

Olena Pchelintseva

Johannes Gutenberg University

Mainz, Germany

Cherkasy State Technological University

Ukraine

pchelino@uni-mainz.de, o.pchelintseva@chdtu.edu.ua

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4472-429X>

Zatłuczenie się kota:

Aspectual Range of Polish Verbal Nouns

Abstract. This article analyzes Polish categorical verbal nouns, *substantivum verbale*, which refer to the same types of situations as the corresponding verbs – actions, processes, or states. The material of the study is continuous sampling of Polish verbal nouns, derived from the delimitative, and inchoative verbs. These units have been analyzed for presence / frequency in corpora, taking into account their realized spectrum of aspectual functions. Based on dictionary and corpus data, as well as the results of a linguistic survey of native Polish speakers, it is shown that the verbal aspectual meaning of the external quantitative-temporal limit of an action is weakened or, in some cases, disappears in verbal nouns. We assume that the nominal form of the verb to one degree or another prevents the explicit presentation of the aspectual meaning of the external quantitative or temporal limit of an action. The study also takes into account data on Russian and Ukrainian verbal nouns.

Keywords: verbal noun; verb; aspectuality; aspectual meaning; quantitative-temporal limit.

1. Introduction. Status of Verbal Nouns in Polish Dictionaries and Grammars

The focus of study is on Verbal Nouns (hereafter referred to as VN(s)) that denote the same types of situation (actions, processes, or states) as the cor-

responding verbs, such as *zbadanie* ‘research’ ← *zbadać*_{PFV}, *badanie* ‘research’ ← *badac*_{IPFV}. According to the definition in *Encyclopedia of General Linguistics* (by S. Karolyak), this class of words “is most often the result of the so-called operation of transposition, carried out in relation to linguistic units that do not belong to the category of nouns, which represent conceptual content in abstraction from substantial meanings”¹ (Karolak, 2003, p. 507). However, there is probably no other grammatical form whose status varies so strikingly both in grammatical descriptions of different Slavic languages and in monolingual studies. For instance, the *Grammatical Dictionary of Polish* (Saloni, 2012) considers Polish VN as a form of the verb with no exceptions. The author claims that the verbal noun with *-nie* / *-cie* (“*odśłownik*”) is specified for every verb, and even in cases where there is no such formation in the language: “we describe with full conviction all forms of the modern lexicon contained in the system, including hypothetical ones” (Saloni, 2012, p. 14). The authors consistently implement this principle in their work, including hypothetical formations such as *pachnienie** ‘smelling’, *mienie** ‘possession’ in this dictionary. Nevertheless, we did not find, for example, VN *mienie** in any of the Polish-language dictionaries, except for the electronic *Grammar Dictionary* compiled by Z. Saloni himself². A similar, though not so radical, point of view on verbal nouns can be found in *Dictionary of Conjugation Forms of Polish Verbs* (Mędak, 2004). The author applies a term *rzeczownik odśłowny* to this category of words and includes them in the verb paradigm. However, out of 142 typical verb paradigms (obtained based on an analysis of 17,000 Polish verbs), the VNs is absent in 10 paradigms (Mędak, 2004).

On the other hand, the *Academic Grammar of Polish* (Grzegorzczukowa, 1998) does not include VN in the verb paradigm, but is dealt with in the “Word Formation” section. We read in the *Academic Grammar of Polish*: “[...] it is not always possible to distinguish unambiguously between inflectional and word-formation oppositions [...] there are a number of classes of grammatical forms characterized by very high functional and structural regularity and constituting a kind of border zone between form-forma-

¹ Here and further, the translation of quotes and examples from Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian into English is ours – *author’s*.

² Note that the authoritative works by J. Puzynina and K. Marzniakowa separately point out that in Modern Polish no deverbatives are formed from the verbs *pachnieć*, *boleć*, *mieć*, *musieć*, *wiedzieć*, and some others (Puzynina, 1969, p. 30; Marzniakowa, 1993, p. 77).

tion and word-formation” (Grzegorzczkowska, 1998, p. 81). In the section “Word Formation” of the Academic Grammar of Polish (Grzegorzczkowska, 1998) and in the monograph by J. Puzynina (Puzynina, 1969), the system of nouns motivated by verbs are classified primarily into two types: categorical (*substantivum verbale*) and non-categorical (*substantivum deverbale*). The first type includes verbal nouns with the suffixes *-(e)ni(e)*, *-ci(e)*, which are formed systematically from verbal stems. The remaining types of verbal nouns (about 80 formants are used for their formation) are defined as semantically and formally non-categorical, irregular, and their existence can only be verified with the help of a dictionary. There is a significant difference between these two types, which is particularly noted in modern generative studies when investigating the argument structure of Polish deverbatives: “[...] in Polish there are two types of nominal [...]: aspectually ambiguous derived nominals whose properties are like those of English derived nominals and verbal nouns which have grammatical aspect and form aspectual pairs like the related verbs” (Rozwadowska, 2000, p. 239). A. Nagórko shares the same idea: “Their grammatical status is equally controversial... forms starting with *-nie*, and less frequently with *-cie*, as in *bicie*, are treated either as full-fledged nouns or – due to the considerable degree of grammaticalization of the rule that creates them – as ‘nounified’ verbs”³ (Nagórko, 1998, pp. 112–113). A similar point of view is also found in the works of Korytkowska and Małdzińska (2002), Jędrzejko (1993), Vetulani (2000), and others.

If we turn to academic dictionaries of the Polish language, we will also find differences in views on the status of VNs. In the *Academic Dictionary of the Polish Language* (Doroszewski, 1958–1968; 2000), verbal nouns were defined as *forma rzeczownikowa czasownika* (‘noun form of the verb’); however, they were not presented with the verb (not in verb entries), but in separate dictionary entries.

In the *Universal Dictionary of the Polish Language* edited by S. Dubisz (2004), the authors take a different approach: most of the VNs are specified directly in the dictionary entries of the corresponding verbs, for example:

zakolegować się *pot.* «nawiązać koleżeńskie stosunki z kimś»: Zakolegowali się ze sobą jeszcze w liceum. *dk* • IV, ~guję się, ~gujesz się, ~guj się, ~ał się; *rzecz.* zakolegowanie się *n I*.

³ In the original text “*urzeczownikowione czasowniki*”.

It is important that not all verbs in this dictionary contain indications of the nominal form in their entries. Those VNs which have acquired additional substantival meanings are described in separate entries, but the first position in their definition is usually formulated “*rzecz. od...*” (‘noun from...’), indicating the specific verb from which the noun is derived.

The most modern dictionary of the Polish language – *Wielki słownik języka polskiego PAN*⁴ (Żmigrodzki, 2024) – also contains indications of the nominal form in verb entries. The authors define this form as a *gerundium*. The difference is that, according to our observations, the nominal form is indicated for a larger number of verbs than in Dubisz’s dictionary. For example, we found an indication of the nominal form for the verbs *pachnieć* ‘to smell’ (“*pachnienie*”), *zechcieć* ‘start wanting’ (“*zechcenie*”), *pojechać* ‘start driving’ (“*pojechanie*”), etc. We found such forms only in the dictionary of Z. Saloni, mentioned above. At the same time, in the entries for several modal verbs (*musieć* ‘have to’, *móc* ‘be able to’, etc.), there is an indication “*gerundium nieużywane*” ‘gerund not used’.

So, taking into account the data from Polish grammars, as well as the ways in which VNs are represented in Polish dictionaries, it is safe to say that Polish VN in general has a very high degree of regularity. However, the grammatical status of the Polish verbal nouns (both its regular and irregular forms) remains controversial: there is no sure agreement in polonistics as to whether the VN is a verb form or a separate word, whether it is formed from all verbs or not, and to what extent it retains verb meanings.

2. Polish Verbal Nouns Against the Background of Russian and Ukrainian

Sometimes you need to look at a subject from the outside: what we know for sure about verbal nouns in other Slavic languages? Slavic verbal nouns have a common ancient origin and similar morphological structure. They are inherited from the Proto-Slavic language and have suffixal elements of Indo-European (*-jo, *-bha, *-ta) (Мельничук, 1986, p. 57). Despite this, Slavic VNs differ significantly in comparative terms in such parameters as preservation or loss of actionality features and the range of aspect functions. See a typical example: one Russian VN, which relates to verbs of either aspect (e.g., VN *повторение* ‘repetition’ ← V *повторить*_{PFV} / *повторять*_{IPFV})

⁴ See also: Żmigrodzki, 2022.

corresponds to two Ukrainian VNs (*повторення* ← *повторити* _{PFV} // *повторювання* ← *повторювати* _{IPFV}), to two or four Polish VNs (*powtarzanie* ← *powtarzać* _{IPFV} // *powtórzenie* ← *powtórzyć* _{PFV} (+/- reflexive marker *się*). It is known that there is an evident statistically significant increase in the number of verbal nouns from East to West (Dickey, 2000). In the Russian material, they turned out to be almost exactly half as many as in Polish. Ukrainian, in quantitative terms, is almost in the middle but slightly closer to Polish.

Also, if we look at the corpus of verbal nouns from the perspective of formal preservation of aspectual pairedness, we see that moving from East to West, the number of aspectual pairs of nouns increases. Russian VNs practically lose aspectual formal characteristics, and are semantically unpredictable. In Russian, there are formally only 15% “aspectual” pairs, in Ukrainian – around 40%⁵ (Pchelintseva, 2022). In Polish, all VNs with *-nie* / *-cie* have aspectual pairs, as long as the corresponding verb also has a pair. That is very interesting, and there are other interesting dependencies there; however, that fact alone does not explain anything. What are the reasons for this state of affairs?

If we focus on why this happens in Russian and Ukrainian, several reasons become obvious at once – pragmatic, historical, and morphonological. Each of these reasons works to a different degree, and one of them is obviously semantic. It turns out that some perfective verbs cannot form verbal nouns. They cannot at all or that process is severely hindered. These are verbs with the meaning of quantitative or temporal limit of action. This semantics is most vividly manifested in delimitatives and perduratives. See examples of different groups of verbs – we cannot form an VNs from such verbs:

попеть (два часа) ‘sing (for two hours)’ → **попение*?
попрыгать (немного) ‘jump around a little bit’ → **попрыгание*?
подумать (5 минут) ‘think for 5 minutes’ → **подумание*?
прождать (3 месяца) ‘wait three months’ → **прождевание*?
пролежать (целый день) ‘lie in bed all day’ → **пролежание*?
нагруститься ‘brood for too long’ → **нагрустение*?
запрыгать ‘to start jumping’ → **запрыгание*?;

⁵ There is an obvious but important remark to be made here: of course, not every verb in Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish has an aspectual pair. For example, we have quantitative data for Ukrainian: according to a dissertation (Skukharyna, 2003), only 53% of the entire verb corpus is composed of aspectual pairs.

дотанцеваться '≈ dance the hell out of' → **дотанцевание*?
переломать (все стулья) '≈ to break all the chairs' → **переломание*?

This regularity has a systemic character; it is confirmed by quantitative data. According to the results of our analysis of dictionaries (Gorbachevich, 2004; Chernyshev, 1948–1965; Rogozhnikova, 1991), in the Russian language there are about 530 delimitative verbs (e.g., *покипеть* [15 минут] 'to boil [15 minutes]') and about 300 perdurative verbs (e.g., *протанцевать* 'to dance [all night]'). None of them form a VN.⁶ From the huge number of verbs with this or similar semantics (we analyzed more than 3000 verbs of other terminative Aktionsart), we cannot obtain VNs. And this is not directly related to perfectivity or formal presence of certain morphemes – we easily form VN from verbs with other perfective meanings. See examples below:

*погасить*_{PFV} 'to extinguish' → *погашение* 'extinguishment'
*прочитать*_{PFV} 'to read' → *прочтение* 'reading'
*завоевать*_{PFV} 'to conquer' → *завоевание* 'conquest'
*отомстить*_{PFV} 'avenge' → *отмщение* 'vengeance'.

In the Ukrainian language, there are slightly fewer delimitative verbs than in Russian: there are 515 units in the (Bilodid, 1970–1980). According to our data, 10 VNs are formed from them, but none of them retains the delimitative meaning (for example, *посидіти* 'to sit (a little, 5 minutes)' → *посиденьки* 'get-together, hangout' (the name of the whole situation, not a delimitative meaning).

If we analyze the quantitative ratio of inchoative verbs and VNs in Russian and Ukrainian, we will also find a certain tendency. The number of inchoative verbs with the prefix ZA- in Russian (e.g., *запрыгать* 'to start jumping'), in our continuous sample from Chernyshev (1948–1965), is about 900, and with the prefix PO- (e.g., *поскакать* 'to start galloping') – 95. From them, 23 and 11 VNs are formed, respectively; the shade of the moment of the beginning of the action is preserved only in 16 (as in *зацветание* 'beginning of flowering', *загорание* 'beginning of burning').

⁶ If a verb is polysemantic, then its lexical-semantic variants with other meanings form VNs, for example: qualitative evaluative (*пропаривать* – *пропаривание* 'to steam (qualitatively) – steaming'), general resultative (*построить* – *построение* 'build – building'), etc.

In the Ukrainian language, according to our data, the number of inchoative verbs is slightly lower: with 3A- – 849, with ПІО- – 64 (Bilodid, 1970–1980). From them, 42 and 4 VNs are formed, respectively. The meaning of inchoativeness is preserved only in a few VNs (like *зацарювання* – ‘beginning of a reign’). Thus, we observe in the Ukrainian language, compared to Russian, a decrease in the number of inchoative and delimitative verbs, and, at the same time, an insignificant increase in the number of VNs formed from them. The semantics of limiting an action by an external limit in VNs is expressed much weaker than in a motivating verb, or is lost completely.

3. Aspectual Semantic Constraints in the System of Polish Verbal Nouns

After all, in this context (in Russian and Ukrainian, there is a strict semantic restriction), the assertion that Polish VNs are formed from any verb looks very suspicious. We decided to check how things are in the Polish language. Firstly, we have checked every verb in *Uniwersalny słownik języka polskiego* (Dubisz, 2004) to see if it had a correlative VN. So, what did we find? First, we found about 50 imperfective prefix-less verbs whose dictionary entries do not indicate that they have a nominal form: *dnieć* ‘to shine’, *ładnieć* ‘to be pretty’, *pachnieć* ‘to smell’, *móc* ‘to be able to’, *musieć* ‘to have to’, etc. The reasons for the absence of a nominal form, in our opinion, can be determined as follows:

- rarity of the verb (like *frapować* ‘to intrigue’);
- activity of parallel cognate or synonymous forms (*boleć* ‘to be ill’ – there is no nominal form ending in *-nie*, but there are nouns formed according to a different model: *choroba*, *bolesność*, *obolałość*, *boleści*);
- derivative nature of the verb itself (the verb is motivated by a noun or adjective (*pięknieć* from *piękny* ‘beautiful’);
- relational (*mieć* ‘to have’, *braknąć* ‘to lack’) and modal (*móc* ‘to be able’) semantics.

Secondly, about 150 prefixal verbs, according to dictionaries, have no correlative VNs. Among these verbs, several semantic groups are obviously distinguished: quantum-limitating – 21 (*zadudnić* ‘to rumble’), delimitative – 7 (*poszumieć* ‘to rustle’), inceptive / ingressive phase-beginning – 10 (*zaboleć* ‘start to get sick’), cumulative – 16 (*nahłasować* ‘make much noise’), and sative – 7 (*wychłostać* ‘to whip’).

This is interesting, but their number – compared to the entire corpus of Polish verbs – is too small. Therefore, the next stage of the study was the

analysis of verbs and the corresponding verbal nouns of certain semantic groups that contain the semantic feature of quantitative-temporal limit of action. We obtained a continuous sample of delimitative and inceptive/ingressive verbs, and determined whether they have correlative nouns. As a result, we received 228 “delimitative” VNs and 74 “inceptive/ingressive” VNs (Dubisz, 2004). These units have been analyzed for presence/frequency in *Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego (NKJP)* taking into account their realized spectrum of aspectual functions.

Let us start with the group with inceptive or ingressive meaning – that is, the point at which an action or process begins. The results of our quantitative analysis of the representation of verbs of this group and corresponding VNs according to the data of dictionaries and corpora are as follows: in our sample, there are 85 inceptive/ingressive verbs with ZA-/PO- and 74 corresponding VNs (*pociec* → *pocieszenie*, *zapalać* → *zapalanie*). A continuous analysis of corpus data showed that 23 VNs have no occurrences. The remaining 51 VNs were found in the corpus. The difficulty of the analysis is that Polish verbs and, accordingly, VNs with ZA- and PO-, rarely have only one (single) aspectual meaning of inception (unlike, for example, Russian verbs like *zatanecvat* ‘to start dancing’, *zaprygat* ‘to start jumping’). Usually, they combine other meanings with inchoativeness, in particular, resultative, distributive, durative, etc. We checked the detected usages to see if they corresponded to the meaning of “the point of beginning of an action or process”: only one VN, *zagadywanie*, has retained the verb initial meaning to some extent. Here are the “bad” examples, which falsify our hypothesis:

(1) *Chodzi o nieustanne mówienie, **zagadywanie**⁷ do ludzi, więc ważne jest, aby nie być nieśmiałym* (A. Papierzyńska, Manko 2010-01-05). ‘It is about talking all the time, **to start talking to people** (1.1) / **talking to people** (1.2), so it’s important not to be shy’.

(2) *Magda nie odpowiadała na **zagadywania** i nie głaskała otyłych jamników* (E. Nowacka). ‘Magda did not answer when people **started talking to her** (2.1) / **respond to conversations** (2.2), nor did she pet the fat dachshunds’.

⁷ Here and further on in the examples, the **bold font** is ours – *author’s*.

The VNs in these examples do indeed have a shade of meaning of the beginning of an action, which, however, may (1.1, 2.1) or may not (1.2, 2.2) be reflected in different translations. In other cases, we found that when the corpus contains VNs, it implements the following resultative, distributive, and other aspectual meanings. Below are typical examples. In (3), the meaning of the duration of an action, a process that continues for some time is realized; in (4), the meaning of repeated actions is actualized (distributive type, since the actants are different):

(3) *Ich prawdziwym nałogiem jest bowiem samo **zakochiwanie się**, ów etap związku dwojga ludzi między poznawaniem się, a dokładnym poznaniem* (Mazowieckie To i Owo, 2005-05-02). ‘Their real addiction is the very process of “**falling in love**”, that **stage** of a two-person relationship between getting to know each other and fully knowing what kind of person is next to you’.

(4) *agatkaa35: Co myśli Pani o ciągłym “**zakochiwaniu się**” w coraz to nowych facetach? Czy to nie wołanie “*pokochaj mnie?*” (Onet.pl Rozmowy, 2003-06-05). ‘What do you think about **constantly** “**falling in love**” with new guys every time? Isn’t that a call to “love me”?’*

Let us give another example based on dictionary data about the meaning of the verb. A verb *zatłuc* has two dictionary meanings: starting point of an action (that is, the variant of quantitative-temporal limit of action or process) and resultative:

Zatłuc 1. o sercu, tętnie: zacząć bić, zacząć pulsować 2. pot. tłukąc, bijąc, uderzając mocno, zapamiętale, zabić kogoś, coś; utłuc (Dubizs, 2004). ‘1. about the heart, pulse: to begin to beat, to begin to throb 2. colloq. to beat, to strike, to hit hard, furiously, to kill someone, something; to smash’.

The NKJP contains 50 occurrences of VN *zatłuczenie* (date of access 25.07.2025), but all have a resultative meaning, no case of start point meaning. We give a typical example below:

(5) *Jest on oskarżony o **zatłuczenie** metalową rurką swojego kolegi z klasy. Powodem miał być alkohol oraz inwektywy pod adresem jego żony* (Życie Warszawy no. 15/01, 2002). ‘He is accused of **bludgeoning** his classmate **to death** with a metal pipe, allegedly due to alcohol and insults directed at his wife’.

Let us consider the situation with delimitative verbs and correlative VNs. We have found 236 delimitative verbs with the prefix PO- in the dictionaries. To accurately identify the meaning, we relied on the presence of the element “*przez jakiś czas*” or “*na krótką chwilę*” in the dictionary entry. 228 dictionary entries of these verbs contain an indication of their nominal form – VNs. Of these VNs, 139 are missing in the NKJP (date of access 25.07.2025). Among them, for example, are the following VNs:

pokoszenie (from *pokosić* ‘mow for a while’)
pobadanie (from *pobadać* ‘research for a while’)
pograbienie (from *pograbić* ‘rob for a while’)
podrzemanie (from *podrzemać* ‘doze for a while’)

However, 89 VNs have at least one occurrence in the NKJP. We analyzed all the cases, and it turns out there are three options. Let us consider these cases.

Option 1: semantic narrowing (reduction of verb delimitative meanings). For instance, the verb *popalić* has two dictionary meanings: delimitative (II) and distributive (I) meaning:

I *popalić* 1. *spalić wiele, jedno po drugim, spalić coś w wielu miejscach*, 2. *pot. «sparzyć wiele czegoś, sparzyć coś w wielu miejscach»* ‘I to burn 1. to burn many, one by one, to burn something in many places. 2. col. to burn a lot of something, to burn something in many places’;

II *popalić* «*spędzić chwilę na paleniu*» – ‘spend some time smoking’.

If the dictionary (Dubisz, 2004) is to be believed, the VN can also realize them. However, the corpus tells us otherwise: *popalenie* has only distributive or resultative meaning. We found 9 occurrences of this VN in the NKJP, and all of them implement only the distributive or resultative meaning, as in the typical examples (6), (7):

(6) *Bo szkodliwa dla włosów, powoduje ich wysuszenie, a nierzadko nawet **popalenie*** (Dziennik Zachodni 2007-06-27). ‘Since (dye. – author) is harmful to the hair, causes dryness and can even **burn** it’.

(7) *Oddychali. Chodzili ze strasznej niecierpliwości. Bo się nie dało usiedzieć. Z tego **popalenia się** żywcem i życia dalej - ale właśnie życia żywcem. To byli podobno ci lotnicy. Z tego samolotu* (Białoszewski, 1984). ‘They were breathing. They were pacing with terrible impatience. Because it was impossible to sit still. From **burning** alive and then living on – but living alive. Apparently, these were the pilots. From that plane’.

Let us provide another example: the verb *ponosić*, according to the dictionary (Dubisz, 2004), has 7 meanings, of which 5 are resultative and 2 are delimitative. The VN *ponoszenie*, correlative to it, has a high frequency – we found 1391 occurrences (date of access 25.01.2025). Manual analysis of all occurrences showed that these VN implement only resultative variants of meanings, here is a typical example:

(8) *Tylko najsilniejsi i najsprawniejsi mogą sobie pozwolić na **ponoszenie** dużego kosztu. Jednak im większe koszty i ryzyko ponoszone przez osobnika, tym większa jego wartość...* (Przepis na człowieka, Ryszkiewicz, 1996). ‘Only the strongest and most capable can afford **to pay** the high cost. However, the greater the cost and risk incurred by an individual, the greater his value’.

Another example of this type: *pokarmienie* (from *pokarmić* ‘feed for a while’), 3 occurrences in NKJP (date of access 20.07.2025), implements the meaning of a result, but not of an action limited by external time frames:

(9) *Jeśli miałbym rybę w akwarium której nie znam, i **pokarmieniu** jej pokarmem X miała regularne wzdęcia, pływałaby osowiała, dawała oznaki choroby, to również uznałbym, że pokarm X jest niewłaściwy dla tego gatunku ryby* (Usenet 2005-01-20). ‘If I had a fish in an aquarium that I didn’t know, and **after feeding** it food X, it would bloat regularly, swim lethargically, and show signs of illness, I would also consider food X to be inappropriate for this species of fish’.

The following example with a VN *pobieganie* ‘jogging’ shows the usual meaning:

(10) *Sport w wydaniu lekkiego **pobiegania** lub ćwiczeń zwanych gimnastyką, to nadal zdrowie* (Winogrodzki, 2006). ‘Sport, such as light jogging or exercises called gymnastics, is still healthy’.

About 50 similar nouns with PO- (e.g., *pobrzmiwanie* ‘(short) vocalization’, *potrącanie* ‘(short) touching’, *powalczenie* ‘overcoming (for a while)’, *podenerwowanie* ‘irritation, nervousness (for a while)’), which combine a delimitative meaning with some other, behave in speech in the same way. They realize various aspectual meanings (resultative, attenuative, distributive, multiplicative, etc.), but not delimitative ones.

Option 2: semantic drift towards substantivity. This occurs as a result of the loss of living word-formation-semantic links of deverbatives with a motivating delimitative verb. In Dubisz (2004), such lexemes are always presented not only in verb articles, but also in separate dictionary entries as nouns. They can indicate stable states such as *pomyślenie* ‘thinking’, *pochodzenie* ‘origin’, *poruszenie* ‘inspiration, emotional upsurge’, name entire situations such as *posiedzenie* ‘meeting’, *posłuchanie* ‘audience’, *pogadanie* ‘conversation’, or acquire subject meanings *poszycie* ‘covering, cladding’. A good example in this regard is the legal term *pożycie* (more than 1,100 occurrences in NKJP, date of access 20.01.2025). Word-formationally, it is related to the verb *pożyć*, which has three dictionary meanings:

- Pożyć* 1. «przeżyć pewien czas» ‘to live for a certain period of time’ 2. «spędzić pewien czas, żyjąc w jakiś sposób» ‘to live for some time in a certain way’ 3. «przeżyć z kimś jakiś czas» ‘to live with someone for some time’.

The NKJP widely represents the terminologized lexeme *pożycie* (legal term), which is recorded in dictionaries as an independent noun in a separate dictionary entry with the meaning “*wspólne życie z kimś* [...], *obcowanie fizyczne dwojga ludzi, zwłaszcza w małżeństwie*” ‘living together with someone [...], physical cohabitation of two people, most often in marriage’:

- (11) [...] *i nagrody, nagrody. Nie tylko dla górników, ale i matek za wychowanie kilku synów dla górnictwa, dla żon za wieloletnie **pożycie**, a największe – dla kadry za wykonanie planu* (Szczepański, Górnik polski 2005). ‘[...] and rewards, rewards. Not only for the miners, but also for the mothers for raising sons for the mining industry, for the wives for many years of **life together**’.

Both variants described above were predictable. However, we continued to look for usages that would falsify our hypothesis. And we can say that we found them, but in the variant of the language play presented below.

Option 3. Sometimes there are lexical indicators of the short duration of the named situation or process. In this case, the meaning of the verbal noun is perceived as close to the delimitative one. However, the delimitative meaning focuses attention on the external boundaries of the action, while here we see an indication of a brief holistic situation. Thus, there is a shift in focus from external time frames to a brief holistic action. For example, such are the usages of the VN *potrzymanie* ‘holding on for a while’ (formed from the verb *potrzymać* 1. “trzymać kogoś, coś, zwykle w rękach, przez jakiś czas; przytrzymać” ‘to hold someone, something, usually in the hands, for some time, to hold’):

(12) *Krótkie **potrzymanie** rąk nad talerzem daje jednak gwarancję, że podany na stół posiłek będzie wartościowy* (Rozumowski). ‘Holding one’s hands over a plate for a short time, however, gives a guarantee that the food served on the table will be healthy’.

(13) *Proszę pana sekretarza o zapisanie nazwisk, widzę las rąk. Proszę o **potrzymanie** tych rąk chwilę w górze. A pana senatora proszę o zadanie pytania. Czy ja mam minutę na zadanie pytania czy więcej?* (Senat RP). ‘I’m asking the Secretary to write down the names. I see a sea of hands. Please hold those hands up **for a moment**. And I’m asking the Senator to ask a question. Do I have one minute to ask a question, or more?’

Option 4: Language plays (an occasional usage to create a certain stylistic effect). In our material, we found several occurrences of occasional usage of VNs in a meaning close to the delimitative one, where we are talking about short-term processes or states. These are the VNs *pociskanie* ‘tossing, throwing for a while’ (7 occurrences), *pobujanie się* ‘rocking for a while’, *poskakanie* ‘bouncing / jumping for a while’, *potanieczenie* ‘dancing for a while’.

It is symptomatic that in half of the recorded similar uses, the VN is put in quotation marks, which emphasizes its unusualness, its usage for the purpose of a language play:

(14) *W trakcie pikniku firma ze Śląska prezentowała bardzo atrakcyjne Eurobangy, które to urządzenie pozwala na wykonywanie skoków na znaczną wysokość. Pięć minut takiego “**poskakania**” kosztowało 10 złotych* (Gazeta Krakowska, 2003-10-06). ‘During the picnic, a company from Silesia presented a very attractive Eurobangy, which is a device that allows you to jump to a considerable height. Five minutes of such “**jumping**” cost 10 zlotys’.

(15) *Ostatnio na sprzedaż w domu aukcyjnym w Teksasie został wystawiony fotel bujany, kiedyś należący do Kennedy’ego. [...] Chociaż za “**pobujanie się**” na nim trzeba zapłacić ponad 100 tys. dolarów, chętnych do jego kupna nie brakuje* (Super Express, 2006). ‘A rocking chair that once belonged to Kennedy was put up for auction. [...] Although more than 100,000 dollars had to be paid for “**rocking**” on it, there was no shortage of people willing to buy it’.

Thus, if such VNs are present in the corpus, 4 scenarios could be possible:

- 1) reduction of the aspectual spectrum of the verbal noun, which realizes in speech the resultative, distributive, usual, and other components of aspectual semantics, but is not found in delimitative or inchoative meanings;
- 2) semantic drift towards substantivity/abstractness;
- 3) the usage of such verbal nouns in a meaning similar to the verbal one; in this case, there is a weakening of the verbal meanings of the external time frames of the action, a shift in the focus of attention to a short, holistic action;
- 4) language play.

4. Some Results of the Linguistic Survey

Even the best corpus cannot provide exhaustive information about the state of the language. Therefore, we conducted a small survey of native speakers of Polish (35 persons). Our respondents were Polish students from different Polish universities, native speakers of Polish. Given the limited space of this article, we present below only the most interesting results of this survey.

In the first type of tasks, respondents had to decide whether it was possible to form a nominal form from certain verbs and, if so, to write these forms (as *ponosić* → *ponoszenie*). The verbs were proposed at random, and among them were those that 1) have a dictionary nominal form (*posiadać* → *posiadanie* ‘possession’,⁸ *pożyc* → *pożycie* ‘residence’, 2) do not have a dictionary nominal form (like *pobyć* ‘stay’, 3) have a dictionary VN, but it is absent from the corpora (as *pobadać* ‘to explore’, *zadudnić* ‘to blow’, *poweseleć* ‘to have fun’).

⁸ Of course, we did not offer students interpretations of these verbs.

We received mixed responses. Firstly, not a single questionnaire had all the positions filled in, each respondent had some verbs without VNs. Only the VNs from the above-mentioned verb *posiadać* did not raise any doubts; in other cases, VNs were missing from some of the answers. Secondly, a relationship was found between the presence of a verb meaning other than the delimitative one and the number of positive responses to the VNs. If a verb has only a delimitative meaning or combines it with a distributive one, then, according to the survey results, its chances of being nominalized are very small. Thus, only 3, 5, and 6 respondents out of 35, respectively, considered it possible to form VNs from the verbs *pobadać* 'to explore', *pobyć* 'to be', and *poszaleć* 'to go crazy'. At the same time, the verbs *poszumieć* 'to make noise', *poweseleć* 'to have fun', *pochorować* 'to get sick', and *popalić* 'to burn' express well not only the delimitative but also the resultative meaning, and here 14, 16, 18, and 26 positive responses were received. It should also be noted that the presence or absence of the corresponding VN in the dictionary (which the respondents, of course, were not informed about) in this case does not affect the result. It is the semantics that matters: the VNs *popalenie*, *pożycie*, and *pobadanie* are in Dubisz's dictionary, but the number of positive responses for them varies significantly: 26, 16, and 3, respectively.

The results for the verb *pokropić* 'to drip a little (about rain)' look very symptomatic. There is no corresponding VN in the dictionary (Dubisz, 2004), and we found this suspicious, since there seem to be no obvious semantic or other reasons for the prohibition of its formation. The query in the NKJP showed 23 uses of the VN *pokropienie*. The results of the survey confirmed the viability of this VN: 29 out of 35 respondents indicated that this noun could be formed from this verb.

The next type of task involved making sentences with VNs (*zatłuczenie*, *potoczenie się*, *zagadywanie*, *pobujanie się*). These VNs are formed from polysemous verbs, one of the meanings of which is quantitative-temporal – inceptive/ingressive or delimitative. We were interested in which of the meanings of the motivator verb these VNs would be used, whether there would be a delimitative one among them. In 15% of cases, respondents were unable to come up with such sentences at all. In 30% of cases, the task was not completed quite correctly: a third of the sentences received did not contain the VN, as the conditions indicated, but a verb (in total, in all questionnaires – 47 sentences). Apparently, the use of these VNs causes some difficulties for native speakers, and is not a completely familiar speech act, since a longer path is chosen (two stages instead of one: first form a verb back from the

noun, and only then build a sentence with it). An analysis of those sentences in which respondents did include VNs (76 results, about 50% of all responses) showed that the VNs were used predominantly in procedural or resultative meanings, without emphasizing any time boundaries of the action; see typical examples from the questionnaires below:

(16) *Wszystko zależy od **potoczenia się** wydarzeń w przyszłości* ‘It all depends on how things **will develop** in the future’,

(17) *Nauczyciela denerwowało ciągle **zagadywanie**, które przeciągało trwanie lekcji* ‘The teacher was irritated by the inappropriate **conversations** that interfered with the continuation of the lesson’,

(18) *Policja przybyła na miejsce i ustaliła że **zatluczenie** było przyczyną zgonu* ‘Police arrived at the scene and determined that bludgeoning was the cause of death’.

Only in one usage did we find a clear hint of ingressiveness (the starting point of the process):

(19) ***Zatluczenie** tego serca nie było możliwe* ‘It was impossible to make this heart **beat again**’

But “the cherry on the cake” is the funny result of trying to fulfill the task of the test “perfectly” – that is, to use a VN with a “się”. At the same time, there is still no starting point meaning, it is of course resultative meaning:

(20) *Babcia spowodowała **zatluczenie się** na śmierć swojego kota* ‘Grandmother caused her cat to the point where he **beat himself to death**’.

5. Conclusions

The quantitative ratio of Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish verbs with the meanings of external time limitation (inchoative and delimitative) indicates an obvious decrease in their number from east to west. At the same time, their ability to nominalize increases. Nevertheless, the Polish categorical verbal nouns of these groups do not fully correspond to the verb in their

functional and semantic properties and are somewhat shifted towards the noun. Despite the possibility of forming action nouns from delimitative and inchoative verbs, their contextual analysis shows that they express a short, holistic action rather than focusing on its external quantitative and temporal boundaries. In addition, the very number of uses of action nouns in this meaning, in comparison with resultative, distributive, general factual, and others, is noticeably less. It is possible to make a cautious assumption that one of the reasons for the increase in the number of verbal nouns “from the east to the west” (Russian → Ukrainian → Polish) is the weakening of the quantitative-temporal limitation of the action in the semantic structure of the perfective verbs themselves. This is manifested both in the number of corresponding verbs and in the shift of the semantic emphasis from the external boundaries to the meaning of the integrity of the action. This idea, however, requires further verification.

Acknowledgments

This research is supported by the Philipp Schwartz Initiative of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

REFERENCES

- Bilodid, I. K. (Eds.) (1970–1980). *Slovník ukrajinskogo jazyka: V 11 t.* Kyiv: Naukova dumka.
[Білодід, І. К. (ред.) (1970-1980). *Словник української мови: в 11 тт.* Київ: Наукова думка.]
- Chernyshev, V. I. (Eds.). (1948–1965). *Slovar sovremennogo russkogo literaturnogo jazyka. V 17 t.* Moskva–Leningrad: Izd-vo AN SSSR.
[Чернышёв, В. И. (ред.) (1948-1965). *Словарь современного русского литературного языка. В 17 т.* Москва-Ленинград: Изд-во АН СССР.]
- Dickey, S. M. (2000). *Parameters of Slavic Aspect.* Stanford, CA: CSLI Publications.
- Doroszewski, W. (1958–1968 / 2000). *Słownik języka polskiego.* Warszawa: PWN SA.
<http://doroszewski.pwn.pl/>
- Dubisz, S. (Eds.). (2004). *Uniwersalny słownik języka polskiego.* Warszawa: PWN SA (Wersja elektroniczna).
- Gorbachevich, K. (Eds.) (2004–). *Bol'shoj akademicheskij slovar' russkogo jazyka. V 30 t.* Institut lingvisticheskikh issledovnij RAN. Sankt-Peterburg: Nauka.
[Горбачевич, К. (ред.) (2004–). *Большой академический словарь русского языка. В 30 т.* Институт лингвистических исследований РАН. Санкт-Петербург: Наука.]
- Grzegorzczukowa, R., Laskowski, R., & Wróbel, H. (Eds.) (1998). *Gramatyka współczesnego języka polskiego, Morfologia, Cz. 1.* Warszawa: PWN.
- Jędrzejko, E. (1993). *Nominalizacje w systemie i w tekstach współczesnej polszczyzny.* Katowice: Uniwersytet Śląski.

- Karolak, S. (2003). Rzeczownik abstrakcyjny (abstractum). *Encyklopedia językoznawstwa ogólnego* (pp. 506–508). Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich.
- Korytkowska, M., & Małdżiewa, W. (2002). *Od zdania złożonego do zdania pojedynczego (nominalizacja argumentu propozycyjnego w języku polskim i bułgarskim)*. Toruń: Wyd-wo UMK.
- Marzniakowa, I. (1993). *Gramatyka konfrontatywna rosyjsko-polska*. Warszawa: PWN.
- Mel'nichuk, A. S. (Eds.) (1986). *Istoričeskaja tipologija slavyanskix jazykov. Fonetika, slovoobrazovanie, leksika i frazeologija*. Kyiv: Naukova dumka.
- [Мельничук, А. С. (ред.) (1986). *Историческая типология славянских языков. Фонетика, словообразование, лексика и фразеология*. Киев: Наукова думка.]
- Mędak, S. (2004). *Słownik form koniugacyjnych czasowników polskich*. Kraków: Universitas.
- Nagórko, A. (1998). *Zarys gramatyki polskiej*. Warszawa: PWN SA.
- Narodowy Korpus Języka Polskiego. <http://nkjp.pl/>
- Pchelintseva, O. (2022). Aspectual properties of Ukrainian verbal action nouns. *Russian Linguistics V. Springer Nature*. October 2022, 46(3), 1–14.
- Puzynina, J. (1969). *Nazwy czynności we współczesnym języku polskim (słowotwórstwo, semantyka, składnia)*. Warszawa: PWN SA,
- Rogozhnikova, R. P. (Ed.) (1991). *Svodnyj slovar' sovremennoj russkoj leksiki*. V 2 t. Moskva: Russkij yazyk.
- [Рогожникова, Р. П. (ред.) (1991). *Сводный словарь современной русской лексики: в 2 т*. Москва: Русский язык.]
- Rozwadowska, B. (2000). Aspectual Properties of Polish Nominalizations. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics*, 8, 239–261.
- Saloni, Z., Woliński, M., Wołosz, R., Gruszczyński, W., & Skowrońska, D. (2012). *Słownik gramatyczny języka polskiego. Podstawy teoretyczne. Instrukcja użytkowania*, (2nd edition). Warszawa: Sowa Sp. Z o.o.
- Sukharyna, N. (2003). *Gramatychna ta leksychna semantyka ukrayins'kogo diyeslova v leksykografichnij systemi: avtoref. dys. ... kand. filol. nauk*. Kyiv: NAN Ukrayiny.
- [Сухарина, Н. (2003). *Граматична та лексична семантика українського дієслова і лексикографічній системі: Автореф. дис.... канд.філол.наук*. Київ: НАН України.]
- Vetulani, G. (2000). *Rzeczowniki predykatywne języka polskiego*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo naukowe UAM.
- Żmigrodzki, P. (2022). Wielki słownik języka polskiego PAN jako słownik tematyczny. *Studia Językoznawcze. Synchroniczne i diachroniczne aspekty badań polszczyzny*, 21, 153–166.
- Żmigrodzki, P. (Eds.) (2024). *Wielki słownik języka polskiego PAN (7th edition)*. Kraków. <https://wsjp.pl/>