

Abstract

This thesis treats the tendencies in the development of diminutives in French dictionaries between 1539 and 1787. In this period develop both French lexicography, a new linguistic discipline, and French language. Diminutives belong to the set of words that were declassified during the 17th century and were estimated as undesirable for the speech of an honest man – „honnte homme“, even though these were relatively appreciated in the previous century. On the basis of research we present diminutives that occur in seven lexicographic works (in the dictionaries from Robert Estienne, Jean Nicot, Randle Cotgrave, Pierre Richelet, Antoine Furetiere, French Academy and Abbé Féraud). Thus we are able to observe the stability of particular diminutives as well as the category as a whole. If we encounter the diminutive form in the dictionaries from the end of the 17th and 18th centuries, it is very likely to be the case of a lexicalised diminutive, independent on the previously diminished word. In parallel to that, we also deal with comments - *marque d'usage* - that generally detach diminutives out of bon usage. The occurrence of synthetic diminutives, their partial extinguishment and substitution by analytical diminutives reflect the degradation of diminutive derivation in the speech of classical France and correspond with the evolution towards analytical character of French language.

Key words: lexicography, diminutives, language development, glossary