

# Approaches And Directions In Russian Word-Formation Studies: From Structural-Semantic To Cognitive-Communicative Perspectives

Olga Vladimirovna Shevtsova

Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of General Linguistics, Uzbek State University of World Languages, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

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**Abstract:** This article provides a comprehensive overview of approaches and directions in Russian word-formation research (derivatology) from the mid-20th to early 21st century. It examines structural-semantic, onomasiological, paradigmatic, field-based, and cognitive models of derivational analysis, emphasizing their theoretical foundations and methodological implications.

Special attention is given to the interpretation of derived words as units of knowledge representation and to the interplay between cognitive and communicative factors in word formation. The study highlights how paradigmatic concepts such as the word-formation field (slovoobrazovatelnoe pole) and semantic-derivational category (semantiko-slovoobrazovatelnaya kategoriya) facilitate the integration of morphological, semantic, and conceptual dimensions.

Finally, the article argues for an integrative cognitive-communicative approach, demonstrating that word formation functions not only as a mechanism of linguistic categorization but also as a dynamic interface between the speaker's cognitive structures and discourse practices. This perspective provides a framework for future international research in Russian derivatology and its comparative alignment with Western word-formation theories.

**Keywords:** Derivatology; word formation; onomasiology; semasiology; word-formation field; derivational category; semantic-derivational category; cognitive linguistics; derived word; nomination; communicative factor.

**Introduction:** Russian word-formation studies, or derivatology, emerged as an independent branch of Russian linguistics in the 1940s–1950s, primarily through the foundational works of V. V. Vinogradov [Vinogradov 1951, 1952, 1975]. Over the decades, multiple approaches and methodological directions have developed, reflecting the interplay between morphological structure, semantic interpretation, and cognitive organization.

Two principal analytical frameworks in early Russian derivatology were syntagmatic and paradigmatic approaches. The syntagmatic approach focuses on relationships between base and derived forms, the internal morphemic structure, and derivational meaning. In contrast, the paradigmatic approach

analyzes higher-order categorical structures, such as derivational types, categories, and fields, resulting in constructs such as the word-formation nest (slovoobrazovatelnoe gnezdo) and word-formation field [Revzina 1969; Klobukov 2016].

This article presents a chronological and thematic overview of Russian derivatology, moving from structural-semantic analyses to cognitive and communicative paradigms, emphasizing the theoretical underpinnings, methodological innovations, and international relevance of Russian approaches.

## METHOD

### Formation of Derivatology in Russian Linguistics

Russian derivatology emerged in the 1940s–1950s within the framework of structural linguistics, but it

quickly distinguished itself through its focus on morphological derivation as a system of lexical innovation. Vinogradov [1951, 1952, 1975] established the fundamental principles, distinguishing base forms (*proizvodyaschie osnovy*) and derived forms (*proizvodnye slova*) and analyzing morphemic composition and derivational meaning.

The field soon developed two complementary orientations: a morphologically oriented approach, emphasizing precise description of morphemes and derivational rules, and a semantic-conceptual approach, integrating the study of word meaning and cognitive categorization [Toropcev 1974]. By the 1960s, Russian derivatologists introduced onomasiological methods, influenced by Czech scholars such as M. Dokulil and J. Kuharž, focusing on nomination processes and the establishment of basic semantic relations between base and derivative [Dokulil 1962].

The institutional consolidation of derivatology was accompanied by systematic textual analyses, lexicostatistical methods, and corpus-based studies, which enabled researchers to quantify derivational productivity and identify recurring patterns across semantic and morphological domains [Revzina 1969; Kubryakova 1978].

### **Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Approaches**

The syntagmatic approach analyzes derivational relations linearly, examining how bases combine with affixes to produce new words. It identifies morphemic structures and derivational meanings, tracing patterns such as modification, mutation, and transposition [Dokulil 1962]. Syntagmatic analysis provides fine-grained descriptions of derivational processes, facilitating classification of productive morphemes and derivational patterns.

The paradigmatic approach operates at a higher level of abstraction, focusing on derivational types and categories. Paradigmatic analysis allows scholars to describe word-formation nests and fields, revealing systematic relations between families of derived words [Revzina 1969; Klobukov 2016]. This approach also enables integration with onomasiological and semasiological perspectives, providing insights into both the creation of lexical units and semantic structures within existing lexemes [Toropcev 1974].

### **Onomasiological and Semasiological Directions**

The onomasiological approach investigates how concepts are expressed through derivational mechanisms. Rooted in the work of M. Dokulil and Czech onomasiology, it examines the interaction between onomasiological basis (the concept to be expressed) and onomasiological feature (the linguistic

element conveying the concept), resulting in modifications, mutations, and transpositions [Dokulil 1962].

The semasiological approach, in contrast, studies the semantic structure of existing lexical items, focusing on meaning relations and transformations. Russian derivatologists distinguish between the two approaches:

“Onomasiology investigates the process of lexical unit creation, whereas semasiology examines the semantic structure and its changes in established lexical units” [Toropcev 1974:7].

This distinction enables a dual perspective on derivation, linking conceptual motivation with lexical representation. Applications include onomasiological analysis of derivational categories, integration with grammatical structures, and development of field-based methods for analyzing derivational systems [Kubryakova 1978; Revzina 1969].

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Field-Based and Semantic-Derivational Approaches**

The concepts of word-formation field (*slovoobrazovatelnoe pole*) and semantic-derivational category (*semantiko-slovoobrazovatelnaya kategoriya*) were introduced to integrate morphological, semantic, and conceptual dimensions of derivation [Klobukov 2016; Kad'kalova 1991].

A word-formation field is defined as a set of affixes sharing the capacity to convey the same derivational meaning, while a semantic-derivational category represents a grouping of derivational types based on a shared conceptual fragment of extralinguistic reality [Klobukov 2015; Klobukov & Shakar 2016]. Field-based analyses allow researchers to map morphological patterns onto conceptual domains, enabling systematic description of derivational productivity and semantic coherence.

These approaches also facilitate cross-linguistic comparison, as they identify universal patterns of derivational categorization while accounting for language-specific realizations. The semantic-derivational perspective underlines that derived words are both formal and conceptual units, bridging Russian derivatology with international cognitive and semantic approaches.

### **Cognitive Derivatology**

Cognitive derivatology interprets derived words as units of knowledge representation, reflecting both mental structures and linguistic organization [Kubryakova 1981, 1988; Babina 2003]. Derived words exhibit double reference:

Reference to the external world, corresponding to the lexical meaning.

Reference to the linguistic system, reflecting derivational sources and internal relations [Kubryakova 2004:59].

By employing frame-based and propositional models, Russian cognitive derivatologists analyze derived words as structured cognitive schemas, integrating predicates, actants, and derivational patterns [Araeva 1994; Shmeleva 1994]. Larger units, such as word-formation types and nests, encode conceptual categories and cognitive schemas, enabling the study of derivation as a mechanism of word categorization and knowledge structuring.

This approach aligns with international cognitive linguistics, including Langacker's Cognitive Grammar [Langacker 1987] and Fillmore's Frame Semantics [Fillmore 1982], while preserving the morphological precision characteristic of Russian derivatology.

### **Communicative and Cognitive Factors in Word Formation**

Lexical functioning assesses the usage frequency and discourse relevance of derived words. N. D. Golev [2011] emphasizes that derivational needs reside in the lexicon, while realization follows the laws of lexical functioning, integrating both frequency and communicative effectiveness. Corpus-based studies quantify the "lexicality" of derivatives, distinguishing innovations from established paradigms.

While Golev highlights the primary role of communicative factors, Russian scholars argue for the inseparability of cognitive and communicative dimensions. Derived words are simultaneously conceptual units and pragmatic tools, mediating between speaker cognition and discourse practices [Alefrenko 2006; Kubryakova 2004].

The integration of cognitive and communicative perspectives allows for holistic analysis of derivational systems, including productivity, semantic coherence, and usage patterns. This framework provides a basis for comparative and cross-linguistic research in derivational morphology and cognitive semantics.

### **CONCLUSION**

Russian word-formation studies demonstrate a progressive integration of structural, semantic, cognitive, and communicative approaches. From Vinogradov's foundational analyses to contemporary cognitive-communicative models, derived words are understood as formal structures, conceptual units, and discourse elements simultaneously.

Key contributions include:

Syntagmatic and paradigmatic approaches for structural classification;

Onomasiological and semasiological analyses for semantic organization;

Field-based and semantic-derivational frameworks for conceptual mapping;

Cognitive and communicative models for understanding knowledge representation and discourse function.

This integrative paradigm provides a robust, internationally relevant model for the study of derivation, bridging Russian insights with global research in cognitive linguistics, typology, and morphology.

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