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Non-Informational Causative Verbs and their Agentive Derivatives

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Abstract: The article considers the semantic class of causative non-informative verbs, which are productive of nomina agentis in the modern English language. On the basis of the correlation analysis of semantic characteristics of non-informative verbs and their agentive derivatives the author attempts to determine the types of lexical verbal units which are more productive in the formation of agentive nominals in the modern English language.

Keywords: the category of agentive nominals, word-formative models, semantic classes of non-informative verbs, nomina agentis, correlation, causative factor

Introduction

At the present stage of development of science, the most important interdisciplinary, complex problems include the problem of a person and various spheres of his activity, which is reflected in the language in the form of a semantic category of names of the figure. This category is one of the most controversial in modern linguistics.

The concept of nomina agentis is not unambiguously defined by linguists, since the broad and capacious semantic category behind this concept covers heterogeneous parts of the language system. To date, the concept of nomina agentis has become more complicated, which is a reflection of both the complicated activity of a person and the complicated vision of a person himself as a subject of activity. The development of linguistic thought on the basis of many studies conducted in various languages has led to the emergence of numerous linguistic interpretations of the figure, reflecting one or another of its sides or aspects (1; 2; 3; 4; 5, etc.).

In this study, any subject (animate or inanimate) is taken as an actor, which has both intentional and non-intentional impact on some object, resulting in a real or potential change in the state of this object.

Main part. Relying on the fact that the category of the actor is based and determined by the concept of activity, which is an active impact on the object and causing or suggesting its possible changes, we have developed the following methodology for identifying the category of names of the actor in modern English. Its cornerstone is the causative verb as a linguistic expression - the standard of activity.

Non-informative verbs include ontological and energetic verbs. Ontological verbs express existential states, possession/presence, social processes, temporal characteristics, quantitative characteristics. Energy verbs denote various states and transformations physical energy: spatial relationships, including movement, location, formation and change of form, structure, physical and physiological processes, etc.

As the results of the analysis showed, ontological verbs are neutral to the production of names of the actor, while energetic verbs are negatively correlated with this derivational indicator. On this basis, these classes of verbs are combined into a single macroclass of non-informative verbs. Thus,



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the general classification scheme in our study acquires the form of a semantic privative opposition, i.e. one in which one marked class of informational verbs is characterized by the presence of some differential semantic, and the other - unmarked (non-informative verbs) - is marked by its absence.

As such a sign, the presence or absence of an informational semantic component in the verbal meaning is recognized, which would differentiate the types of information processing in the psyche. It is quite clear that the semantic macroclass of informational verbs acts as a marked member of the named opposition. Energy and ontological verbs form a wider and at the same time less homogeneous unmarked class, which consists of 3031 units, which is 72.38% of the total list of verbs (4174 units). The verbs of this macroclass are characterized by a negative correlation with the derivative names of the agent (r = -.22).

But it is important to note once again that specific subclasses of non-informative verbs correlate differently with the derivatives under study.

Of particular interest is the further consideration of the semantic structure of the names of the agent and the non-informative verbs that produce them, which have a positive correlation coefficient with these derivatives.

Physical state verbs are the most numerous in the non-informational semantic macroclass (21.5% of the total number of verbs). 48.6% of these verbs have derivatives with the meaning of the doer. Therefore, the correlation coefficient is positive and amounts to 10. The physical characteristic itself can refer to both the effect and the resulting state.

I. The following names of the figure are derived from verbs expressing physical impact: 'boxer', 'archaeologist, excavator', 'builder', etc.

The initial verbs of this type express a certain physical impact of the subject on the object, but do not explicate the state of the subject, which is the result of this impact.

In some cases, the original verbs, in turn, are derived from nouns denoting a material object (instrument), through which the subject influences the object. Here the verbal derivative denotes two causative factors:

- A. an animated subject of action, expressed by the suffix -er;
- B. an inanimate instrument acting as an auxiliary causative factor and denoted by the root of the word.
- II. Derivative names of the agent are singled out, formed from verbs expressing the physical resultant state of the object, but not explicating a specific effect as the cause of this state.
- III. The third group is formed by the names of the agent, derived from verbs denoting both a physical impact and a physical resultant state. In other words, verbs of this type (as well as their derivatives) contain a double physical characteristic: 'digger; excavator ', 'reaper; reaper', etc.

Some of the original verbs are derived from nouns denoting the material through which the resulting state of the object is called. And the corresponding names of the actor include in their semantic structure the meaning of both the subject, expressed by the suffix, and the material, expressed by the root: 'plasterer; sculptor using plaster, etc.

The semantic field of existential verbs is characterized by a more pronounced antonymic structure than the semantic field of physical state verbs.



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According to this criterion, verbs of this type are divided into:

- A. positive-existential, expressing the "causation of the existence" of an object ('generate, produce; create, create'), etc.;
- B. negative-existential, expressing the "causation of non-existence" of the object ('destroy, demolish, demolish; liquidate; wipe off the face of the earth').

According to another criterion, existential verbs, like the verbs of a physical state, differ depending on the explicit expression or non-expression of a particular way of causation of the resulting existential state.

In accordance with the above criteria, agentive derivatives of existential verbs allow grouping them as follows:

- I. Names of the agent from existential verbs implying physical impact:
- A. positive-existential initial verbs: 'baker, baker,' etc.; b) negative-existential verbs: 'extinguisher; fire extinguisher, etc.

Thus, the existential names of the actor of this type include the values of the physical characteristic, which brings them closer to the names of the actor discussed above.

- II. Names of the agent from existential verbs implying physiological effects:
- A. positive-existential initial verbs: 'cattle breeder; breeder; producer (animal)';
- B. negative-existential initial verbs: 'killer, killer'.
- III. Names of the agent from existential verbs implying information impact:
- A. positive-existential verbs: 'legislator; member of the legislature';
- B. negative-existential verbs: 'the one who revokes declares null and void'.

The above examples illustrate the derivation of names from verbs of speech. An example of agentive derivatives from non-speech informational verbs is: 'composer; author, writer.

The names of an agent of this type (as well as the verbs that generate them) combine informational and non-informational components of meaning in their semantic structure.

- IV. The names of the agent from the verbs of existence with an unexplained mode of influence and a generalized undifferentiated resultative existential state:
- A. positive-existential initial verbs: 'founder, founder';
- B. negative-existential initial verbs: 'radical means (for the destruction of something); weeding tool.

The structure of the semantic field of movement, as well as the previous non-informational semantic fields, is determined by the intersection of two privative semantic oppositions, reflecting: the severity or non-expression of a particular method of influence; the positive or negative nature of the resulting state.

The marked subclass of the first opposition is verbs (and their agentive derivatives), expressing mainly the physical impact of the subject on the object.

According to the second opposition, the original verbs (and the corresponding derivatives) are distinguished, which cause either the movement of an object (positive verbs of movement) or the cessation of it (negative verbs of movement).



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- I. Names of the agent from verbs that express a specific method of influence:
- A. positive initial verbs in most cases have a physical effect at the heart of their semantics. Naturally, this subclass intersects with the subclass of the physical state: the same lexical unit belongs to the semantic subclass "physical state" according to the method of influence and to the subclass "movement" according to the resulting state ('working, folding (smth.); loader').

In a number of cases, the original verb appears as a derivative of a noun with an instrumental meaning: 'carrier; cart driver', etc. Sometimes the causative factor has the character not of a physical, but of some other type of influence: the movements of the conductor (of a tram, bus); conductor; driver; conductor'), communications 'the one who invites guests'). The meaning of the movement often appears in combination with components of a social ('invader, occupier; encroacher'), evaluative ('participant in a raid, raid, round-up; raider; looter'), structural ('one who divides, separates, separates') nature;

- B. negative initial verbs. The names of the actor from them express, as a rule, a physical impact, resulting in the cessation of the movement of the object: 'catcher, accepting (in baseball)', 'hunter setting traps'.
- II. Names of the agent from verbs of motion that do not explicitly express a specific mode of action:
- A. positive initial verbs: 'a person starting to do something; starter, referee, signaling the start of the race; athlete at the start';
- B. negative initial verbs: 'stopper'; locking mechanism; limiter', etc.

The semantic field of form/structure verbs is characterized (albeit to a lesser extent than the existential one) by an antonymic structure. Positive verbs express various kinds of creation of some form of a separate object or a structure of relationships between several objects ('sharpen, sharpen; accelerate'; 'compress; squeeze', etc.). Negative verbs mean various types of violation or destruction of some form / structure ('to interfere, mix (sya)').

According to the criterion of expressiveness / non-expressiveness of the method of influence, the original verbs and their agentive derivatives are divided into the following types:

- I. The names of the actor, implying a physical impact on the object:
- A. from positive initial form/structure verbs: 'mixer, mixing apparatus; mixer; mixer; bartender (person who mixes drinks); sound engineer, sound engineer';
- B. from negative initial form/structure verbs: 'troublemaker; policeman, policeman; crusher';
- II. The names of the actor, implying the information impact on the object: 'classifier, systematizer; sorter; separator'.

A small group of these names of the figure combines informational and non-informational semantic characteristics.

- III. Names of the agent from verbs that do not express the method of influence:
- A. positive initial form/structure verbs: 'organizer, organizer', 'transformer'; transformer', etc.;
- B. negative initial form/structure verbs: 'safe-cracking tool, ripper (killer who rips open the bodies of his victims)'.

Conclusion. As can be seen from the considered material, the main type of non-informational impact is physical. And its result can be a physical condition; its existence/non-existence; change in



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the shape / structure of an object or its movement. It can be argued that the physical impact plays the same nuclear role in the sphere of non-information processes, which communicative (primarily speech) impact plays in the information area. The presented data clearly show how semantically heterogeneous the category of subjects of the causative action under study is. Derivatives formed from verbs of different semantic classes "inherit" sub categorization within a semantic class and, accordingly, form certain subclasses and groups within a seemingly single semantic category. The filling or quantitative representation of subclasses and groups, as noted earlier, is determined by the correlative dependencies established between the verbs and the names derived from them.

The analysis carried out within this article makes it possible to formulate a number of summarizing conclusions, which are presented below.

The unmarked macroclass of non-informative verbs as a whole is negatively correlated with derived agent names. Relatively of the considered names, subclasses of non-informative verbs form three groups:

- > positively correlated with derivative names of the agent (verbs of physical state, existence, movement, form/structure);
- > neutral in relation to the studied derivatives (verbs of presence, physiological state, quantitative, temporal characteristics);
- > negatively reacting to the formation of the names of the figure (verbs of social status, location).

Physical influence plays a nuclear role in the sphere of non-informational verbs and their agentive derivatives, similar to the role of communicative (speech) influence in the information sphere.

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