MICHAŁ RZEPIELA

Summary

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SOME COGNITIVE AND SOME EXTRALINGUISTIC ASPECTS OF WORD-FORMATION IN MEDIEVAL LATIN

The present paper discusses some cognitive and some extralinguistic aspects of word-formation in medieval Latin. It is inspired by the works of Michèle Fruyt (1996 and 2000: see notes 2 and 3 respectively in the article) on the same aspects of word-formation as observed in ancient Latin. Our point of departure was the M. Fruyt's distinction between the 'sens fonctionnel' - the meaning of the words in everyday communication, which could also be described as 'the normal meaning', – and the 'sens parallèle', the meaning given to the lexemes by the speaking subjects when subjecting them to metalinguistic analysis. If it is possible to decompose the lexemes morphologically, then this kind of meaning may also be called the 'sens compositionnel'. The distinction described is to some extent inspired by the cognitive ideas. The 'parallel meaning' then reflects an individual understanding (sometimes erroneous according to a norm) and (re)interpretation of the words produced by the speaking subjects. The most spectacular manifestation of the 'parallel meaning' is taken to be the variety of etymological reinterpretations commonly called 'folk etymology'. We give some examples of these reinterpretations taken from the dictionary of Polish Medieval Latin (Lexicon mediae et infimae Latinitatis Polonorum). Another group of vocabulary analysed here is that of the deminutive formations, particularly where these represent the connotative meanings. Finally we discuss some extralinguistics factors, such as historical and social changes in the Middle Ages, which can have a notable influence on the process of word-formation. By comparing the same formations as they occur in both ancient and medieval Latin, one can sometimes establish a significant difference in their productivity during the two ages arising from this type of cause. The phenomenon can be illustrated very well by derivatives such as feminines ending in -trix, names of offices ending in -atus and others.

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24.2.2009, 14:51