RESULT NOMINALIZATIONS IN ROMANIAN LIGHT VERB CONSTRUCTIONS

Diana Anițescu[*]

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyze the class of Romanian nominalizations which enter light verb constructions with the light verbs *a face* 'make, do' and *a avea* 'have'. We show that such nominalizations are not event, but result. In order to test this hypothesis, we have chosen two of the most productive suffixes which appear with these nominalizations in light verb constructions, namely *-ție* and *-re.* As will be seen, the two suffixes may attach to the same verb stems, giving rise to doublets (e.g. from *a afirma* 'state': *afirmație* vs. *afirmare*). The syntactic analysis of these doublets proves that *-re* is specialized for event readings, while *-ție* generally gives rise to result nominals. Returning to light verb constructions, when a verb has both *-ție* and *-re* nominalizations available, the light verb will always select the result deverbal noun, the one ending in *-ție***,** while its *-re* counterpart will have an event reading and thus will be banned from the light verb construction.

Keywords: light verb constructions, result nominalizations, Romanian, *-ție* suffix, *-re* suffix.

1. Introduction

It is a well-known fact that, at least in some languages such as English or Romanian, light verb constructions (LVCs henceforth) are formed by a light verb with the nominalization of another verb, i.e. a deverbal noun. There is general consensus (Wierzbicka 1982, Catell 1984, Butt 2010, Grimshaw and Mester 1988, Samek-Lodovici 2003, Harley 2003, a.o) that for constructions like those in (1) the light verb is semantically bleached and therefore has little descriptive content, but provides the syntactic skeleton for the LVC and a complete functional structure. On the other hand, the nominalization is the one providing both the theta-structure and the descriptive content of the entire construction, as shown by the equivalence of LVCs with lexical verbs.

(1) a. a face o plimbare < a se plimba
to make a walk < to walk
'to take a walk'

b. a avea o conversație < a conversa
to have a conversation < to converse
'to have a conversation'

Focusing on the nominalizations which occur in LVCs, the starting point of our analysis is the theory of nominalization put forth by Grimshaw (1990) and further refined by Alexiadou (2001, 2010, etc.) and later by Borer (2011). These studies show that there are fundamental syntactic differences between result nominals (RNs) and complex event nominals (CENs).

[*] University of Bucharest, "Languages and Cultural Identities" Doctoral School, Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, diana_anitescu@yahoo.com.

Bucharest Working Papers in Linguistics XIX, 2, 29-45, ISSN 2069-9239, E-ISSN 2392-8093

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

Perhaps the most important distinction between these two classes of nominalizations is that only CENs have a-structure which they inherit from the underlying verbs. Therefore, in the case of transitive verbs, the internal argument is obligatory, since it activates the a-structure and gives rise to an event reading. This is not the case with RNs which do not take obligatory arguments, as can be seen in the contrast between the two examples below:

(2) a. Bombardarea *(oraşului) de către armată a durat
bomb-INF-the city-GEN-the by army has lasted
trei zile
three days. (CEN)
'The bombing of the city by the army lasted three days'.

b. Afirmaţia lui Ion ne- a uimit. (RN)
state-ŢIE-the the.GEN Ion 1PL.ACC has amazed
'Ion's statement amazed us.'

Unlike English, Romanian has been argued to have only one Genitive position (Cornilescu 2001, 2004, Iordachioaia and Soare 2008, a.o.). Thus, with Romanian transitive CENs, which require the overt presence of the underlying verb's internal argument, the only Genitive structural case position is occupied by the obligatory internal argument, see *oraşului* in (2a), and there is not enough functional structure left to license a second argument. Consequently, the external argument can only be introduced as an adjunct, with a *by*-phrase, see *de către armată* in (2a). In the case of RNs, which do not obligatorily express the internal argument, the Genitive case position is free and occupied by the external argument, see *lui Ion* in (2b).

Other syntactic properties that distinguish between CENs and RNs are the ones showing evidence (or lack respectively) of grammatical event structure, such as: occurrence with aspectual modifiers, with agent-oriented modifiers or implicit argument control.

Borer (2011) argues that all nominalizations have a verb projection in their structure, but only event nominalizations have verbal functional structure (e.g. the Apect projection) and this is apparent in the following examples where CENs allow aspectual modifiers (3a), while RNs do not (3b):

(3) a. Inspectarea spitalului în două luni (CEN)
inspect-INF-the hospital-the.GEN in two months.
'The inspection of the hospital for two months'

b. ?Inspecţia spitalului în două zile (RN)
inspect-ŢIE-the hospital-the.GEN in two days
*'The inspection of the hospital in two days'

For Romanian, Iordăchioaia and Soare (2008) argue that aspectual modifiers like *frequent/constant* may occur with both types of nominalizations. The difference is that they can occur with both singular and plural CENs (4a-b), but only with plural RNs (4c-d):

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

(4) a. Examinarea constantă a elevului de către
examine-INF-the constant OBL student-the.GEN by
profesor (CEN)
teacher
'The constant examination of the student by the teacher'

b. Demolările frecvente ale cartierelor vechi de către
demolish-INF-the.PL frequent OBL quarter-the.GEN old by
comunişti (CEN)
comunişti
'The frequent demolitions of the old quarters by the communists'
(Iordăchioaia and Soare 2008:194)

c. *Acuzaţia frecventă a celor care au fost
accuse-ŢIE-the frequent OBL those-GEN who have been
martori ai crimei (RN)
witnesses OBL murder-the.GEN
*'The frequent accusation of those who have been witnesses to the murder'

d. Întrebările frecvente ale mămicilor (RN)
ask-INF-the.PL frequent OBL mommy-the.GEN
'The frequent questions of mommies'
(Google)

A second syntactic difference is that CENs (5a), unlike RNs (5b), exhibit implicit argument control in purpose clauses, as the subject from the subordinate clause is controlled by the implicit agent of the nominalization:

(5) a. Afirmarea adevărului pentru PRO a jigni pe cineva (CEN)
state-INF-the truth-the.GEN for to offend PE someone
'Stating the truth in order to offend someone'

b. *Afirmaţia lui Ion pentru PRO a jigni pe cineva (RN)
state-ŢIE-the the.GEN Ion for to offend PE someone
*'Ion's statement in order to offend someone'

Last but not least, CENs may occur with agent-oriented modifiers (6a), while RNs cannot (6b):

(6) a. Demolarea intenţionată a unei clădiri de către
demolish-INF-the deliberate OBL a-GEN building by
constructori (CEN)
contructors
'The deliberate demolition of a building by the constructors'

b. *Declaraţia intenţionată a lui Ion (RN)
state-ŢIE-the deliberate OBL the.GEN Ion
*'Ion's deliberate statement'

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

We adopt Borer's (2011) position in our analysis of Romanian nominalizations and use the above syntactic properties as tests in order to distinguish between result and event nominalizations.

The aim of our analysis is two-fold. Firstly, we offer a first tentative description of result nominalizations in Romanian. To this end, we have chosen two suffixes, *-ţie* and *-re*. The reasons why we have chosen these two suffixes are that they are in general two of the most productive suffixes in Romanian and *-ţie* may enter minimal pairs with the infinitive suffix *-re***,** giving rise to doublets of the type:

(7) a. a acuza → acuzaţie, acuzare
to accuse → accuse-ŢIE accuse-INF
Ion a făcut o acuzaţie gravă.
Ion has made an accuse-ŢIE serious
'Ion made a serious accusation.'

b. a imagina → imaginaţie imaginare
to imagine → imagine-ŢIE imagine-INF
Dan are o imaginaţie bogată.
Dan has an imagine-ŢIE rich
'Dan has a vivid imagination.'

Furthermore, these doublets are very frequent and we can use them to understand the specific semantic contribution of each affix. Thus, we show that there is a partial semantic specialization where *-re* is specialized for an event reading (8a), while *-ţie* gives rise to result nominals (8b):

(8) a. Afirmarea / *Afirmaţia adevărului (CEN)
state-INF-the / *state-ŢIE-the truth-the.GEN
'Stating / *The statement of truth'

b. Afirmaţia lui Mihai a şocat pe toată lumea. (RN)
state-ŢIE-the the.GEN Mihai has shocked PE all people-the
'Mihai's statement shocked everyone'

Secondly, our main hypothesis is that in Romanian light verbs select only result nominals. If this generalization is correct, in the case of doublets where *-ţie* nominals are results (with limited exceptions, as will be discussed below) and *-re* events, the light verb will always select the result deverbal noun, the one ending in *-ţie***,** while *-re* nominals will be banned from the LVC.

The present paper is structured as follows: section 2 focuses on the distribution of the affix *-ţie* in Romanian, reviewing the morpho-syntactic properties of the verbal bases it attaches to. Section 3 aims at providing evidence that *-ţie* is generally associated with a result reading, while *-re* nominals may have both result and event readings. Section 4 presents our corpus analysis of *a face* 'make, do' and *a avea* 'have' LVCs, proving that the nominalizations which enter such constructions are indeed result nominals. The last section includes the final conclusions and some further research questions.

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

2. The distribution of the suffix *-ţie*

The aim of this section is to account for the distribution of the affix *-ţie* in Romanian in terms of morpho-syntactic properties of the verb stems such as: transitivity (number of arguments of the base verb), lexical aspect, and conjugation group (for a detailed description of the affix *-ţie* in Romanian see Oprea 1992-1993, Pană-Dindelegan 2008, Sala et al 2015, a.o.).

Thus, our corpus analysis has evidenced that *-ţie* is one of the most productive nominalizing affixes in Romanian. It does not show any selectional restrictions with respect to the conjugation group, or the lexical aspect of the base verb (i.e. it may attach to all classes of predicates: states, activities, achievements and accomplishments).

As mentioned before, both *-ţie* and *-re* have a wide distribution and they may often enter minimal pairs as they attach to the same verb stem and give rise to doublets. However, we have found an interesting contrast as far as transitivity is concerned. It has been observed (Cornilescu,2001, 2004, Iordachioaia and Soare 2008, a.o) that *-re* does not attach to unergative verbs, a matter of telicity (the infinitive is [+telic], see Cornilescu 2001). As unergatives are activities, they do not have an internal argument, while *-re* nominalizations are mainly events and CENs require the presence of an overt IA. Hence, they are not compatible (Cornilescu 2001).

-Ţie is not subject to this restriction because it appears in result nominals which do not necessarily take an overt IA and thus it may also attach to unergatives. Consequently, there can be doublets only for transitive and unaccusative verbs, but not for unergatives:

Table 1. Number of arguments of the base verb *-ţie* vs. *-re*

Verb Stems	***-ţie***	***-re***
Transitives		
a consulta 'consult'	consultaţie consult-ŢIE	consultare consult-INF
a dona 'donate'	donaţie donate-ŢIE	donare donate-INF
Unaccusatives		
a fermenta 'ferment'	fermentaţie ferment-ŢIE	fermentare ferment-INF
a interveni 'intervene'	intervenţie intervene-ŢIE	intervenire intervene-INF (Dragomirescu 2010: 277-338)
Unergatives		
a conversa 'converse	conversaţie converse-ŢIE	*conversare *converse-INF

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

3. Interpreting *-ţie* nominals: A comparison with *-re* nominals

The third section of this paper aims at providing evidence that in Romanian the affix *-ţie* is specialized for a result reading, while *-re* specializes for an event one. Our main claim is that *-ţie* nominalizations are in general result nominals. This is apparent in the fact that whenever there are *-ţie*/*-re* doublets, *-ţie* nominalizations occur in contexts where a result nominal is needed, while their *-re* counterparts are used with an event reading (see also Cornilescu et al. 2014).

More often than not *-ţie* nominalizations are neologisms borrowed from Romance languages (French, Italian, etc.), see Oprea (1992-1993), Sala et al (2015), a.o. What is interesting is the fact that in such languages the correspondent affix *-tion* has both an event and a result reading, as in English:

(9) a. Cette construction de Le Corbusier est un chef d'oeuvre (RN)
this construction of Le Corbusier is a masterpiece
'This construction of Le Corbusier is a masterpiece'

b. La construction de cette maison a eu lieu il y a
the construction of this house has had place it there has
deux ans (CEN)
two years
'The construction of this house took place two years ago'
(Tavalati and van de Velde 2014: 142-143)

However, Romanian also has the infinitive grammatical nominalization (i.e. *-re*). Therefore, *-ţie* nominals tend to be results and the grammatical nominalization with the affix *-re* develops the event reading for transitive and unaccusative verbs, a sign of affix specialization.

Furthermore, we have also found examples where the affix *-ţie* is blocked for some verbs (unknown reasons so far) and *-re* can lead to both an event and a result reading and instances where both *-ţie* and *-re* nominalizations have an event reading, but we will argue that the latter represent instances of semantic specialization.

3.1 Result interpretations

This subsection focuses on the syntax of *-ţie* and *-re* nominalizations, arguing that there are fundamental syntactic differences between the two, as we show that *-ţie* nominals are generally RNs, while their *-re* counterparts are CENs. Additionally, we discuss cases where the affix *-ţie* is blocked and *-re* nominalizations develop both an eventive and a resultative reading.

3.1.1 RN properties of *-ţie* nominalizations: A comparison with *-re* CEN nominals

-Ţie nominalizations exhibit all the syntactic properties of result nominals. By examining *-ţie*/*-re* doublets, one can notice that *-ţie* nominalizations are usually used in

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

contexts which require RNs, while their *-re* nominalizations take their place whenever CENs are needed.

Thus, one first characteristic of *-ţie* nominalizations is that they do not obligatorily require internal arguments. Therefore, they are not compatible with overt Genitival IAs:

(10) a. *Donaţia banilor a fost o idee foarte bună (RN)
*donate-ȚIE-the money-the.GEN has been an idea very good
*'The donation of money was a very good idea.'

b. Donarea *(banilor) de către Ion a avut loc . (CEN)
donate-INF-the money-the.GEN by Ion has had place
ieri.
yesterday
'The donation of money by Ion took place yesterday'

As previously discussed, in Romanian RNs the Genitive position is occupied by the external argument, as they do not need an internal argument. This is also what happens in the case of *-ţie* nominalizations, proving that they are result (11a). On the other hand, *-re* nominalizations have an obligatory internal argument (see also Grimshaw 1990) which is assigned the Genitive case, while the external argument is an adjunct and is introduced by *de către* (10b and 11b):

(11) a. Afirmaţia lui Dan a fost un şoc pentru toată lumea. (RN)
state-ȚIE-thethe.GEN Dan has been a shock for all people
'Dan's statement shocked everyone.'

b. Afirmarea / *Afirmaţia adevărului de către Dan (CEN)
state-INF-the / *state.ȚIE-the truth-the.GEN by Dan
'Stating / *The statement of truth by Dan'

Secondly, *-ţie* nominalizations do not show aspectual properties either for lexical or for viewpoint aspect, therefore they do not occur with aspectual modifiers (12a) or with modifiers such as *frecvent*/*constant* 'frequent'/'constant', unless pluralized (13a). *-Re* CENs do allow aspectual modifiers, proving that they have an additional Aspectual projection (Borer 2011), as in (12b) and (13b):

(12) a. *Inspecţia în trei luni / timp de trei luni (RN)
*Inspect-ȚIE-the in three months / time of three months
'The inspection in three months/for three months'

b. Inspectarea spitalelor timp de trei luni (CEN)
inspect-INF-the hospital-PL-the.GEN time of three months
'The inspection of the hospitals for three months'

(13) a. *Donaţia frecventă a lui Ion către spital (RN)
donate-ȚIE-the frequent OBL the.GEN Ion to hospital
'Ion's frequent donation to the hospital'

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

b. Donarea frecventă a banilor pentru orfani. (CEN)
accuse-INF-the frequent OBL money-GEN for orphans
'The frequent donation of money for the orphans'

Thirdly, *-ţie* nominals do not show control into purpose clauses**,** again a characteristic of RNs (14a). Control in purpose clauses would imply the presence of an EA of the nominalization which controls the subject of the subordinate clause, i.e. evidence of argument structure and according to Grimshaw (1990) RNs do not have an a-structure. On the other hand, as CENs, *-re* nominals exhibit control in purpose clauses (14b):

(14) a. *Afirmaţia lui Ion pentru PRO a impresiona
*state-ŢIE-the the.GEN Ion for to impress
masa electorală. (RN)
mass-the electoral
'Ion's statement in order to impress the electoral mass'
b. Afirmarea adevărului pentru PRO a impresiona masa
state-INF-the truth-the.GEN for to impress mass-the
electorală (CEN)
electoral
'Stating the truth in order to impress the electoral mass'

Additionally, *-ţie* nominals (15a), unlike *-re* nominalizations (15b) cannot occur with agent-oriented modifiers:

(15) a. ??Afirmaţia intenţionată a lui Ion (RN)
state-ŢIE-the intentional OBL the.GEN Ion
'Ion's deliberate statement'
b. Afirmarea intenţionată a unor neadevăruri (CEN)
state-INF-the intentional OBL some untruth-PL-the.GEN
'The deliberate statement of lies'

Last, but not least, it is a well-known fact that nominalizations which come from verbs of propositional attitude are able to take CP complements, again a sign of an r-reading (Stowell 1981, Grimshaw 1990). It has been argued (Cornilescu et al. 2014) that *-ţie* nominals take CPs as complements (16a), while *-re* nominals do not (16b), showing that the former are RNs, while the latter are CENs:

(16) a. Afirmaţia lui Ion că şcolile sunt închise (RN)
state-ŢIE-the the.GEN Ion that school.pl-the are closed.
'Ion's statement that schools are closed.'
b. *Afirmarea că el e curajos (CEN)
state-INF-the that he is brave
*'The statement that he is brave'

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

Taking all of the above properties into consideration, we may draw the conclusion that *-ţie* nominals are more often than not results, while *-re* nominals occur as CENs. Thus, we may say that the affix *-ţie* is specialized for a result reading, while *-re* specializes for an event reading. But a new question arises: what happens when the affix *-ţie* is blocked and the only available nominalization is the infinitive one? As will be seen in the next subsection, the answer is that *-re* nominalizations may also develop an r-reading in such cases.

3.1.2 RN instances of *-re* nominals

An important empirical generalization observed by Grimshaw (1990) is that nominalizations which have event readings may also develop result readings. For Romanian, the affix *-re* conforms to this generalization. Thus, it has been shown (Cornilescu 2001, Iordachioaia and Soare, 2008, a.o) that *-re* nominalizations can receive both event and result interpretations. As a result, the *-re* suffix may have RN properties as well. In what follows we will briefly discuss the properties of result *-re* nominalizations, that have no *-ţie* counterparts.

The first RN property is that *-re* nominals that come from transitive verb stems do not take obligatory internal arguments:

(17) Prezentarea a impresionat publicul.
present-INF-the has impressed audience-the
'The presentation impressed the audience'

(Iscrulescu 2002: 14)

Secondly, *-re* RNs lack properties that show the presence of further verbal functional structure. Thus, just like *-ţie* nominals, they do not occur with aspectual modifiers (18) or with modifiers such as *frecvent/constant* 'frequent/constant' (19):

(18) ??Prezentarea în două ore
present.INF-the in two hours
'the presentation in two hours'

(Iscrulescu 2002: 16)

(19) *Introducerea frecventă a criticului la roman a
introduce.INF-the frequent OBL critic-the.GEN to novel has
plăcut mult.
pleased much.
'The frequent introduction to the novel by the critic was well liked by everybody.'

(Cornilescu 2001: 477)

Additionally, *-re* RNs do not show control into purpose clauses:

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

(20) ??Prezentarea pentru PRO a impresiona publicul nu a avut succes.
present-INF-the for to impress audience-the not has had success
'The presentation in order to impress the audience was not a success'

Again sharing the behaviour of *-ţie* nominalizations, *-re* RNs do not accept agent-oriented modifiers:

(21) ??Prezentarea intenţionată a fost o greşeală
present-INF-the intentional has been an error
'The intentional presentation was an error.'

(Iscrulescu 2002: 13)

The fact that *-re* nominals may develop r-readings as well is essential to our analysis as we will show that, whenever the affix *-ţie* is blocked, *-re* nominalizations may enter LVCs, but with a result interpretation.

3.2 Event interpretations

In the previous section we have seen that *-ţie* RNs can be considered regular instances of *-ţie* nominalizations and that, in the case of doublets, *-ţie* provides result nominals, while *–re* gives rise to event nominalizations.

As announced, with a limited number of verbs *-ţie* may have an event reading, producing CENs. So far, we have also found 13 cases where *-ţie* nominals are, in fact, events. The aim of this section is to discuss the syntactic properties of *-ţie* CENs. Since some of these verbs also have *-re* CEN counterparts, we argue that there is a semantic specialization for these suffixes.

Let us consider the following examples:

(22) a. Extracţia molarilor de minte va elimina multe
extract-ŢIE-the tooth.PL- the.GEN wisdom will eliminate many
alte probleme.
other problems
'The extraction of the wisdom teeth will eliminate many other problems.'

b. Execuţia prizonierului a avut loc ieri.
execute-ŢIE-the prisoner-the.GEN has had place yesterday
'The execution of the prisoner took place yesterday."

(Google)

The *-ţie* nominals from the examples above pass all the tests which Grimshaw (1990) proposed for CENs. First, as they are derived from transitive verbs, they take an obligatory internal argument, which is assigned the Genitive case. This internal argument occupies the only structural Genitive case position and the external argument, if added, will be an argument-adjunct and will be introduced by the *by*-phrase *de către*). Also, the internal argument is an obligatory argument, as its absence may lead to ungrammatical sentences:

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

(23) a. Extracţia *(molarilor de minte) de către dentist
extract-ŢIE-the wisdom tooth-PL-the.GEN by dentist
'The extraction wisdom teeth by the dentist'
b. Execuţia *(prizonierului) de către armată
execute-ŢIE-the prisoner-the.GEN by army
'The execution of the prisoner by the army'
(Google)

Second, *-ţie* CENs may pass other tests that show the presence of verbal functional structure and of argument structure, such as aspectual modifiers (24), and control into purpose clauses (25):

(24) a. Extracţia frecventă a dinţilor poate cauza
extract-ŢIE-the frequent OBL tooth-PL-the.GEN may cause
dureri.
pain-PL
'The frequent extraction of teeth may cause pain'
b. Au avut loc execuţii frecvente de prizonieri.
have had place execute-ŢIE-PL frequent of prisoner-PL
'There have been frequent executions of prisoners.'
(25) a. Extracţia molarilor de minte pentru PRO a evita
extract-ŢIE-the wisdom tooth-PL-the.GEN for to avoid
complicaţiile.
complication-PL-the
'The extraction of wisdom teeth in order to avoid complications'
b. Execuţia prizonierului pentru PRO a da un exemplu.
Execute-ŢIE-the prisoner-the.GEN for to give an example
'The execution of the prisoner in order to set an example'
(Google)

However, we have also found *-re* CEN counterparts for these *-ţie* nominals, but they are used in specialized language and can be argued to be instances of affix semantic specialization:

(26) a. Extragerea cărbunilor de către mineri .
extract-INF-the coal-PL-the.GEN by miners
'The extraction of coal by the miners'
b. Executarea silită a actriţei pentru recuperarea
execute-INF-the forced OBL actress-the.GEN for recovery-the
sumelor
sum-the-PL
'The enforced execution of the actress to recover the sum of money'
(Google)

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

3.3 Interim conclusions

The conclusion we have reached so far after examining the behaviour of nominalization doublets *-ţie/-re* is that the affix *-ţie* is specialized for a resultative reading and such instances pass all tests for a resultative interpretation. On the other hand, we have seen that *-re* is specialized for an eventive reading, as it surfaces instead of *-ţie* in the contexts where CENs are required. Another important fact to note is that *-re* may as well develop a resultative reading whenever the suffix *-ţie* is blocked. We have also found 13 exceptions where *-ţie* gives rise to CENs, but all these examples have *-re* CEN counterparts and are instances of affix specialization.

4. *-Ţie* and *-re* nominalizations in LVCs: *a face* / *a avea*

After the long excursion into the properties of nominalizations, we return to LVCs and our main hypothesis: the task of the light verb is to offer eventhood and a functional structure, while the nominalization provides the a-structure and meaning. Since there cannot be two events in the same clause, we propose that all nominalizations in Romanian LVCs are RNs. Thus, this section focuses on providing evidence that in Romanian light verbs select RNs and ban CENs. As part of this endeavor, we will examine combinations of *a face/a avea* 'make, do'/'have' LVs with *-ţie*/*-re* nominals in order to see which is the preferred affix.

4.1 Hypothesis

Our hypothesis is that in Romanian nominalizations which appear in LVCs are result nominals. Given what we have shown in the previous section, at least the following predictions should be borne out:

Firstly, in the case of *-ţie-re* doublets, the light verb will always select the result deverbal noun, the one ending in *-ţie***,** while the infinitive counterpart will receive an event interpretation and will be banned from the LVC.

Secondly, as previously shown, the suffix *-ţie* may be blocked. In such cases, we expect the affix *-re* to appear in LVCs, but with a result reading (remember that *-re* may develop both readings).

4.2 The corpus

The analysis is based on 104 authentic Romanian examples with both the LVs *a face* 'make, do' and *a avea* 'have' which we have found in several Romanian dictionaries, such as *Dicţionarul Limbii Române* (DLR) (2010), Dobrescu (2008), Trofin (1996), Hulban (2007), and from the internet, using Google as a search engine.

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

4.3 Description of the procedure

The analysis presented in this section involved three main steps. First, we collected the 104 examples of LVCs with both the light verbs *a face* 'make, do' and *a avea* 'have' followed by either *-ţie* or *-re* nominalizations or both using the aforementioned sources. 58 of these nominalizations were *-ţie*/*-re* doublets. Thus, the second step was to decide for each pair which member of the doublet is possible in the LVCs and verify our examples using dictionaries and Google. The final step involved the refining of the generalization apparent in the data and the quantitative and qualitative analysis.

4.4 Results of the analysis

The corpus analysis in these three steps revealed that our predictions were correct and our hypothesis was confirmed, as can be seen in Table 2 where the results are summarized.

The relevant situation is that of *-ţie/-re* doublets. Our previous discussion has revealed that when the two affixes attach to the same base verb, *-ţie* has a result reading, while *-re* may have an event reading. According to our hypothesis, the light verb should always select result nouns, in this case the ones derived with *-ţie*. This is indeed what happens with all the 58 examples involving doublets: both in the case of *a face* 'make, do' (27) and *a avea* 'have' (28), the LVs select *-ţie over -re*. Here are some examples:

(27) *a face*

a. complicare → complicaţie, complication
În urma operaţiilor, pacientul a făcut o complicaţie /
following surgery-PL-the.GEN, patient-the has made a complicat-ŢIE
*complicare
*complicate-INF
'After the surgeries, the patient developed a complication.'

b. consultare → consultatie 'conversation'
doctorul face consultaţii / *consultări
doctor-the does consult-ŢIE-PL / *consult-INF-PL
'The doctor offers consultations.'

(28) *a avea*

a. satisfacere - satisfacţie, satisfaction
Am avut o satisfacţie / *satisfacere imensă când a luat
have had a satisfy-ŢIE / *satisfy-INF immense when has taken
examenul.
exam-the
'I had a tremendous satisfaction when he passed the exam.'

b. obiectare → obiecţie, objection
avocatul are mai multe obiecţii / *obiectări.
lawyer-the has more many object-ŢIE-PL / *object-INF-PL
'The lawyer has several objections.'

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

As shown in section 2, the affix *-re* is blocked for unergatives, while *-ţie* does not show such a restriction. What follows is that in the case of unergatives there are no doublets available, but only *-ţie* deverbal nouns. Thus, we have also found 5 examples of LVCs where the LV combines with *-ţie* nominalizations that have no *-re* counterparts:

(29) a face erupţie: to make erupt:
Copilul a făcut o erupţie / *erupere pe piele.
child-the has made a erupt-ŢIE / *erupt-INF on skin
'The baby developed a rash on his skin.'

A third pattern is that of nominalizations where the affix *-ţie* is blocked (for yet unknown reasons) and the verb can combine only with the infinitive affix. As we have previously argued, in such cases, *-re* nominals may also develop a result reading. This allows them to enter LVCs with both the LV *a face* 'make, do' (30) and a *avea* 'have' (31) and we have found 39 examples:

(30) *a face*
S- a oprit şi nu a făcut nicio mişcare / *mişcaţie.
REFL has stopped and not has made no move-INF / *move-ŢIE
'He stopped and did not make any more moves.'

(31) *a avea*
Am o presimţire / *presimţie rea.
have a feel-INF / *feel-ŢIE bad
'I have a bad feeling.'

The corpus analysis has also evidenced 2 instances of affix specialization, where both *-ţie* and *-re* may enter LVCs, but are used in different contexts. Here are the examples:

(32) a. S- a făcut extragerea numerelor loto.
REFL has made extract-INF number-PL-the.GEN lottery
'The draw of the lottery numbers has been done.'

b. Doctorul a făcut două extracţii de molari.
doctor-the has made two extract-ŢIE-PL of molars.
'The doctor did two extractions of molars.'

c. Am făcut o rezervare la restaurant.
have made a reserve-INF at restaurant
'I made a reservation at the restaurant.'

d. În Delta Dunării s- a făcut o rezervaţie naturală.
In Delta-the Danube-the.GEN REFL has made a reserve-ŢIE natural
'The Danube Delta has made a natural reservation.'

The table below contains our results so far:

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

Table 2. Results of the quantitative and qualitative analysis

A face + *-ţie*	63
a afirma → afirmaţie ‘statement’ to state state-ŢIE Scriitorul a făcut o afirmaţie interesantă. writer-the has made a state-ŢIE interesting The writer made an interesting statement a (-şi) imagina → imaginaţie ‘imagination’ to REFL imagine → imagine-ŢIE Copiii au o imaginaţie bogată. children-the have an imagination rich ‘Children have a vivid imagination.’	
Both suffixes	2
a extrage → extragere, extracţie ‘extraction’ to extract extract-INF extract-ŢIE a face o extragere / extracţie to make an extract-INF / extract-ŢIE ‘to make an extraction’	
A face + *-re* / *-ţie* blocked	39
a (se) plimba → plimbare, *plimbaţie to REFL walk walk-INF walk-ŢIE Am făcut o plimbare prin parc have made a walk through park ‘I took a walk in the park.’	
Total	104

At the end of our analysis we may draw the conclusion that in Romanian light verbs indeed select result nominalizations. The data have shown that in the case of *-re/-ţie* doublets both the light verb *a face* ‘make, do’ and *a avea* ‘have’ always select the affix which gives rise to RNs, i.e. *-ţie*. When this affix cannot attach to a certain verb base, *-re* takes its place and may appear in LVCs with a result reading.

5. Conclusions

In this paper, we have tried to analyze the class of nominalizations that enter Romanian LVCs with the verbs *a face* ‘make, do’ and *a avea* ‘have’ and to argue that these nominals are result, and never event. We started the discussion by briefly presenting the standard definition of LVCs together with the theory of nominalization as put forth by Grimshaw (1990) and further developed by many other linguists (Alexiadou 2001, 2010, Borer 2011, a.o.). The second section has revealed the fact that the affix *-ţie* is very productive in Romanian, that it shows no selectional restriction with respect to the verb

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

base and that it more often than not enters minimal pairs with the infinitive affix, i.e. *-re*. We have also evidenced the fact that such doublets may appear only in the case of transitive and unaccusative verb bases, as *-re* cannot attach to unergatives (Cornilescu 2001). The third section has dealt with the interpretation of both *-ţie* and *-re* nominalizations and we have provided evidence that the two suffixes are specialized. Thus, regular instances of *-ţie* are RNs, while *-re* deverbal nouns are their CEN counterparts. However, *-re* nominalizations may develop r-readings whenever *-ţie* is not available for a verb base. The last section of the paper is focused on our analysis of Romanian LVCs with the light verbs *a face* 'make, do' and *a avea* 'have' and *-ţie/-re* nominalizations. As we have seen, in all the relevant cases where doublets are available, the light verb selects the result nominalization, the one derived with the suffix *-ţie*, proving that in Romanian LVCs always contain a result nominalization, and not an event one. Even though there are cases where *-ţie* is blocked, we can argue that *-re* is allowed in the LVC, but again with a result interpretation as it has been observed that *-re* nominals can receive an e-reading and an r-reading as well.

References

Alexiadou, A. 2001. *Functional Structure in Nominals: Nominalizations and Ergativity*. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Alexiadou, A. and Grimshaw, J. 2008. Verbs, nouns and affixation. In F. Schäfer (ed.), *SinSpeC (1*). *Working Papers of the SFB* 732, 1-16. University of Stuttgart.

Borer, H. 2011. In the event of a nominal. In M. Everaert, M. Marelj, and T. Siloni (eds.), *The Theta System: Argument Structure at the Interface*, 103-149. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Butt, M. 2010. *The Light Verb Jungle: Still Hacking Away*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Butt, M. and Geuder, W. 2001. On the (semi)lexical status of light verbs. In N. Corver and H. van Riemsdijk (eds.), *Semilexical Categories: On the Content of Function Words and the Function of Content Words*, 323-370. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Catell, R. 1984. *Composite Predicates in English*. Sydney: Academic Press.

Cornilescu, A. 2001. Romanian nominalizations: Case and aspectual structure. *Journal of Linguistics* 37: 467-501.

Cornilescu, A., Dobrovie-Sorin, C., Giurgea, I. 2014. Deverbal nouns. In C. Dobrovie-Sorin and I. Giurgea (eds.), *A Reference Grammar of Romanian*, vol. 1, *The Noun Phrase*, 663-718. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Dobrescu, A. 2008. *Dicţionar de expresii idiomatice româneşti*. Iaşi: Editura Em. Olis.

Dragomirescu, A. 2010. *Ergativitatea: Tipologie, sintaxă, semantică*. Bucharest: Editura Universității din București.

Grimshaw, J. 1990. *Argument Structure*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Grimshaw, J., Mester, A. 1988. *Light Verbs and θ-Markings*. Cambridge, MA. MIT Press.

Harley, H. 2009. The morphology of nominalizations and the syntax of vP. In A. Giannadikou and M. Rathert (eds.), *Quantification, Definiteness, and Nominalization*, 321-343. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hulban, H. 2007. *Dicţionar englez-român de expresii idiomatice şi locuţiuni*. Iaşi: Polirom.

Institutul de Lingvistica "Iorgu Iordan-Al. Rosetti". 2010. *Dicţionarul limbii române (DLR)*. Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române.

Iordachioaia, G. and Soare, E. 2008. Two kinds of event plurals: Evidence from Romanian nominalizations. In O. Bonami and P. Cabredo Hofherr (eds.), *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics* 7, 193-216. Paris: CNRS.

Institutul de Lingvistica "Iorgu Iordan-Al.Rosetti". 2005. *Gramatica Limbii Romane (GALR)*. Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române

Iscrulescu, C. 2002. The Morpho-Syntax of Romanian Nominalizations. MA dissertation, University of Southern California.

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

Oprea, I. 1992-1993. Istoria adaptării împrumuturilor româneşti care au corespondente latineşti în *-(t)io, -(t)ionis*. *Anuarul de lingvistică şi teorie literară* XXXIII: 81-132.
Pană Dindelegan, G. 2008. Concurenţa *-(ț)iune -(ț)ie*; stadiul actual al fenomenului. *Studii şi cercetări lingvistice* LIX (2): 489-502.
Sala, M., Carabulea, E. şi Contraş, E. 2015. *Formarea cuvintelor in limba romana IV*. Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române.
Samek-Lodovici, V. 2003. The internal structure of arguments and its role in complex predicate formation. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 137: 835-881.
Stan, C. 2003. *Gramatica numelor de acțiune*. Bucharest: Editura Universității din București.
Stowell, T. A. 1981. Origins of Phrase Structure. PhD dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Tayalati, F. and van de Velde, D. 2014. Event nominalizations in French and Modern Standard Arabic: A parallel. *Brill's Annual of Afroasiatic Languages and Linguistics* 6: 119-155.
Trofin, A. 1996. *Dicţionar englez-român de expresii idiomatice şi locuţiuni.* Bucharest: Editura Ştiinţifică.
Wierzbicka, A. 1982. Why can you have a drink when you can't *Have an eat? *Language* 58: 753-799.

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din Bucureşti
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)

BDD-A29075 © 2017 Universitatea din București
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.142 (2026-11-14 22:57:50 UTC)