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## MORPHOLOGICAL WORD-FORMATION IN FRENCH ECONOMIC TERMINOLOGY

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### Abstract

Issues related to various aspects of the establishment, formation and development of terminology are constantly in the focus of attention of linguists. The developmental features of these language subsystems provide an excellent opportunity for modeling and studying the features of linguistic evolution in general. From our point of view, an analysis of economic terminology is particularly relevant at the moment. This is due, on the one hand, to the fact that the economy penetrates all spheres of life of a modern person, and on the other hand, to the rapid development of the economy itself, which requires an adequate reaction from the language, primarily at the lexical level. This article is devoted to the study of some aspects of the functioning of the French economic terminology system. It describes the features of synthetic and analytical morphological word formation and provides data on the productivity of the models used. The article also analyzes the relationship between the productivity of each way of word formation and the degree of understanding of the derived term by students of French. Research in this area is of great importance not only for terminography, lexicography, but also for the theory and practice of translation.

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*Keywords:* Economic terminology, French, morphological word-formation, terminological system



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## 1. Introduction

Issues related to various aspects of the establishment, formation and development of terminology are constantly in the focus of attention of linguists. The developmental features of these language subsystems provide an excellent opportunity for modeling and studying the features of linguistic evolution in general (Bylina et al., 2019; Goncharova & Shemyakina, 2020; Korneyeva, 2015; Kuznetsov et al., 2020; Nechayeva, 2016; Samigullina et al., 2019). From our point of view, an analysis of economic terminology is particularly relevant at the moment. This is due, on the one hand, to the fact that the economy penetrates all spheres of life of a modern person, and on the other hand, to the rapid development of the economy itself, which requires an adequate reaction from the language, primarily at the lexical level.

The subject of the study is morphological word-formation in economic terminology. Research in this area is of great importance not only for terminography, lexicography, but also for the theory and practice of translation.

## 2. Problem Statement

Economic terminology occupies a special place in the lexical system of any language. Despite the fact that lexicologists do not have a generally accepted definition of the “term” notion (Athu, 2012; Shair, 2016; Shelov, 2010; Superanskaya et al., 2019), it is traditionally interpreted as a stylistically neutral nominative language unit possessing a special content that reflects the conceptual specifics of a particular sphere of human activity. Their ordered combination in a certain area forms a specific terminology (terminological system). The economic terminological system has a rather complex structure, since the term “economy” itself is polysemous and implies both the economic activity of people and the complex of sciences that study it. It consists of many subsystems organized by topic.

The dynamic development of economic terminology, due to extralinguistic factors, having its own characteristics and patterns, reflects the main trends in the evolution of the language as a whole. This circumstance is due to the fact that the term is, first of all, a functional kind of lexeme that preserves all its main features and characteristics. Thanks to this, the study of the processes of formation of economic terminology is interesting both theoretically and from a practical point of view, as they are designed to satisfy the needs of communication in the field that affects all spheres of our life. Despite the existing works devoted to the economic terminology of the French language (Adonina, 2005; Nechayeva, 2017, etc.), its current active development, unfortunately, has not yet received comprehensive coverage.

## 3. Research Questions

- 3.1. What are the distinctive features of the functioning of this terminological system in French?
- 3.2. What is its specificity in the field of morphological word-formation?
- 3.3. Does the productivity of the word formation method affect the understanding of the derive term?

## 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to look into and describe the morphological derivation of French economic terminology. The analysis will be held in a synchronic aspect based on the study of theoretical sources and language material.

## 5. Research Methods

The study was carried out as part of pragmatic and cognitive approach using data from the structural-semantic and word-formative analysis of economic terms selected using the continuous sampling method from specialized sources: financial-economic and commercial dictionaries. Additionally, articles from the French media (Les Echos, L'Entreprise, Le Figaro.fr.économie, Le Monde économique, Problèmes économiques, La Tribune) were used to analyze the language materials.

## 6. Findings

Economics cannot exist without terminology. The term "economy", going back to the lexeme *οικονόμος*, (*house manager; ruler, monitor*) first appeared in French in 1370-1372 as an indirect borrowing from Latin as *yconomie* (*gestion intérieure d'une maison, d'une famille*) thanks to the philosopher N. Orem, who translated some works by Aristotle for Charles V. Since then, economic terminology has come a long way. The corpus of specialized dictionaries currently covers thousands of lexemes.

An analysis of specialized dictionaries indicates that 3 main parts of speech are presented in economic terminology. The dominant position is occupied by the noun, followed by the adjective and, at the end, the verb. In this terminological system, along with the underlying words (*avance, prix*), there are a large number of formally motivated lexemes. Morphological word formation is rightfully considered the most important way of their creation (Chekalina & Ushakova, 2007; Tsybova, 2008).

### 6.1. Synthetic word-formation

The most productive way of creating terms is synthetic (affixational) morphological word-formation with functionally differentiated elements. The word-formative morphemes used are of predominantly Latin and Greek origin.

Suffixation is represented by the following word-formative morphemes:

- noun suffixes: -able – contribuable, -age – bradage, -aire – bénéficiaire, -ance – assurance, -ence – concurrence, -at – agrégat, -cien – mercaticien, -eur – fournisseur, -ie – sidérurgie, -ier – banquier, -ing – trading, -iste – monopoliste, -isme – gradualisme, -ité – indemnité, -ment – règlement, -ement – connaissance, -tion – gestion, -ure – couverture;
- adjective suffixes: -able – mobilisable, -aire – monétaire, -al – fiscal, -eux – frauduleux, -ible – inaccessible, -ier – douanier, -if – productif, -istique – logistique;
- verb suffixes: -er - instaurer, -ifier – planifier, -iser – monétiser.

Due to the quantitative predominance of nouns in the economic terminological system, among which suffix derivatives prevail, suffixation is the main model of word-formation of economic terms. It accounts

for about 42% of derivative lexemes. The given data clearly demonstrate the greatest variety of suffixes precisely in nouns. Most often, this method is used to form concrete nouns (names of action agents, documents, etc.) and abstract (names of actions, operations, relations, systems, etc.).

Prefixion is represented by the following word-formative morphemes:

- noun prefixes: a- – acompte, ad- – admission, af- – afflux, anti- – anti-inflation, auto- – autonomie, co- – cocréancier, con- – consignateur, contre- – contrefaçon, dé- – découvert (bancaire), dés- – déséquilibre, dis- – disparités, demi- – demi-produit, é- – émission, en- – encaisses, entre- – entreposage, ex- – exportation, im- – implantation, in- – insolvabilité, ir- – irrévocabilité, macro- – macroéconomie, méga- – méga-centre, micro- – micromarché, mono- – monopsonne, multi- – multiplicateur (d'impôt), quasi- – quasi-contrat, re- – revente, sous- – sous-développement, sur- – surcharge, uni- – uniformisation;
- adjective prefixes: a- – abordable, af- – affilié, anti- – antimonopoliste, auto- – autofinancé, dé- – défaillant, dés- – désavantageux, en- – endossable, entre- – entreposable, extra- – extraterritorial, im- – importable, in- – intangible, ir- – irreboursable, multi- – multilatéral;
- verb prefixes: ad- – adjuger, af- – affranchir, anti- – antidater, auto- – autofinancer, co- – coopérer, contr- – contrpasser, dés- – déshypothéquer, dis- – dispenser, é- – émettre, en- – engager, entre- – entreposer, ex- – exporter, im- – imposer, re- – revaloriser, sur- – surimposer.

Based on these data, it can be concluded that in this sphere, almost the same prefixes are used in word formation of lexemes related to the main parts of speech. Typically, prefixion in the French language is more characteristic of verbs, but among economic terms, it, like suffixation, is most productive among nouns (50%) due to their multiplicity. Adjectives and verbs account for about 20% and 30%, respectively. Unlike other terminological systems, quantitative prefixes (demi-, mono-, macro-, uni-, etc.) and prefixes that change the value of the root morpheme to the opposite (anti-, dé-, dés- and etc.) or with the meaning of the repeated action: ré-, ré-. In the total mass of terms formed by affixation, prefixion is presented in about 21% of cases. In the process of word-formation, parasynthesis is widely represented (37%) with a different combination of affixes: *acheminement*, *dédommager*, *endettement*, *déductible* (*des impôts*), etc.

## 6.2. Analytical word-formation

Analytical word-formation with functionally undifferentiated elements is inferior to synthetic both in frequency (33%) and in diversity. Compounding (12%) is represented by 2 varieties:

- compounding of 2 words, which is carried out using the following models: N+N – assurance-vieillesse, V+ V – *savoir-faire*, N+Adj – *coffre-fort*, Adj+ N – libre-échange, Adv+Pp – moins-value, ADV+V – bien-être;
- stem-composition: *aéronautique*, *agroalimentaire* etc.

When word formation of terms, the norm is the use of book word composition. However, the analysis showed that in our case, the models of the so-called "folk" constitution are more common.

Regressive word-formation is mainly used to form verbal nouns: *emploi*, *coût*. It accounts for less than 1%. A characteristic feature of any terminological system is the presence of clippings, economics is no exception (20%).

Of the wide variety of clipping methods, abbreviation is mainly used. Most often these are graphic abbreviations. This means that compounded-abbreviated initial words are variants of multi-word terms, and not independent lexemes, although sometimes they also serve as the basis for further derivation: *SMIC* → *smicard*. Abbreviations accelerate the transfer and perception of information for specialists. This circumstance determines the tendency to displace the original units from active use. In French terminology the following reduction methods are widely represented:

- alphabetisms – PVD - pays en voie de développement, PSD - pays sous-développé, FBCF – formation brute de capital fixe, FMN – firme multinationale, VS – variations de stocks, PME – petites et moyennes entreprises etc.;
- acronyms – GAN – Groupe des assurances nationales, SARL – société à responsabilité limitée, SAV – service après-vente, TES – tableau des entrée-sorties etc.

In parallel with French abbreviations, the following English ones is actively used: CAF (coût assurance et fret) = CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight), OPEP (Organisation des pays exportateurs de pétrole) = OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries). Sometimes preference is given to English abbreviations: APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation = Forum de la coopération Asie-Pacifique), GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade = Accord Général sur les Tarifs et le Commerce).

Due to the fact that the number of letters is less than the number of clippings, the emergence of homonymy is inevitable: SMIC - Salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance/Seuil minimum indispensable de caractères. However, this circumstance causes difficulties only for the uninitiated, while experts, based on the context, always clearly determine the meaning of each abbreviation.

Telescopy is much less common:

- merging a part of one word with a part of another word: *stagnation* + *inflation* = *stagflation*;
- merging a part of one word with the full word: *télévision* + *achat* = *téléachat*,  
*télévision*+*affichage*= *téléaffichage*.

Apocopes are also found in specialists' speeches. These are not independent terms, but stylistically marked versions of neutral lexemes that are characteristic of professional slang. Since most of the semantic component of a lexical unit is concentrated at the beginning of the word, this method of word formation is represented by the apocope: *dépâto* - département store.

It is known that when translating economic terms, problems often arise (Ermolatiy, 2016). As part of the study among students studying economic translation, an analysis was conducted of the extent of understanding of morphologically motivated terms. For this purpose, the adequacy of their translation was examined. It turned out that there is no direct dependence on the productivity of a word-formation model. The subjects coped best with the translation of terms formed using regressive derivation (100%), in which, although a part of speech of the derivative changes, the original value is retained.

Next in terms of the adequacy of the translation are the terms formed using prefixion (92%), due to the semantic specialization of these word-forming morphemes. A slightly lower indicator of the adequacy of the translation into Russian is for lexemes with suffixes (62%), due to their possible homonymy. In the group of terms formed by affixation, parasynthesis caused the greatest difficulties (45%) due to a combination of these factors.

Students struggled with translation of complex words (20%). Probably, the reason for this was the rupture of the semantic connection between the original elements and the result of compounding. A rather large scatter of indicators was in the group of clippings.

Relatively easy only the translation of telescoping cases was performed. Terms where a part of one word forms a single whole with a whole word were correctly transferred into Russian in 70% of cases. Where in the structure of the term a part of one word forms a single whole with a part of another word, the result was lower – 46%, which is explained by the difficulty in determining the initial elements of the word compounding.

Predictably the biggest problem was the translation of abbreviations. Students naturally tried to leave the alphabetisms and acronyms unchanged, which is permissible in principle. Despite the proposed context, they could not cope with decoding, and the Russian counterpart was successfully selected only in 4% of cases..

## 7. Conclusion

Economic terminology, although it occupies a special place, is not a foreign element in the lexical system of the French language. It is organically and naturally woven into the fabric of the language. The source of its occurrence is, first of all, typical word-formation processes according to existing morphological models characteristic of the language as a whole. Terminology in the language of economics makes extensive use of various models of morphological word-formation with a predominance of synthesis with functionally differentiated elements. The specifics of the morphological derivation of economic terms is not in its methods, but in the activity of this process, designed to satisfy the communicative needs of society in the field of economy, and the degree of productivity of traditional models.

The processes in the formation of economic terminology once again clearly show that the evolution of language, the most important means of communication, depends on dynamically changing human needs, but, nevertheless, is carried out according to its own laws. As a result, the extent of adequacy of perception of the derived term differs significantly from the productivity of a particular word-formation model.

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