaning 'action d'enlever les gerbes d'un champ'; in 1845 and 1890 it has the meaning 'bois qui provient d'une pièce de bois refendue dans sa longueur'; in 1922 it has the meaning 'action de mettre les céréales en gerbes', formed from the verb *gerber* by adding the suffix *-age*; *parcage* - appeared with the meaning 'endroit clos, enceinte'; in XIV and XV centuries it has the meaning 'parc'; in 1611 it has the meaning 'action de faire séjourner des moutons dans un parc'; in 1845 it has the meaning 'action de placer des coquillages dans un parc pour les engraisser rapidement'; in 1949 it has the meaning 'action de laisser en stationnement un véhicule automobile', formed from the verb *parquer* by adding the suffix *-age* [DHEF, TFLi].

The verbal nouns' period of development is from the XIIIth century till the XIXth century. The development of these nouns is as follows:

- the nouns that appeared in the XIIIth and the XIVth centuries are less numerous, their appearance is linked to the society's shift from the an agricultural to an industrialized one: *pavage*, *brassage* etc.: *pavage* - appeared in 1331 with the concrete meaning 'péage pour l'entretien de la chaussée'; in 1354 it has the meaning 'travail du paveur', formed from *paverà*, by adding the suffix *-age*; *brassage* - appeared with the meaning 'action de mélanger des métaux'; at the beginning and the end of the XIVth century it has the meaning 'action de brasser de la bière'; in the XXth century it acquires the meaning 'mélange', 'fusion', formed from the verb *brasser* by adding the suffix *-age* [DHEF, TFLi].
- the nouns that appeared in the XVIIth and the XVIIIth centuries are less numerous (*adoucissage*, *bottelage* etc.). Some of the nouns from this subclass appeared in the French language earlier, but the meaning of

action is actualized in the above mentioned centuries: *adoucissage* appeared in 1723 with the meaning 'manière de rendre une couleur moins vive'; in 1842 it has the meaning 'sorte de poli qu'on donne aux métaux au moyen de la poussière de diverses substances', formed from *adoucir* by adding the suffix *-age*; *bottelage* – appeared in 1351 with the meaning 'droit payé sur le foin ou la paille'; in 1636 it has the meaning 'action de botteler du foin', formed from *debotteler* by adding the suffix *-age* [DHEF, TFLi];

- the greatest majority of nouns that represent process-event sememe developed in the XIXth century (*ensilage*, *fendage*, *gerbage*, *serfouissage*, *simililage*, etc.): *ensilage* – appeared in 1838, formed from the verb *ensiler* by adding the suffix *-age*; *fendage* – appeared in 1845, formed from the verb *fendre* by adding the suffix *-age*; *gerbage* – appeared with the meaning 'action d'enlever les gerbes d'un champ'; in 1845 and 1890 it has the meaning 'bois qui provient d'une pièce de bois refendue dans sa longueur'; in 1922 it has the meaning 'action de mettre les céréales en gerbes', formed from the verb *gerber* by adding the suffix *-age*; *serfouissage* – appeared in 1812 with the meaning 'péage pour l'entretien de la chaussée', formed from *serfourir* by adding the suffix *-age*; *simililage* – appeared in 1935 in Larousse, formed from the verb *similiser* by adding the suffix *-age* [DHEF, TFLi].

Conclusions

The number of verbal nouns under the process-event sememe is not big. A few of them have been borrowed, the greatest number of nouns have been created by adding the *-age* suffix. Diachronically, the most productive period of process-event sememe nouns is the XIXth century.

References

1. Constantinovici E. *Semantica și morfosintaxa verbului în limba română*. Chișinău: AȘM, 2006.
2. Казаков В. П. *Синтаксис имён действия*. СПб: Санкт-Петербург ун-та, 1994.
3. Коряковцева Е. Н. *Имена действия в русском языке: История, словообразовательная семантика*, Москва: Наука, 1998. с. 5-89.
4. *Le Petit Larousse, grand format*. Paris: Larousse, 2000 [=PL].
5. TLFi: *Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé*. <http://www.atilf.fr/Les-ressources/Ressources-informatisees/TLFi-Tresor-de-la-Langue-Francaise/> [=TFLi].