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Diasystème et variation en français actuel :  
aspects sémantiques

Sous la direction de Gaétane Dostie et Pascale Hadermann



### La langue du patient, de l'archaïsme à l'orthonymeAnalyse comparative français/anglais

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[. Diasystème et variation en français actuel : aspects sémantiques](#)
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- **Abstract:** There has always been a discrepancy between the language used by the physician (borrowed from Greek and Latin) and that used by the patient (derived from the vernacular language), and numerous studies have demonstrated that language barriers have a negative impact on both the quality and the cost of healthcare (Ogden *et al.* 2001, 2003; Tailor et Ogden 2009; Howard 2006; Vernon *et al.* 2007). This paper is a French/English comparative study of the terms relative to the body and its illnesses, based on the identification of the main stylistic devices and linguistic forms used in the lay language. Our corpus consists in a series of language for medical purposes reference books and textbooks aimed at foreign healthcare professionals. The stylistic devices studied are the metaphor, metonymy, truncation, and euphemism. We also develop a typology of archaisms, which generally originate from humorism, and of language misuses, which are often due to a misunderstanding of anatomy (Dirckx 1983 [1976]). We dedicate a part of our study to eponyms, which are still deeply imbedded in the lay language (Woywodt 2007), as well as to orthonyms (in their abbreviated forms) and to toponyms (Turnpenny et Smith 2003), the latter two having entered the lay language more recently via emerging infectious diseases. Our analysis reveals that English and French are marked by the same stylistic devices and linguistic forms, which evidences that both languages are underlain by the same culture of the body and its illnesses. In the conclusion, we underline the medical interest of such a study as it should permit to improve doctor-patient communication when the two do not share the same native language, a situation rendered more and more common with the healthcare professionals' increasing mobility and the growth of international tourism.
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