NOMINAL DERIVATION WITH SUFFIXES IN LATIN

Dana DINU
University of Craiova

Abstract

The systematization of the facts of language which belong to the domain of lexical creation by suffix derivation can be done from several perspectives, among which there is not a precise delimitation, because, to a certain extent, each of them enters the territory of the other, the object of study being the same. One approach sets the starting point of the analysis on the base of derivation, another concerns the phonetic, morphosyntactic, semantic or stylistic features of the derivatives, and the third focuses on the functionality and the phonetic, semantic, syntactic, stylistic features of suffixes. This article is about the relationship between the base and the derivative determined by the functions of suffixes.

Key words: *derivative*, *base*, *derivational suffix*, *bound morpheme*, *syntactic category*

Résumé

La systématisation des faits de langue inclus dans le domaine de la création lexicale par dérivation avec suffixes peut se faire par différentes perspectives entre lesquelles il n'existe pas une délimitation précise, se superposant partiellement et ayant le même objet d'étude. Un certain type d'approche établit le point de départ dans l'analyse de type dérivationnel, un certain autre regarde les traits phonétiques, morphosyntaxiques, sémantiques et stylistiques des suffixes. Cet article recherche la relation entre la base et le dérivé de la perspective des fonctions des suffixes.

Mots-clés: *dérivé*, *base*, *suffixe dérivationnel*, *morphème dépendant*, *catégorie syntaxique*

Several theoretical observations

Among the possibilities of lexical creation through internal sources – derivation, compounding, parasynthesis, conversion, etc. – suffix derivation is the most exploited by Latin.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

The derivative is the lexical creation resulting from the synthesis of two constituents, called basis of derivation and derivational suffix or in short, base and suffix. There is a determination "relationship"[1] established between these two constituents, based on their syntactic and semantic characteristics, which results in a word "whose global meaning transcends that of the overall base and suffix"[2].

According to the traditional theory, the suffix derivation creates nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs from substantive, adjectival, verbal or adverbial bases. Thus, derivatives are usually named desubstantival, deadjectival (or with a common term denominal), deverbal and deadverbial. A careful examination of derivatives in Latin was made by the French linguist Guy Serbat. He doubted the bases are nouns or verbs, i.e. "parts of speech", and therefore proposed the use of concepts of "prenominal" or "preverbal" base, because the bases not correspond to the parts of speech, lacking any syntactic value, but belong to a notional level above the distinction in parts of speech[3]. However, these amendments made, the old terms continue to be used under inertia.

At the end of an article on nominal derivation, in which he demonstrates the explanatory limits of the traditional approach on the base of derivation as a "part of speech", Guy Serbat notes: "L'originalité de la dérivation, c'est d'associer des unités du niveau 1 (notionnel) à des unités du niveau 2 (le suffixe, catégoriseur) dans le cadre contraignant du mot"[4],

[1] Cf. Serbat, «Quel est le signifiant du concept de «relation» dans les dérivés ?» in *Opera disiecta*, Travaux de linguistique générale, de langue et littérature latines, Textes réunis et présentés par Léon Nadjio, Éditions Peeters, Louvain-Paris, 2001, p. 457-463.

[2] Serbat, «La dérivation nominale», in *Linguistique latine et linguistique générale*, Peeters, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1988, p. 67.

[3] "À notre avis, au contraire, B n'appelle, a priori, aucune étiquette catégorielle. C'est un *thème*, c'est-à-dire une séquence phonique significative, mais forcément intégrée à une classe. La «racine» ***deH3*** de gr. *Didōmi*, *dāre*, *dōnum* exprime la notion de «don» ou de «donner», elle n'est encore ni verbe, ni nom. Elle est seulement porteuse d'une notion. L'erreur invétérée, c'est d'assigner, dans tous les cas, une valeur syntaxique à B, c'est-à-dire de le considérer comme une «partie du discours»", Serbat, «La dérivation nominale», in *Linguistique latine et linguistique générale*, Peeters, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1988, p. 70.

[4] Idem, *op. cit.*, 1988, p. 71.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

illustrating in a diagram the stages of the "building of a derivative"[5]. Level 1 is represented by the „notional whole", one in which "the notions, named *themes*, delimit themselves". Following the organization of this first level according to "the morphosyntactic rules of each language", *themes* integrate level 2 of "the parts of speech", marked by suffixes, desinences, etc. In their turn, organized under the "rules of phrastic syntax", they become building elements of the utterances, representing level 3.

From the synthematic perspective, Christian Touratier[6] calls suffix derivatives *suffix synthemes* and includes them into a similar definition to that proposed by Michèle Fruyt, which cites: "Les synthèmes peuvent être ce qu'on appelle traditionnellement des dérivés, c'est-à-dire qu'ils ajoutent à «un lexème de départ (appelé 'base de dérivation')» (Fruyt, 1985: 486) un morphème conjoint (appelé suffixe), ce qui aboutit à un nouveau lexème, «lexème d'arrivée (appelé 'dérivé')» (Fruyt, 1985: 486)"[7].

The extensive research of the derivative suffixes corpus allows a much more appropriate view of this type of highly productive lexical creation in Latin and makes necessary some other clarifications on the basis of derivation, except those relating to their categorical nature already set out. Bases may be "ambivalent", which means that they may belong to the same extent to a verb or a name, e.g. *dūc-ō* „to lead", verb, *dūc-s* "leader", noun. Also, you can create a word on "impressive"[8] bases, as onomatopoeia and interjections, e.g. *cuculus* "cuckoo", *ulula* "screech-owl", *ulucus* "screech-owl", *grus* "crane". Bases may belong to lexical fields likely to select certain suffixes, forming lexical microsystems, such as, for example, the lexical microsystem of trade names created with the suffix *-tor*. A

[5] Idem, *op. cit.*, 1988, p. 72.

[6] Touratier, , 1994, p. 312.

[7] Kircher-Durand, «Introduction», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, *Création lexicale*: *la formation des noms par dérivation suffixale*, Textes rassemblés et édités par Chantal Kircher-Durand, Éditions Peeters, 2002, p. 3, qui renvoie à J. André, *Les mots à redoublement en latin*, Klincksieck, 1978 pour définir le terme.

[8] Kircher-Durand, «Introduction», dans *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, *Création lexicale*: *la formation des noms par dérivation suffixale*, Textes rassemblés et édités par Chantal Kircher-Durand, Éditions Peeters, 2002, p. 3, qui renvoie à J. André, *Les mots à redoublement en latin*, Klincksieck, 1978 pour définir le terme.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

systematization of the nominal derivation according to the base is provided in the first volume of "The History of the Romanian Language"[9].

The meaning of bound morphemes, i.e. suffixes, exercises "trois sortes de contribution significative différentes"[10] on the derivative; they are classified by Michèle Fruyt and the classification is also adopted by Christian Touratier: «modification sémantique entre base et dérivé (cas n° 1): type: fr. *maison → maisonn-ette*, angl. *red → red-ish*, sans modification de catégorie grammaticale; ou bien modification syntaxique, c'est-à-dire changement de catégorie grammaticale (cas n° 2): type fr. *président → président-iel*; ou encore modification syntaxique et sémantique (cas n° 3): type: fr: *chanter → chant-eur*, angl. *sing → sing-er*» (Fruyt, 1985: 486)"[11].

To be able to systematize the facts of language which belong to the domain of lexical creation by derivational suffixes, three approaches are possibly; there is no precise separation among them because, to a certain extent, each of them enters the territory of the other, the object of study being the same. One point of view establishes the starting point of basis analysis, another is interested in phonetic, morphosyntactic, semantic and stylistic features of the derivatives, the third focuses on the functionality or the phonetic, semantic, syntactic, stylistic features of suffixes.

In this article, I present in a very concise way the suffixes from the functional point of view, as proposed and argued by Michèle Fruyt and adopted by Christian Touratier in the cited work[12].

Suffixes contribute to the meaning of the derivative due to their three functions:

a) the semantic function, which does not change the grammatical category of the derivative, which is the case of diminutival suffixes *-lus*: *paruus* "small" – *paruulus* "tiny"; of comparative and superlative suffixes respectively *-ior*, *-issimus*, which intensify or emphasize the meaning of the base; of frequentative suffixes such as *-itāre*: *uisĕre – uisitāre*;

[9] *** *Istoria limbii române*, I, 1965, p. 73-91.
[10] Idem, *ibidem*.
[11] Idem, *ibidem*.
[12] Touratier, 1994, p. 309-320

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

b) the syntactic function (or grammatical), which changes the syntactic category of the derivative in relation to the base: for example, *-tat-* forms nouns fron an adjectival base: the noun *maiestas* is formed from the comparative adjective *maius*. Christian Touratier calls the suffixes with syntactic function nominalizing/adjectivating/verbalizing morphemes, emphasizing not the syntactic category of the starting lexeme, but the syntactic category of the arrival lexeme, i.e. of the derivative;

c) the semantic and syntactic function, which consists in the change of both the grammatical category and meaning of the derivative in relation to the base, for example, from the verbal base *rapĕre*, the suffix *-āx* creates the adjective *rapāx*, and the suffix *-tor* creates the noun *raptor*, each of the two distinct derivatives representing a different syntactic category than the base.

A. Suffixes with semantic function

They create derivatives that belong to the same syntactic class, to which they add a purely semantic meaning. If there is semantic continuity between the base and the derivative, the function of the suffix is to modify and where there is not semantic continuity between the two constituents, the suffix exerts the formative function.

- the suffix *-ulus*[13] and its numerous allomorphs express mainly a quantitative or qualitative diminution compared with the base, which can be nominal, adjectival, adverbial or verbal. It may have a hypocoristic, affective or emotional meaning: *filiolus – filius* "little son" – "son". It may be used as a motional suffix: *puella – puer*. It creates:

o nouns: *oppidulum – oppidum* "small town" – "town"; *ocellus – oculus* "little eye" – "eye"; *opusculum – opus* "little work" – "work"; *muscula – musca* "little fly" – "fly"; *pisciculus – piscis* "little fish" – "fish"; *hortulus – hortus* "small garden" – "garden"; *ampulla - amp*(*h*)*ora* "small amphora" – "amphora"; *agellus – ager* "little field" – "field"; *homunculus – homo* "little man" – "man"; *geniculus – genu* "small knee" – "knee";

[13] Cf. Gaide, «Les dérivés 'diminutifs' en *-lus*, *-la*, *-lum*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, *Création lexicale*: *la formation des noms par dérivation suffixale*, 2002, p. 111-123.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

specula – spes “slight hope” – “hope”; *armilla – armus* “bracelet” – “arm”; *anguilla – anguis* “eel” – “snake”, etc.

o adjectives: *paruulus – paruus*; *primulus – primus*; *misellus – miser*; *minusculus – minus*, etc.;

o adverbs: *plusculum – plus, primulum – primum, clanculum – clam, saepicule – saepe, longule – longe*, etc.

o verbs: there are very rare diminutive verbs formed from verbal stems, with the suffix *-illare*: *conscribillare* “to scribble all over” from *conscribere* “to write together, to enlist”; *occillare* “to harrow, to smash” from *occare* “to harrow” *sorbillare* “to sip” from *sorbere* “to sup up” (Cooper 243)

- the suffix *-(ĭ)tāre* added to a base word creates frequentative meaning:

cantāre - cantitāre, uisĕre – uisitāre, etc.

- the suffix *-ix* attached to the variant *-tr-* of agent suffix *-tor*, signifies the feminine gender:

uictor – uictrix; *adiutor – adiutrix*, etc.

- the suffixes *-ior, -issimus* derive adjectives from adjectival bases to express degrees of intensity:

clārus – clarior – clarissimus, etc.

B. Suffixes with grammatical function

Their classification under this name is based on the finding that there are suffixes which are assigned a specific meaning but which is not found in all derivatives they create, because there are different meanings of the derivative. Thus, no semantic meaning of suffixes is common for a number of derivatives. Suffixes from this category have actually no semantic content, but a grammatical signifier, i.e. they indicate that the derivative belongs to a particular syntactic class (‘part of speech’ in traditional terminology). As morphemes, these suffixes have a meaning, but it is

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

probably grammatical, and thus "les valeurs sémantiques que l'on croit repérer ne proviennent pas du suffixe, mais de son entourage sémantique"[14].

So, *-eus* in *aureus* is the derivative suffix denoting the material, while in *femineus* or *uirgineus* indicates the appurtenance; *-ārius* is the suffix for trade names in *argentārius*, but in *armārium* it indicates the place for weapons[15]. What the traditional view explains about the meaning of some suffixes is that they indeed "tended to attach to bases of a certain semantic type (e.g. *-icus* is added to personal or ethnic names, while *-ensis* frequently appears in toponymic derivatives), lending them elements of meaning, but, in fact, their function is to indicate the modification of the syntactic category[16].

Suffixes, or bound morphemes, with grammatical, or syntactical function can be classified as follows:

Adjectival suffixes

Suffixes *-īnus*, *-ānus* and *-(i)nus*[17] create adjectives from:

- phytonyms *salignus* "of willow" from *salix* "willow", *fāgīnus* "of beech" from *fagus* "beech-tree", *pōpulnus* "of poplar" from *pōpulus* "poplar-tree", etc.;
- material names: *aenus* "of cooper" from *aes* "cooper", *eburnus* "of ivory" from *ebur* "ivory", *picīnus* "pitch-black" from *pix* "pitch", etc.;
- trade or activity names: *haruspicīnus* "relating to the inspection of victims" from *haruspex* "interpreter of sacrifices", *sutrīnus* "belonging to shoemaker" from *sūtor* "shoemaker", etc.;
- toponyms: *Latīnus* from *Latium*, *Palatīnus* from *Palatium*, *Tiberīnus* from *Tiběris*, *Romānus Roma*, etc.;
- anthroponyms: *Plautīnus* from *Plautus*; *Iugurthīnus* from *Iugurtha*, cognomina in *-iānus*: *Pompeiānus* from *Pompeius*, etc.;

[14] Fruyt, *apud* Touratier, 1994, p. 313.
[15] Idem, *ibidem*.
[16] Idem, *ibidem*.
[17] Cf. Kircher-Durand, «Les dérivés en *-NUS*, *-NA*, *-NUM*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, IX, p. 125-160.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

• zoonyms: *caprīnus* “pertaining to goats” from *capra* “goat”; *equīnus* “of horses”, de la *equus* “horse”, etc.;

• the feminine form of the suffix *-īna* can substantivate adjectives designating both a specific trade or activity and the place where the activity is done: *sūtrīna* means both “shoemaker workshop” and “trade of making shoes”; *carnificīna* designates “the office of hangman or executioner” and “the place of torture” from *carnifex* “hangman, executioner”; *medicīna* means “medical art”, “remedy, medicine” and “the shop of a physician”.

The suffix *-icus, -ica, -icum*[18]

This is a grammatical morpheme with the same adjectivizing grammatical value as the morpheme *-nus*, very productive; it tends to select nominal bases meaning persons, particularly ethnicity. It was strengthened by Greek loans. It forms adjectives from:

• appellatives from military, political and social vocabulary: *cīuicus* “civic” from *cīuis* “citizen”; *hosticus* “pertaining to enemy” from *hostis* “enemy”; *nauticus* “belonging to ships or sailors” from *nauta* „sailor”; *bellicus* “pertaining to war” from *bellum* “war”, etc.; these old derivatives are strongly competed by the derivatives with *-īlis* and-*ius*: *cīuīlis, hostīlis*, etc.;

• ethnonyms: *Gallicus* from *Gallus*, *Campānicus* from *Campānī*, *Punicus* from *Poenī*, etc.;

• anthroponyms and theonyms: *Homericus* from *Homer*, *Platōnicus* from *Platō*, *Sōcrāticus* from *Sōcrātes*, *Bacchicus* from *Bacchus*, etc.;

• toponyms: *Ponticus* „of Pontus, Pontic” from *Pontus*; *Pharsālicus* “of Pharsalus, Pharsalian” from *Pharsālus*, etc.;

• various common names *uīllicus* “overseer of a farm or estate” from *uilla* “farm, estate”, etc.

The suffixes *-(ā)ticus, -(ā)ticum* create:

[18] Cf. Kircher-Durand, «Les dérivés en *-CUS, -CA, -CUM*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, IX, p. 67-87.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

• adjectives from both denominal and deverbal bases. They are not numerous but quite common[19]: *fānāticus* "belonging to a temple" from *fānum* "sanctuary, temple"; *siluāticus* "belonging to a wood" from *silua* "wood"; *uolāticus* "flying, winged" from *uolāre* "to fly"; *errāticus* "wondering" from *errāre* "to wonder", etc.;

• substantivated neuter adjectives in -(*ā*)*ticum*: *uiāticum* "travelling money" from *uia* "way"; *agrāticum* "land tax" from *ager* "land", etc.

The suffix -*ensis*[20]

Selects toponymical bases, has anthroponomical governing element and presents, in Chantal Kircher-Durand's view, «un vide sémantique absolu»[21]. Derivatives are interpreted as adjectives and also as substantivations of adjectives. It is competed by the suffix -*ānus*, which also creates derivatives from toponyms that mean "belonging to a place", "inhabitant of…", but, unlike it, -*ensis* forms toponymical derivatives mostly from outside Italy[22]: *Carthaginiensis*, *Atheniensis*, *Hispaniensis*, *Siciliensis*, etc.;

• -*ensis* not only designates the inhabitants or natives of a place, but any person who has a relation with a place. Thus:

Ciliciensis legiō does not mean "the legion formed by the inhabitants of Cilicia", but "the legion stationed in Cilicia" and *legatus Hispaniensis* is "the legate in Hispania", etc.

Nominalizing suffixes

The suffixes -*tiō*/-*siō*, -*tus* and-(*i*)*tās*, -*tūdō*[23] form:

• abstract nouns from adjectival and verbal lexemes (are also derivations from noun themes: *cīuitās* "city" from *cīuis* "citizen", adverbial

[19] Kircher-Durand, *op. cit.*, p. 75-76.

[20] Kircher-Durand, «Les dérivés en -*ENSIS*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, p. 185-194.

[21] Idem, *ibidem*, p. 187.

[22] Idem, *ibidem*.

[23] Daudet, «Les substantifs abstraits de qualité», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, p. 225-306.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

themes *uicissitās* “change, alternation” from *uicis* “change”). The derivatives in *-tiō*/*-siō* are called *nomina actionis* and are the most numerous, with over 4,000 lexemes. The derivatives in *-tās* and *-tūdō* are part of *nomina qualitatis* and formed, throughout Latinity, an amount of more than 2100 lexemes, according to the statistics made by Jean Daudet. This total is unevenly divided into the classes of suffixes in *-ia*, *-itia*, *-ntia*, *-mōnia* or in *-tu-*, G. *-tutis* (only five of the latter are attested throughout Latinity)[24].

- abstract nouns created from adjectival bases: *bonitās* “goodness” from *bonus* “good”, *dignitās* “dignity” from *dignus*[25] “worthy”, *ueritās* “truth” from *uerus* “true”, *urbanitās* “city-life” from *urbānus* “of the city”; *fortitūdō* “strength” from *fortis* “courageous”, *magnitūdō* “greatness” from *magnus* “great”, *similitūdō* “likeness” from *similis* “like”, etc.;

- names of actions formed from verbal bases that develop two kinds of derivatives, which, in fact, are not synonyms. This is the case of those in *-tio*/*-sio*, expressing the action contained by the verbal base as a process, and those in *-tus*/*-sus* expressing the result of the verbal action or the final outcome, e.g.: *captio* means “the process of catching, the action to catch or capture”, while *captus* “the fact of being caught, the result of catching action”:

cap-tiō	*cap-ĕre*	*cap-tus*
iunc-tiō	*iung-ĕre*	*iunc-tus*
fic-tiō	*fing-ĕre*	*fic-tus*
dēfen-siō	*dēfend-ĕre*	*dēfen-sus*

- quality abstractions in *-tās* are productive throughout Latinity. They characterize the elevated style and in archaic Latin have corresponding forms in *-tūdō*, so there are some adjectival bases from which two types of abstract nouns were built:

acerb-itās	*acerbus*	*acerb-itūdō*
asper-itās	*asper*	*asper-itūdō*
grau-itās	*grauis*	*graui-tūdō*

[24] Idem, *ibidem*, p. 227-228.

[25] Cf. Gabriela Creția, *Dignus et ses dérivés. Étude de lexicologie latine*, București, 2003.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

Verbal(izing) suffixes

The suffixes *-ā-*, *-ē-* and *-ī-* create verbs from nominal or adjectival bases.

These morphemes have no semantic content, but represent "a pure formal, grammatical process, used to form verbs from noun bases whose semantic content they preserve"[26]:

ancillārī "to serve as a hand-maid " from *ancilla* "hand-maid", *bellāre* "to war" from *bellum* "war", *flōrēre* "to be in flower" from *flōs*, *flōris* "flower", *custōdīre* "to watch over" from *custōs*, *custōd-is* "watch", etc.

C. Suffixes with grammatical and syntactic function

The suffix *-tōr*/*-sōr*[27]

The derivatives with this suffix are traditionally called *nomina agentis*, having a dual function: "to make a verb enter the class of nouns"[28] and to designate the agent or the actant who performs the action expressed by the verbal lexeme

- *amātor* "one who loves" from *amāre* "to love"; *dātor* "one who gives" from *dāre* "to give"; *dēfensor* "one who fends" from *dēfendĕre* "to fend"; *orātor* "one who speaks" from *orāre* "to speak", etc.

The suffixes *-men* and *-mentum*[29]:

They select verbal bases and create nouns expressing the notion contained by the verb; there are many derived from the same basis with both suffixes, the doublets being competitive from the stylistic point of view, those in *-men* belonging to the literary language, and those in *-mentum* more to the *sermo uulgaris*, which prefers words which are longer in form. The

[26] Touratier, 1994, p. 315.

[27] Cf. É. Benveniste, *Noms d'agent et noms d'action en indo-européen*, Paris, Adrien Maisonneuve, 1948; Guy Serbat, «Les dérivés non-déverbaux en *-tor* (*-trix*)», dans *Opera disiecta*, p. 499-534; Guy Serbat, «Noms "d'agent" en *-trīx*: Noms ou adjectifs? (Interférences du lexique et de la syntaxe)», in *Opera disiecta*, p. 535-549; Dana Dinu, "Derivate substantivale latinești. *Nomina agentis*", Annals of the University of Craiova, Philological Sciences Serie, Linguistics, XXX, 1-2/2008, p. 177-188.

[28] Touratier, 1994, p. 315.

[29] Cf. Perrot, *Les dérivés latins en -men et -mentum*, Paris, Klincksieck, 1961.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

lexemes derived by such means can designate concrete and abstract objects including the idea that they are the result of a process or that they manifest themselves as a process or instrument:

- *delectamentum* "delight" and "delighting"; *uestimentum* "clothe" and "clothing"; *documentum* "lesson", "example" and "that which teaches"[30], etc.;
- *certamen* "contest", "fight" from *certāre* "to decide something by a contest", "to fight"; *clināmen* "inclination" de la *clinō* "incline", etc.;
- doublets: *augmen – augmentum, cognomen – cognomentum, regimen – regimentum,* etc.

They are competition from the suffix *-tio* which also creates abstract action names: *deuotamentum – deuotio* "devoting"; *dissimulamentum – dissimulation* "dissembling"; *cunctamentum – cunctatio* "delaying", etc.

The suffix *-culum*

Mostly derives from verbal bases and creates "the instrument for…" or "the place for"[31], therefore, together with *-bulum*, is called mediative suffix by Guy Serbat, in a work dedicated to nominal derivatives with this suffix[32]. Most of these deverbals are built on themes in *-ā*:

- *gubernāculum* "helm, rudder", *spectāculum* "the place where the plays are performed, theater", *mirāculum* "that which causes the wonder", *curriculum* "that which serves to running", *propugnāculum* "that which serves for defending", *receptāculum* "that which serves for receiving", etc.

The suffix *-āx*[33]

Derives adjectives from verbal bases; they signify abundance or the quantity of the content expressed by the base:

[30] Touratier, *op. cit.*, p. 315.
[31] Idem, *ibidem*, p. 316.
[32] Cf. Serbat, *Les dérivés nominaux à suffixe médiatif*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1975.
[33] Pecman, 2002, p. 25-53.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

• *edāx* “voracious, gluttonous” from *edō* “to eat”; *bibāx* “given to drink” from *bībĕre* “to drink”; *fallāx* “deceitful, fallacious” from *fallō* “to deceive”; *audāx* “bold, courageous” from *audeō* “to venture or dare something”; *rapāx* “grasping, greedy of plunder” from *rapiō* “to seize and carry off”, etc.

The suffix *-ōsus, -osa, -osum*

Creates adjectives signifying the abundance of nominal basis content and sometimes a certain proclivity to the basis content:

• *copiōsus* “furnished abundantly with a thing” from *copia* “abundance”; *formōsus* “finely formed” from *forma* “form”; *gloriōsus* “full of glory” from *gloria* “glory,”; *curiōsus* “very full of care” from *cura* “care”; *mulierōsus* “fond of women” from *mulier* “woman”, etc.

This presentation of Latin nominal derivation is only a brief review of some aspects of the mechanisms involved in this type of lexical creation in light of the theories and methods of modern linguistics. Latin vocabulary research has had a long and valuable tradition since antiquity, but some ideas need to be revised, because they cannot solve the problems posed by the so-called lexical “monsters” such as *turibulum*, which proved to be not merely an exception that can be explained by the traditional theory of the base as “part of speech”, but should be analysed by considering the base as a *theme* which bears a concept outside the categorial determination. At the same time, one must explain the concept of “relationship” established within the derivative, the direction of its determination, from the base to the suffix or vice-versa. Guy Serbat believes that «1) le sème *relation* est sous-jacent à tous les types de suffixation (où B → S); 2) ce sème n’a pas d’autre signifiant que le mot, en tant que forme de synthèse contraignante» (Serbat, 463).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

*** *Istoria limbii române, I*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române, 1965.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

Arias Abellán, Carmen, «Les dérivés en *-arius*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, *Création lexicale*: *la formation des noms par dérivation suffixale*, Louvain, Peeters, 2002, p. 161-184.

Bechet, Florica, *Lexicologie semantică latină*, Bucureşti, Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2008.

Benveniste, Émile, *Vocabularul instituţiilor indo-europene*, I-VI, Bucureşti, Paideia, 2005.

Biville, Frédérique, «*Capistrum, feretrum, angistrum*, etc.: emprunts, hybrides et formations hérités, à propos des dérivés médiatifs latins et grecs en *-trum*», dans *Études de linguistique générale et linguistique latine offertes en hommage à Guy Serbat*, Paris, 1987, p. 67-82.

Cooper, Frederic Taber, *Word Formation in the Roman Sermo Plebeius*, Hildesheim, New York, 1895.

Cousin, Jean, *Évolution et structure de la langue latine*, Paris, Société d'Édition «Les Belles Lettres», 1944.

Creţia, Gabriela, *Dignus et ses dérivés*. *Étude de lexicologie latine*, Bucureşti, Editura Universităţii din Bucureşti, 2003.

Dinu, Dana, *Lexicologia limbii latine*, Editura Universitaria, Craiova, 2008.

Fischer, I., *Morfologia istorică a limbii latine*, Bucureşti, 1985.

Fruyt, Michèle, «Réflexions sur la notion de mot en latin», p. 81-94, in *De lingua Latina novae quaestiones*, Actes du X^{ème} Colloque International de Linguistique Latine, Paris-Sèvres, 19-23 avril 1999, édités par Claude Moussy, Peeters, 2001.

Kircher-Durand, Chantal, (textes rassemblés et édités par), *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, *La création lexicale*: *la formation des noms par dérivation suffixale*, Louvain: Peeters, 2002.

Kircher-Durand, Chantal, «Les dérivés en *-NUS*, *-NA*, *-NUM*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, p. 125-160.

Kircher-Durand, Chantal, «Les dérivés en *-CUS*, *-CA*, *-CUM*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, p. 67-87.

Kircher-Durand, Chantal, «Les dérivés en *-ENSIS*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, p. 185-194.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)

Kircher, Chantal, «Les adjectifs en *-OSUS, -A, -UM*» http://www.linguistique-latine.org/pdf/suffixation/Suffixation%20adjectifs%20-osus.pdf

Lavency, Marius, *VSVS. Grammaire latine. Description du latin classique en vue de la lecture des auteurs*. Deuxième édition, Louvain-la-Neuve, Peeters, 1997.

Marouzeau, J., *Quelques aspects de la formation du latin littéraire*, Paris, Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1949.

Meillet, A., *Esquisse d'une histoire de la langue latine*, Paris, Librairie Hachette, 1928.

Molina Yévenes, José, *Iniciación a la fonética, fonología y morfología latinas*, Barcelona, 1993.

Pecman, Mojca, «Les adjectifs en *-ax*», in *Grammaire fondamentale du latin*, Tome IX, *Création lexicale: la formation des noms par dérivation suffixale*, Louvain, Peeters, 2002, p. 25-53.

Serbat, Guy, *Opera disiecta*, Travaux de linguistique générale, de langue et littérature latines, Textes réunis et présentés par Léon Nadjio, Éditions Peeters, Louvain-Paris, 2001.

Serbat, Guy, *Linguistique latine et linguistique générale*, Peeters, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1988.

Touratier, Christian, *Syntaxe latine*, Peeters, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1994.

BDD-A3818 © 2010 Editura Sitech
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 18:35:56 UTC)