

**Current Developments
in English Historical Linguistics**

Studies in Honour of Rafał Molencki

Prace Naukowe



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Studies in Honour of Rafał Molencki

Edited by

Artur Kijak, Andrzej M. Łęcki, and Jerzy Nykiel

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Preface

With this volume we would like to honour our mentor and friend – Professor Rafał Molencki on his sixtieth birthday. Born in Gliwice, on 23 October 1957, Rafał Molencki has tied his career within linguistics to Katowice and Sosnowiec, that is, two cities where the Faculty of Philology of the University of Silesia is based. Rafał Molencki received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1988 from the University of Silesia based on a dissertation entitled *Complementation in Old English*. The book *A history of English counterfactuals* was the basis for achieving the title of Doctor of Letters in English Linguistics (habilitation). Upon publishing the book *Causal conjunctions in mediaeval English. A corpus-based study of grammaticalization* in 2012, Rafał was granted the title Professor of Humanities by the President of Poland.

Professor Rafał Molencki's work, as he frequently admits, has been influenced by eminent scholars, such as the late Professor Kazimierz Polański (Jagiellonian University in Kraków, University of Silesia), who was Rafał Molencki's first teacher of linguistics, the late Professor Ruta Nagucka (Jagiellonian University in Kraków), who was a supervisor of his PhD dissertation, and Professor Emerita Elizabeth Closs Traugott (Stanford University), who was his host and advisor when he was a visiting researcher at the Stanford University after being awarded the Fulbright Advanced Research Grant by the Polish-American Fulbright Foundation.

Rafał Molencki's earliest linguistic research was set within the generative framework. In his important work at that time (Molencki 1991) he offered an analysis of verbal complement options in Old English. Afterwards his research took a functionalist bent which has been indelibly etched on his prolific linguistic output ever since. This new inclination shines through in the next important work by Professor Molencki, that is, his take on the history of English counterfactual constructions (Molencki 1999). At the further stages of his career, we can see Rafał Molencki dividing his attention mostly between the history

of modal verbs (Molencki 2002, 2003, 2005) and that of adverbs and adverbial subordinators. His research at this stage has been driven by an interest in grammaticalization and manuscript studies (Molencki 2012). Professor Molencki's profound influence is reflected in the number of distinguished scholars who have contributed to this volume.

His interests go far beyond English historical linguistics and they include Indo-European studies, early Germanic languages, Old Norse, Anglo-Norman, multilingualism in medieval England, manuscript studies, varieties of English, syntactic theories, contrastive studies and machine translation.

On top of being a researcher, Rafał Molencki has also, if not most of all, been a teacher and a lecturer. He has taught courses in linguistics which are, for obvious reasons, far too numerous and too variegated to mention here. He has been the supervisor of dozens of BA and MA theses and thirteen doctoral dissertations. The editors of this commemorative volume have each had the pleasure to be students of Rafał Molencki's at one point in time.

Over the years, Professor Rafał Molencki has also held a number of administrative positions at the Faculty, including that of Dean of the Faculty of Philology (2008–2016). He has also been active serving and shaping the academic community outside the University of Silesia itself. He is the Head of the Katowice Branch of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Editor-in-Chief of *Linguistica Silesiana*.

We would also like to thank all the contributors to this volume, referees, and the Institute of English, University of Silesia.

Artur Kijak, Andrzej M. Łęcki, Jerzy Nykiel

Table of Contents

Preface (<i>Artur Kijak, Andrzej M. Łęcki, Jerzy Nykiel</i>)	5
List of publications by Rafał Molencki	7
Tabula gratulatoria	13
<i>Jerzy Welna</i>	
From Raphael to Rafał, or a partly linguistic potpourri: An anniversary essay .	17

Part One: Medieval English Syntax

<i>Artur Bartnik</i>	
Resumptive pronouns and asymmetric coordination in Old English	35
<i>Magdalena Bator, Marta Sylwanowicz</i>	
“Once you see it, once you don’t” – The case of null objects in Middle English culinary and medical recipes	51
<i>Anna Cichosz</i>	
Verb-initial main clauses in Bede: A translation effect?	68
<i>Ursula Lenker</i>	
Pathways of change of English <i>there</i>	90
<i>María José López-Couso, Belén Méndez-Naya</i>	
The declarative complementizer <i>how</i> in the long diachrony	109
<i>Andrzej M. Łęcki</i>	
On the evolution of adverbial subordinators expressing negative purpose in English: The case of <i>weald</i>	129
<i>Janusz Malak</i>	
Expletives in Old English and the structure of the Old English clause	140
<i>Ilse Wischer</i>	
On the use of the pre-modal <i>mæg</i> in Old English	159

<i>Anna Wojtyś</i>	
The role of syntactic factors in the elimination of *þurfan from English	176

Part Two: Semantics, Lexis, Translation

<i>Magdalena Charzyńska-Wójcik</i>	
To translate is human, to explain – divine	195
<i>Ewa Ciszek-Kiliszewska</i>	
Dynamics of use of the Middle English preposition <i>bitwix(e)</i>	214
<i>Radosław Dylewski, Tomasz Kopyciński</i>	
A study of <i>dude</i> 's earliest semantics and its geographical distribution on the basis of <i>Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers</i>	227
<i>Joanna Kopaczyk, Bettelou Los</i>	
Referential functions of <i>there+P</i> pronominal adverbs in Older Scots	254
<i>Hans Sauer</i>	
Milton's binomials and multinomials in <i>Samson Agonistes</i>	275

Part Three: Phonology

<i>Ondřej Tichý, Jan Čermák</i>	
Consonant cluster reduction and change of language type: Structural observations on phonotactic modification from Old to Middle English	307
<i>Artur Kijak</i>	
Labial-velar changes in the history of English and Netherlandic	327

On the cover: an illustration and a fragment of the manuscript from the 12th-century historical treatise *Pantheon* by Gotfryd from Viterbo and the Bible of the collegiate church in Sandomierz. The collection of Diocesan Library in Sandomierz

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