

STUDIA NEOFILOLOGICZNE XVI

INSTRUCTIONAL WRITING ACROSS TIMES AND LANGUAGES

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XVI

INSTRUCTIONAL WRITING
ACROSS TIMES AND LANGUAGES

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MAGDALENY BATOR
PRZEMYSŁAWA SZNURKOWSKIEGO



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PREFACE

The present volume unveils the vast scope and potential of instructional texts, demonstrating how they can be approached from various perspectives. The papers collected in the volume cover topics which range from the structure and typology of medical and culinary instructions, through medical and culinary lexicon, to instructions as found in grammar books. The articles cover the period from the fourteenth century until contemporary times, and deal with British, American and Australian varieties of English, as well as Polish.

The contributions have been organised in a chronological order, beginning with the analysis of medieval medical recipes in two seemingly unrelated manuscript collections, namely MSS 404 and 5262, housed at the Wellcome Library in London. Teresa Marqués-Aguado and Laura Esteban-Segura prove that – contrary to what has been believed – a certain degree of overlap can be identified between the instructions found in the two manuscripts; this is accomplished by investigating recipe components and individual recipe features, such as the form of the headings, telegrammatic style, verb forms, personal and possessive pronouns, object deletion, temporal structuring and parataxis.

The investigation of typological and structural features of medical texts is also addressed by Marta Sylwanowicz, who worked on surgical instructions. Her study shows that early surgical texts had a well-defined and well organised structure which co-existed with the linguistic features preferred in these texts. This resulted in an authoritative tone of the instructions.

The second part of the volume begins with Isabel de la Cruz-Cabanillas's presentation of Early Modern English recipes as a mirror of the time period. She concentrates on the society in which the recipes were written, as "no other genre is so permeable to the changes in the cultural and social spheres, reflecting fashion, traditions and conceptions of their time of writing." (Cruz-Cabanillas, this volume). The author discusses the most frequent diseases of the time and possible cures for them, as found in a number of selected and

(mostly) unpublished manuscripts from the 16th to the 18th centuries. The study is also a source of newly-introduced terminology for ingredients brought to Europe from America.

Francisco Alonso-Almeida and Francisco J. Álvarez-Gil investigate the nature and functions of modal verbs used in medical discourse. They show that apart from the general meaning of obligation expected of modal verbs used in instructions, one may find modals expressing possibility, prediction, and a range of other pragmatic functions. The authors touch upon the relationship between particular modal verbs and modal meanings, and discuss selected formulaic patterns found in the recipes. The deontic, dynamic and epistemic modalities are illustrated diachronically, in terms of their functions and frequency of occurrence in recipes.

The next article is a lexicographic comparison of two medical dictionaries from the 17th century. R.W. McConchie undertook the laborious task of juxtaposing the entries of the physical dictionary attached to the translation of Lazare Rivière (1655) and a version of the dictionary in Richard Tomlinson's translation of Jean de Renou (1657). Although earlier studies (Tyrkkö 2009)¹ revealed no common features between the two, on the basis of the analysis of the headwords as well as a number of entries, McConchie concludes that 'a modest part' of Renou/Tomlinson's dictionary derives from Rivière.

The final article in this part is based on the earliest recipe collections written and published in 17th-century Poland. Even though they were written only a few years apart from one another, Magdalena Bator argues that features of *Compendium Ferculorum* are more typical of a medieval than a 17th-century collection. Features of the latter are represented in recipes in *Moda Bardzo Dobra* [Very good trends].

The third part of the volume, devoted to the period from the 19th century until today, comprises three articles dealing with instructions written in three different varieties of English. Julia Landmann offers an analysis of the culinary lexicon found in the contemporary informal language used in the media. Her attention is especially focused on the impact of French, Spanish and German which have influenced the (British and American) English lexicon since 1901. Next, Dana Serditova has collected a long list of culinary lexicon found in Australian slang. She categorises the collected entries into five categories on morphological, phonological, semantic, stylistic and etymological grounds.

¹ Tyrkkö, J. 2009. "A physical dictionary 1657: The first English medical dictionary", in: R.W. McConchie, A. Honkapohja and J. Tyrkkö (eds.) *Selected Proceedings of the 2008 Symposium on New Approaches in English Historical Lexis (HEL-LEX 2)*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Press, 172–187.

The final contribution unveils a different face of instructional writing. Radosław Dylewski delves into a number of Confederate grammar books published between 1861 and 1865, and explores the irregular verbs whose past participle forms were considered obsolete, obsolescent or rare. Wherever possible, the author compares the Southern manuals with their Northern or British counterparts.

We would like to thank all the contributors for their splendid cooperation, and the group of reviewers who did a great job and shared their opinions to improve the volume. We would also like to acknowledge Jan Długosz University Publishing House, which agreed to publish the volume despite a number of obstacles which arose on the way.

The articles shed some light on the issues related to instructional writings of various types. However, they also pose a number of questions which remain unanswered, opening the door for further research. Thus, it is hoped that the volume will be inspirational for other scholars and will contribute to the growing interest in the analysis of instructions.

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