

Legal Latin From an Interdisciplinary Perspective

The occurrence of Latinisms, that is terms, phrases and maxims derived from or imitative of Latin, is one of the most salient features of legal discourse. Legal Latin is an inseparable element of legal argumentation, which is evidenced by the fact that it is used by both practicing lawyers, researchers dealing with branches of law significantly influenced by Roman law, and translators of texts produced by lawyers. Therefore, Latinisms are an important linguistic phenomenon not only in the context of applying the law but also translating legal texts. The social and cultural prestige of Latin enables lawyers to effectively invoke the authority of the law and allows them, *inter alia*, to concisely refer to concepts governing a given legal system. Latin is well adapted to multilingual environments, which may contribute to its usefulness in international legal communication between representatives of diverse legal cultures. It also elevates the importance of law in society. Considering the fact that lawyers willingly avail themselves of legal Latin, it can be assumed that due to its archaic nature, its presence may hinder comprehension of legal texts on the part of non-lawyers. Since Latin in its legal variety appears in various types of texts, the issue of proper understanding and translation of Latinisms also applies to translators of legal texts who often have to make difficult translation choices as regards the employment of Latinisms and their variants.

The aim of the project is to analyse the prevalence and characteristics of Latinisms in specialized varieties of natural language, namely in the language of the law (i.e. the language of legal acts) and legal language (i.e. the language of legal professionals), based on non-translated and translated texts representative of contemporary legal discourse. The project provides for the creation of a large electronic corpus of legal texts as well as the creation of a catalogue of Latinisms and their variants occurring in several genres. The interdisciplinary analyses to be carried out within the framework of the research project will be embedded in jurilinguistics, thus combining the knowledge and methodology of linguistics and legal sciences.

The research project will significantly broaden the scope of already existing small-scale research on Latin in legal discourse. The knowledge gained in the course of the project will be useful to both lawyers and non-lawyers, including translators. The collected results will be subjected to an in-depth interpretation, allowing conclusions to be drawn regarding the degree of prevalence of legal Latin in legal discourse, its character in different legal systems, changes in its use over the years, and its impact on the accessibility of non-translated and translated legal texts. In addition, the research tasks will make it possible to define in detail the role played by today's legal Latin and the implications for the training of translators of legal texts and lawyers. The results of the work carried out within the project will be published in the form of scientific articles written in Polish and English as well as presented at national and international conferences. Information on the course of work is to be published on a website set up specifically for that purpose.