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## Limitations on metonymic uses of *-ion* nominalizations

This paper examines the polysemy of English nominalizations ending in the suffix *-ion* explaining it by metaphorical and metonymic extensions of the central meaning. The central meaning of *-ion* nominalizations is 'the action of V-ing'. Nominalizations in *-ion* are abstract action nominalizations. Due to various metaphorical and metonymic processes, they can be used to refer to people, objects, places and time of the action, as well as to emotions. This study shows that metonymic use of *-ion* nominalizations is limited. Nominalizations of verbs which code the events close to the transitive prototype cannot be used metonymically. Only the nominalizations of actions in which the Patient is not drastically visibly affected by a momentary action of a volitional acting Agent can have metonymic use. Even the ones which can be used metonymically do not have equal status. Some can be used both referentially and predicatively, while others can have only predicative use.

**Keywords:** nominalization; metonymy; metaphor; referentiality; transitivity.

### 1. Nominalization

Nominalizations have presented a problem to earlier linguistic theories. They challenged the distributional characterization of categories because they had some properties of verbs, e.g. the ability to take complements and subjects, while at the same time they had the same distributional properties as nouns. In

generative grammar, the nominalization issue caused a dispute between the transformationalists and lexicalists. The former considered that nominalizations should be studied within grammar because they are derived from clauses by transformation rules, whereas the latter regarded them as part of lexicon and considered that they should be listed in it as such. In functional grammar, Matthiessen and Halliday (1997) and Givón (1993) in his functional-typological approach regarded nominalizations as reduced verbal clauses which are rank-shifted to the level of a noun phrase.

In cognitive linguistics the ‘eternal’ question whether nominalization belongs to grammar or lexicon is completely irrelevant because cognitive linguistics makes no sharp distinction between lexis and grammar. In cognitive grammar, lexicon and grammar form “a continuum of symbolic units serving to structure conceptual content for expressive purposes” (Langacker 1987:35). Langacker (1991: 22) regards nominalization as conceptual reification. Nominalization morphemes are meaningful and directly participate in determining the composite sense of the nominal expression. A verb designates a process which consists of a sequence of configurations of states. These states are conceived as distributed in time. All individual states or configurations are different, which means that a verb typically designates a change over a period of time. Verbal predication is very complex because it consists of as many conceptual situations as there are different states in the designated process.

According to Langacker (1987), there are two ways of cognitive processing in conceptualizing such a complex scene: sequential scanning and summary scanning. In sequential scanning we can see the transformation from one configuration into another, i.e. we view the process as a series of transformations.

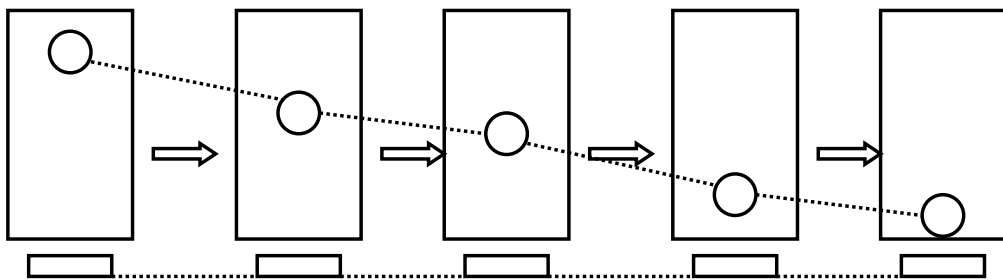


Figure 1. Sequential scanning (Langacker 1987: 144)

Summary scanning gives all configurations together, i.e. individual states are viewed as one complex configuration.

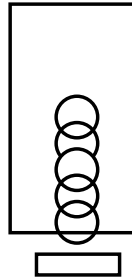


Figure 2. Summary scanning (Langacker 1987:144)

A verbal clause is a sequential scanning, while nominalization is a summary scanning of the same state-of-affairs. Langacker (1987) compares summary scanning to viewing a photograph, while sequential scanning is compared to watching a film. Humans have conceptual flexibility to process a complex scene in both ways. The verb profiles every individual state in the event and the relationships between them, while the noun profiles the same states collectively, as a thing.

## 2. Polysemy of *-ion* nominalizations

Nominalization suffixes are semantically very complex and often highly polysemous. The semantics of nominalizations has recently inspired many studies (Panther and Thornburg 2002, Panther and Thornburg 2004, Heyvaert 2003, etc.). They have all noticed the polysemous character of nominalization suffixes. Since the linguistic sign is not arbitrary, they all tried to find the way of explaining the relatedness of various meanings of one nominalization type, namely *-er* nominalizations. *-Er* nominalizations are, certainly, not the only type of nominalization which exhibits this polysemous character. Our aim is to illustrate the polysemy of *-ion* nominalizations and to show that various meanings of *-ion* nominalizations are not arbitrary, and that they can be explained through metaphorical and, more often, metonymic extensions.

### 3. Metonymy in the study of grammar

Metonymy is a conceptual phenomenon, “grounded in our experience, is subject to general and systematic principles, and structures our thoughts and actions.” (Radden and Kövecses 1999: 18). Kövecses (2002: 145) defines it as follows:

Metonymy is a cognitive process in which one conceptual entity, the vehicle, provides mental access to another conceptual entity, the target, within the same domain, or idealized cognitive model (ICM).

The theory of conceptual metonymy has found its application in many areas of grammar in which polysemy and various apparently unrelated uses of grammatical constructions could not be explained, e.g. Past Simple Tense for counterfactuality, the use of diminutive suffix to express affection, etc. (Kövecses 2002).

### 4. On the corpora

If not otherwise stated, the corpus is extracted from Collins COBUILD *Wordbank on a CD ROM*. It is a corpus of five million words extracted from the *Bank of English*. If the research at a certain stage required more examples or clarification, they were provided from *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary on a CD ROM* or the *British National Corpus Online*. The sources for such examples are recorded.

### 5. The central meaning of *-ion* nominalizations

In our study of polysemy of nominalizations, we have examined the most prominent and productive nominalization formative, the suffix *-ion*. The corpus findings presented in Biber et al. (1991) reveal that *-ion* is the most productive nominalization suffix in English both in terms of the total number of noun lexemes formed and in terms of rare coinages. It is rare in conversation and fiction, but extremely productive in news and almost four times as productive in academic prose as the second most productive nominalization suffix *-ity*. The suffix *-ion* was borrowed into English from Latin *-io*, *-ionem* through French *-ion* (OED). According to the same source, this suffix is used to form nouns of condition and action, usually from verbs, and rarely from adjectives or nouns. It was mainly added to participles in *-t-*, *-s-* or *-x-* but is now also added to verbs in actual use. These nouns were borrowed either directly from Latin or through

French, and some are formed in English by analogy. Nominalizations in *-ion* are higher-order symbolic units.<sup>1</sup> They consist of two or more symbolic units, i.e. the stem, usually a verb (rarely an adjective or a noun), and the suffix *-ion*. These complex structures blend into a unit.

The etymological meaning of this suffix was ‘the state or condition of being V-ed’, e.g. *relation* for ‘the condition of being related’, *completion* for ‘the condition of being completed’, etc. However, already in Latin *-tio* was used for the ‘action or process of *relating*, *completing* etc’. In English, the most usual sense is the noun denoting an action, equivalent to the English ending *-ing* (OED), i.e. the central meaning of *V-ion* is ‘the action of V-ing’. This meaning, ‘the action/instance or process of V-ing’ is the most frequently quoted in dictionaries, grammars and studies (OED, Plag (2003), Biber et al.(1999), Quirk et al (1985), Jackendoff (1975), Muysken (1999)).

Other frequently quoted meanings of *-ion* suffix are:

- the state or condition of being V-ed (OED, Plag (2003), Quirk et al. (1985), Muysken (1999))
- the (abstract) result or product of V-ing (Plag (2003), Quirk et al. (1985), Jackendoff (1975), Muysken (1999))
- group that Vs (Jackendoff 1975)

We will show here that the proposed central meaning ‘the action of V-ing’ can be found with all *-ion* nominalizations which is not the case with other meanings.

The meaning of *-ion* as ‘the state of being V-ed’ cannot be considered for a central meaning because it is ruled out in many examples of nominalizations derived from intransitive verbs, e.g. *immigration* cannot be interpreted as ‘\*the state of being immigrated’, or *participation* as ‘\*the state of being participated’ or *conversation* as ‘\*the state of being conversed’ and many other similar examples.

On the other hand, the meaning ‘the result of V-ing’ cannot be considered as the central meaning of *-ion* because it would block nominalizations of verbs denoting processes which lead to ‘the state of being V-ed’, e.g. *inspiration* cannot be interpreted as ‘the result of inspiring’, *possession* is not ‘the result of possessing’, *relaxation* is not ‘the result of relaxing’ etc.

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<sup>1</sup> For the explanation of *higher-order symbolic unit* see Langacker 1987.

## 6. Transitive Action Scenario

Prototypical action is a controlled, dynamic state of affairs. It involves an agent (a person who volitionally initiates a physical activity and who is in control of the action), a patient (an entity directly affected/effected by the activity of the agent), sometimes also an instrument (an object used in performing the action and achieving the goal) and it takes place in a certain time frame and at a certain place.

Langacker (1991: 282) defines events in terms of a billiard-ball model. Elements of an event are space, time, material substance and energy. These elements “are conceived as constituting a world in which discrete objects move around in space, make contact with one another, and participate in energetic interactions.” (Langacker 1991: 283). Discrete objects are expressed by nouns, and energetic interactions by verbs. An event is an action chain, like in billiard. The head of the chain is the source of energy. In the course of an event the energy is transferred from the head to the next object, and then to the next and so on until it gets to the tail of the action chain, like in billiard.

In a prototypical transitive event, the head of the Action Chain is the Agent, and the Tail is the Patient. The Agent is the source of the energy and, who “volitionally initiates physical activity resulting through physical contact in the transfer of energy to an external object.” (Langacker 1991: 285). The Patient is “an inanimate object that absorbs the energy transmitted via externally initiated physical contact and thereby undergoes an internal change of state.” In sentences like this, the Agent has the syntactic function of the Subject and the Patient has the function of the Object Direct.

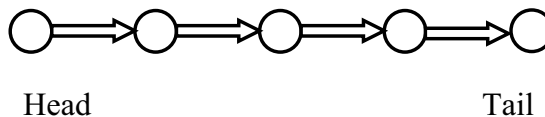


Figure 3. Action Chain (Langacker 1991: 285)

Events or processes can be divided in several types according to Taylor (2002: 414).

- Dynamic processes which can be divided in two subtypes:

- change-of-state processes (*The house collapsed*<sup>2</sup>.)
- processes in which there is energy input into the situation, but the process does not result in a change. (*The phone rang*.)
- Stative processes in which there is no energy input and no change of state. These processes exhibit three subtypes:
  - processes in which properties are assigned to an entity (*The book is boring*.)
  - processes which show the disposition of one entity with respect to another (*The picture hangs above the sofa*.)
  - processes in which an entity is identified (*The photographer is Beryl*.)
- Cognitive processes which include mental and perceptual processes. They can be:
  - stative (*I liked the film*.)
  - dynamic (*I watched the film*.)
- Complex processes which are made up of two or more component processes, such as the example '*Jane returned the book to the library*.' which can be broken down into three component processes, namely: (1) Jane does something with respect to the book, (2) the book changes its location and (3) the book ends up in a new location (library). In construing complex processes, we can focus on just one component in contrast to the process as a whole.

Givón (1993: 90) divides states, events and actions into five categories:

- temporary state: *She was angry*.
- permanent state: *He was tall*.
- unintended event: *The ball rolled off the field*.
- bounded action: *She kicked the ball off the field*.
- unbounded action: *They worked steadily*.

We shall assume here that there are several factors which are relevant for motivation in metonymic reading of a nominalization, i.e.:

- whether the process is stative or dynamic (stative vs. dynamic)

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<sup>2</sup> The examples are taken from the same source.

- degree of affectedness of the patient (change vs. no change)
- whether the action is momentary or continuous (bounded vs. unbounded)
- whether there is energy transfer or not (transfer of energy vs. no transfer of energy)

## 7. Metaphorical extensions of *-ion* action nominalizations to emotions

Verbs of emotion differ from this transitive prototype in the fact that the event is not initiated by a volitionally acting Agent, and there is no Patient which undergoes a perceptible change in the course of the energy transfer which is the action itself. The participants in cognitive events (which subsume verbs of emotion, perception and cognition) are the Experiencer and the Stimulus. The Experiencer is “an animate entity which is the locus of a cognitive activity or a cognitive state.” (Taylor 2002: 420). The Stimulus is “an entity which causes a cognitive activity or a cognitive state in the Experiencer.” (Taylor 2002: 420).

Emotions are metaphorically seen as physical actions. Every nominalization in *-ion* which is used for emotion has a different source which is from physical domain. The word *emotion* is by its origin nominalization of Latin verb *movere* ‘to move’. According to OED, the original meaning of *emotion* is ‘the action of moving out, migration, transference from one place to another’. Therefore, physical actions are metaphorically mapped on emotions.

We will illustrate the above statement with several examples. Etymological meanings of the nominalizations are given from the Oxford English Dictionary. The original meaning of *depression* was ‘the action of pressing down’. It is now used to refer to ‘the state of being sad’ through SAD IS DOWN metaphor. The original meaning of *inspiration* was ‘the action of breathing in’. It developed into figurative meaning: ‘a breathing in or infusion of some idea, purpose, etc. into the mind’ through the metaphor MENTAL FUNCTIONING IS BREATHING, which is a part of the conceptual metaphor MIND IS BODY. The original meaning of *attraction* was ‘the action of physically attracting another body’. It is now used for ‘a feeling of liking’ through the metaphor CAUSE OF EMOTION IS PHYSICAL FORCE. The nominalization *irritation* has the physical meaning ‘inducement of nervous impulse by stimulation’ which is metaphorically extended to ‘anger’ through the metaphor THE CAUSE OF ANGER IS PHYSICAL ANNOYANCE.



## 8. Metonymic extensions of *-ion* nominalizations to participants, settings and states

Our study has shown that *-ion* nominalizations can be used not only to express actions, but also to denote persons, physical objects and events, facts or beliefs which cause the action.

- (1a) This is why *the administration* of Kosovo must be part of a big Balkan plan. ('the action of administering Kosovo')
- (1b) The *administration* may put more emphasis on spurring economic growth. ('people who administer a country'; ACTION FOR AGENT metonymy)
- (2a) A key factor in running a business is the *delegation* of responsibility. ('to delegate responsibility')
- (2b) When the *delegation* arrived at Montevideo airport to catch their flight back to Brazil, they were met with demonstrators chanting "Get out Parreira." ('a group of people delegated to have talks on behalf of a larger group of people', ACTION FOR PATIENT metonymy)
- (3a) The research will focus on the *adaptation* of carbon dioxide lasers for topside and subsea welding work in both a wet and hyperbaric environment and the eventual development of a remotely operated welding system. (BNC) ('adapting carbon dioxide lasers')
- (3b) Mr Knight also acknowledged that a suitable high-speed pick-up machine was not yet available from a commercial manufacturer although they had shown their own *adaptation* with a high speed paddle rotor swept up all materials including small particles. (BNC) ('a machine adapted for certain purposes', ACTION FOR PATIENT metonymy)
- (4a) Delays in the determination of the final form and *decoration* of the palace constantly put back the date for the grand house-warming party. ('the action of decorating the palace')
- (4b) Colorful streamers and festive paper *decorations* had been hung from the ceiling. ('paper objects used to decorate the room,' ACTION FOR OBJECT USED IN THE ACTION metonymy)

- (5a) The Russian government had called a halt to the *construction* of a new project in the Rostov region. ('the action of constructing a new project')
- (5b) The British pavilion is an impressive steel and glass *construction* the size of Westminster Abbey. ('an edifice', ACTION FOR RESULT OF THE ACTION metonymy)

Nominalizations in *-ion* can also be metonymically used to refer to the settings: time, place and manner of action.

- (6a) The preparations for the *reception* of his Royal Highness proceeded. ('for receiving his Royal Highness')
- (6b) I asked him to wait in the lobby while I went to the *reception* - then made a quick exit through the back. ('the place in a hotel/hospital where guests/patients are received' ACTION FOR LOCATION metonymy)
- (7a) Gallant RAF pilots prevented a German *invasion* of our shores by winning the Battle of Britain in 1940. ('prevented Germans from invading our shores')
- (7b) He was commander in chief during the *invasion* of Panama. ('the time when Panama was invaded' ACTION FOR TIME metonymy)
- (8a) I thought a phonetic spelling might aid in *pronunciation*. ('pronouncing the word')
- (8b) Many New York speakers alternate, for instance, between two *pronunciations* of words like that: `;that'; and `;dat';. (BNC) ('ways of pronouncing' ACTION FOR MANNER OF ACTION metonymy)

They can also be used to refer to the state which is result of the action:

- (9a) We will then look at some coping strategies such as muscle *relaxation*, breathing exercises, distraction techniques, and positive self-talk, which will help you to develop a sense of control over your symptoms. ('relaxing muscles')
- (9b) Hypnotherapy is a highly effective method for helping to resolve body/mind issues using a state of complete mental *relaxation*. ('the state of being relaxed' ACTION FOR THE STATE RESULTING FROM THE ACTION metonymy, a subtype of CAUSE FOR EFFECT meton-

ymy)

The examples above show that in addition to being abstract nouns denoting actions/processes, *-ion* nominalizations can have referential meaning and denote people, things or abstract entities performing the action, a concrete result of the action, location and time of the action. Each nominalization is represented by an example of the central meaning (the action/process of V-ing) and an example of a metonymic extension.

## 9. Predicative *-ion* nominalizations

We have seen in the examples above that some nominalizations lend themselves easily to metonymic reading. The above metonyms of *-ion* nominalizations can have full noun status with reference and grounding.

However, some metonymically used *-ion* nominalizations can be used only in descriptive function, i.e. in predicative expressions (with copular and complex-transitive verbs) and in apposition. They are descriptive, non-referential and ungrounded, and they have no participant status. For example, metaphorical extension of action nominalizations to emotions and cognitive events can be further metonymically extended to denote a participant in the cognitive/emotional process. These processes differ from the action chain model. They are not volitional. The participants in the event are the Experiencer and the Stimulus. The Experiencer is the locus of the emotional/cognitive/perceptive events, the source and the sink of the energy in the process. The Stimulus is inactive, often backgrounded and sometimes even absent (expected or anticipated).

We can refer to the Stimulus using EMOTION FOR STIMULUS metonymy. This metonymy is only possible with nominalizations denoting emotions of low or medium intensity, such as *inspiration*, *irritation*, *consolation*, and the like. For example:

(10a) My *inspiration* comes from poets like Baudelaire and Jacques Prevert. ('a feeling of enthusiasm you get from someone or something, which gives you new and creative ideas')

(10b) In the Twenties, he was *an inspiration* to the young muralists Diego Rivera and Jose Clemente Orozco and was revered by the Surrealists. (BNC) ('a person who inspired young muralist', EMOTION FOR STIMULUS metonymy)

- (11a) For the first time Leonard felt *irritation* at her methods. ('a feeling of annoyance')
- (11b) She was *an irritation* to him, no more. (BNC) ('a person who irritates him', EMOTION FOR STIMULUS metonymy)
- (12a) Will he be able to resist the *temptation* to buy? ('a feeling of desire for something one should not do or have')
- (12b) The first *temptation* was, as it has always been for a lot of sportsmen, alcohol. ('the thing one wants to have, that causes the feeling of *temptation*', EMOTION FOR STIMULUS metonymy)

The nominalizations used for Stimuli of emotions, *temptation*, *inspiration* and *irritation* usually do not have referential status. They cannot be used as subjects of verbs other than copulas (primarily *be*). Their role is rather descriptive than referential. They are also found in complex-transitive complementation as object complements, which is again an intensive relationship, i.e. there is the relationship of equality between the referent object and the object complement. Although the examples below refer to persons, they cannot be used as Subjects of the verbs *say* and *leave* which normally require animate Subjects:

- (13) \*The *inspiration* said that she was tired.
- (14) \*The *irritation* left without saying goodbye.
- (15) \* The *temptation* said good-bye leaving the room.

These nominalizations can only be used predicatively, e.g. "He describes tourists as an irritation." or in apposition, such as "Madam de Berny, his *inspiration* and...". Both in predication and in apposition, we find two nominals, both designating the same entity. Even if they are used as subjects, they have Zero semantic role, e.g.:

- (16) *Its earliest inspiration* was a young man born in a village on the banks of the Nile about 250 AD. (BNC)

Although predicate nouns (Taylor 2002) (or predicative nominative as Langacker (1991) calls them) are usually ungrounded, since they ascribe a property to a subject referent, we have found a number of examples in which they are used predicatively, but they are grounded. Grounding is expressed by the definite article:

- (17) ‘You are *the irritation*, mademoiselle, and, on this occasion, also that vacuous Marie.’ (BNC)
- (18) She is *the inspiration* of Lennox Lewis, Britain's greatest boxing hope. (BNC)
- (19) You are not only desirable but you have become *the inspiration* for many of his most successful designs. (BNC)

The above cited example with *irritation* meaning ‘the person who irritates someone’ used with the definite article is the only one found in the British National Corpus, while similar examples with the noun *inspiration* are numerous. This means that *irritation* can only be used as the predication indicating class-membership (with the exception of the one example found in BNC), while *inspiration* can be found in class-membership, but also in identification relation. In class-membership relation, the subject referent is grounded, while the predicate noun is ungrounded. In identification, both the subject and the predicated noun that complements the copula are grounded, and the sentence is reversible.

The nouns *inspiration* and *irritation* also differ in the use of possessives. We can say: *She was his inspiration* or *She was his consolation*, but not \**She was his irritation* or \**She was his temptation*.

- (20) Madame de Berny, *his inspiration* and older first love (she was his mother’s age), haunts the works set in the Loire valley, such as ‘Le lys dans la vallee’ and ‘La grenadiere.’
- (21) They lost the chance of Olympic glory, beaten by a German side *whose inspiration* is Heike Latzsch, the new sensation in women’s hockey. (BNC)

Although they are both nominalizations of transitive events (i.e. *She inspired him* and *She irritated him*), the expression *his inspiration* can be interpreted ‘something/somebody that inspired him’ or ‘his feeling of inspiration’, whereas *his irritation* can only be understood as ‘his feeling of irritation’. We would also like to add here that the status of possessives as grounding predications is still unclear.

This shows that the degree of entrenchment of *-ion* nominalizations in metonymic use differs from type to type. Whereas collective nouns, for example, in ACTION FOR AGENT metonymy such as *administration*, *the Prosecution*, *the Opposition*, *competition* etc. can have full referential status, and can be used

as subjects of various lexical verbs, the nouns *temptation*, *consolation*, *inspiration* and *irritation* can be used only predicatively, and cannot be used as referential nouns. If co-ordinated, they are co-ordinated with other predicative nouns denoting quality (in the example below *a bore* and *an irritation* can be replaced by *boring* and *irritating*).

- (22) I am one of what must be an increasing number who find the portentous moralisings of A. Solzhenitsyn a bore and *an irritation*.

Although co-ordination normally occurs between the same morphosyntactic forms, this nominalization is in some cases co-ordinated with predicative adjectives, which further proves its predicative status.

- (23) He turned about abruptly, as if the subject was suddenly *painful* or *an irritation*.

Another group of nominalizations which can be used only predicatively are those which are used in ACTION FOR CAUSE metonymy. Closely related to Agent is the role of External Cause. Unlike human agents, External Causes are not in control of the action, they cannot plan and monitor it, but they bring about the change in the patient being the source of the energy which causes this change. They are seen as general, independent forces having the energy of their own to perform the action, and they are out of human control. They are non-physical causes, such as situations, facts, events, behaviours, problems, ideas, etc. which bring about the action.

A number of nominalizations in this group can occur only in intensive complementation, i.e. as complements of copular verbs or as object complements in complex-transitive complementation. These nouns do not occur as subjects of verbs other than copulas, and they can only rarely be found as direct objects of the verbs *find* and *seek*, and with the constructions *be seen as* (*justification*, *illustration*...). Such *-ion* nominalizations denoting causes are: *demonstration*, *consolation*, *explanation*, *illustration*, *indication*, *inspiration*, *justification*, *manifestation*, *reflection*. Like the verbs which are the bases for nominalizations found in ACTION FOR AGENT metonymy, the verbs which are the bases of these nominalizations are very low on causation scale. The Patients of these verbs are not affected. They do not undergo internal change. They are actions of metaphorical transfer, so the Objects Direct of these verbs are metaphorical Movers, not Patients. The activity is not premeditated or volitional. Conceptually (according to CALD Thesaurus) most of them belong to two groups between which we can establish conceptual relatedness, i.e.

- Defining and explaining (*explanation, illustration, justification*)
- Showing and demonstrating (*demonstration, indication, manifestation, reflection*)

These two groups, i.e. defining and explaining, and showing and demonstrating are different ways of conveying information about an event, a thing or a person. The former group includes verbal communication of information about an event, a thing or a person, while the latter group includes movements or actions by which we convey information about something/somebody. Events, beliefs and other non-physical External Causes cannot communicate verbally or by movements. According to Langacker (1991:310) this is a metaphorical extension of action chain to non-physical domain (i.e. social interactions). We are dealing here with nominalizations of actions which have a non-physical cause, a non-physical mover, and an indefinite recipient. This is the initiation of transfer which does not involve any physical motion. The object is construed as moving abstractly to the recipient, and the Subject is construed as supplying the energy that induces the transfer.

- (24a) Did Yeltsin explain why they were entitled to relief in his view? I don't think there was a great deal of *explanation*, except Iraqi people are suffering. ('a great deal of explaining')
- (24b) The deputy airport manager said there was no apparent *explanation* for the crash. ('no details or facts which explain the crash', ACTION FOR CAUSE metonymy)
- (25a) In *illustration* of this he produces, starting with the careers of Drake and Raleigh, a potted history of the British at sea. ('to illustrate this')
- (25b) An *illustration* of China's dynamism is that a new company is formed in Shanghai every 11 seconds. ('the fact that illustrates China's dynamism', ACTION FOR CAUSE metonymy)
- (26a) He added: "In the wake of the election, this message from the IRA, which is one of savagery and destruction, must be seen as their *indication* of an intensification of what they call the armed struggle." (BNC) ('their act of indicating')
- (26b) The threat is a clear *indication* that Ireland can expect a fiery welcome when they make the difficult trip to Bursa for the second leg next week. ('fact that indicates...' ACTION FOR CAUSE metonymy)

Just like *irritation*, these metonyms are used only descriptively, i.e. in intensive complementation and ungrounded.

### 10. - *ion* nominalizations without metonymic reading

If we consider the examples (1.b. - 9.b.) above, we will see that the following nominalizations are used metonymically: *administration*, *delegation*, *adaptation*, *decoration*, *construction*, *reception*, *invasion*, *pronunciation* and *relaxation*. All these examples are dynamic actions with energy transfer. However, they all are very far from the transitive prototype in the fact that the Patient is not affected at all, or at least not physically, visibly affected, i.e. there is not observable change on the Patient. The only exception is *adaptation*, which implies change on the Patient, but it is just a minor modification to make the object meet the needs, not a drastic, salient one. The action is usually unbounded, i.e., not momentary and often not terminated. Most nominalizations which can be used metonymically are long-term or iterative activities, often occupational (e.g. *administration*, *the Prosecution*, *protection*, *representation*, *delegation*), related to acts of communication (e.g. *declaration*, *explanation*, *expression*, *justification*, *manifestation*) or administrative organization (*conglomeration*, *federation*, *association*, *coordination* etc.).

We can notice that the closer the process is to the transitive prototype (i.e. Agent acting deliberately; concrete, visibly affected patient; bounded, terminated, fast-changing event that took place in real time (Givóon 1993: 100)), the less likely it is to have metonymic reading, e.g. *execution*, *destruction*, *manipulation*, *demolition*, *evaporation* and *suffocation*.

While the group of people who immigrate in a country is called *immigration*, the group of people who destroy a country cannot be called *destruction*. The people who are delegated to speak on behalf of other people are called *a delegation*, while the people who are assassinated cannot be called *assassination*. The object used to decorate a room is called *a decoration*, while the object used to execute a person cannot be called *an execution*.

The reason for this is that the action in the above examples is too salient and its elements (participants and settings) are backgrounded. The only metonymy which can be found with these nominalizations is ACTION FOR TIME metonymy because of a special relationship between action and time.



According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999) measuring time means comparing events. The beginning and the beginning and the end of an event are compared with states of instruments used to measure time. The operation of such instruments is based on regularly repeated events, e.g. repeated movements of the Sun, or a pendulum etc.

We cannot observe time itself – if the time even exists as a thing-in itself. We can only observe events and compare them. In the world, there are iterative events against which other events are compared. We define time by metonymy: successive iterations of a type of event stand for intervals of “time”. (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 137)

Therefore, the basic literal properties of time are properties of events:

“Time is directional and irreversible because events are directional and irreversible; events cannot “unhappen”. (Lakoff and Johnson 1999: 137)

This shows us that our experience of time is relative to our experience of events. This is why ACTION FOR TIME metonymy is one of the most productive metonymies found with *-ion* nominalizations. Almost any *-ion* nominalization easily lends itself to this kind of extension. Even the nominalizations denoting fast-changing events with visibly highly affected Patients, which normally do not have metonymic extensions can be found in this metonymy, e.g.:

- (27a) There is worldwide concern about *the destruction* of the rainforests. (‘about destroying the rainforests’)
- (27b) Ever since the tragic *destruction* of Convoy PQ17 in the previous year the German battleship’s baneful presence had haunted the minds of naval planners. (‘since the time when Convoy PQ17 was destroyed’, ACTION FOR TIME metonymy)
- (28a) His protest against *the execution* of Sir Roger Casement in 1916 probably cost him a seat in the House of Lords. (‘against executing Sir Roger Casement’)
- (28b) Before *execution*, he admitted to taking the lives of at least 35 more women. (‘before the time of his execution’, ACTION FOR TIME metonymy)

Another group of nominalizations which are not found in metonymic use are nominalizations in *-ion* used for emotions. While *inspiration*, *irritation*, *consolation*, *temptation* and some other nominalizations used for emotions can be used

metonymically for the Stimulus of the emotion (e.g. She was an *inspiration* of many poets.), it is not found in nominalizations denoting emotions of high intensity, such as e.g. *infatuation* and *depression*. This can be explained by the fact that the emotions of *infatuation* and *depression* are too intense and therefore too salient, so that they do not allow foregrounding of the Stimulus.

(29) \*She is the *infatuation/depression* of many people.

*Depression* can only be ‘the state of being depressed,’ and *infatuation* ‘the state of being infatuated’. By no means can we interpret *depression* as ‘something/someone that depresses you’ or *infatuation* as ‘someone/something you are infatuated with’. This is in line with one of the principles of metonymy proposed by Kövecses and Radden (1998), SALIENT OVER NONSALIENT. Momentary actions in which the Patient is killed, destroyed, or disappears in any other manner or is drastically changed occupy all our attention.

## 11. Conclusion

Nominalizations ending in the suffix *-ion* are highly polysemous. The central meaning of these nominalizations is ‘the action of V-ing’, i.e. they are primarily abstract action nominalizations. In addition to being abstract nouns denoting actions/processes, *-ion* nominalizations can have referential meaning and denote people, things or abstract entities performing the action, a concrete result of the action, location and time of the action and emotions. This is possible due to various metaphorical and metonymic extensions from the central meaning.

However, metonymically used *-ion* nominalizations do not have equal status. Some can be used both referentially and predicatively, e.g. *administration*, *protection*, *construction* and *combination*. Others can be used only predicatively, e.g. *inspiration*, *irritation*, *temptation* and *consolation*. The third group of nominalizations cannot have metonymic reading at all, for example: *destruction*, *assassination*, *evaporation* and *suffocation*.

Possibility of metonymic reading depends on the type of action coded by the nominalized verb. The closer the action is to the transitive prototype, i.e. fast changing (momentary) action in which the Patient is highly affected (destroyed or killed) by a volitional, premeditated and planned action of an animate Agent, the less likely it is to have metonymic reading and be polysemous.

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**OGRANIČENJA METONIMIJSKE PORABE NOMINALIZACIJA NA *-ION***

U ovom se radu razmatra polisemija engleskih nominalizacija koje završavaju na sufiks *-ion*, i objašnjava se metaforičkim i metonimijskim proširenjima središnjega značenja. Središnje je značenje nominalizacija sa sufiksom *-ion* 'obavljanje radnje izraženo glagolom'. Nominalizacije sa sufiksom *-ion* su apstraktne nominalizacije radnje. Zahvaljujući raznim metaforičkim i metonimijskim procesima, one se mogu koristiti kako bi se referiralo na ljude, predmete, mjesto i vrijeme radnje, kao i na emocije. U ovom se radu pokazuje da je metonimijska poraba nominalizacija sa sufiksom *-ion* ograničena. Nominalizacije glagola koji kodiraju događaje bliske tranzitivnom prototipu ne mogu se koristiti metonimijski. Samo nominalizacije radnji u kojima Pacijens nije drastično vidljivo promijenjen trenutnom radnjom Agensa mogu imati metonimijsku upotrebu. Čak i one koje se mogu koristiti metonimijski nemaju isti status. Neke se mogu koristiti i referencijalno i predikativno, dok druge mogu imati samo predikativnu porabu.

**Ključne riječi:** nominalizacija, metonimija, metafora, referencijalnost, prijelaznost.