Logical Categories and Parts of Speech as Structuring Devices in Pollux’ Onomasticon

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Stelios Chronopoulos

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Pollux’ Onomasticon

- 10 books, ca. 120,000 words
- written as a fluid text
- 2nd century CE
- it contains:
  - lists of synonyms and
  - lists of notions together with their words
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Pollux' Onomasticon: an onomasiological dictionary without macrostructure

Word-oriented Structures and the Parts-of-Speech System

Object-oriented Structures and Logical/Descriptive Categories

Mixing Structures

onomasiological dictionaries

- starting point for each entry is a notion/concept
- main body: groups of words ordered according to logical and/or linguistic categories → microstructure
- entries organized in object domains according to logical/conceptual criteria → macrostructure
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Outline

Pollux’ *Onomasticon*: an onomasiological dictionary without macrostructure

Word-oriented Structures and the Parts-of-Speech System

Object-oriented Structures and Logical/Descriptive Categories

Mixing Structures
the entry *tryphân* in Pollux 6.185

- headword and list of verbs, without PoS-tag
  - *pragmata*: abstract nouns
  - *metochai*: participles; only a remark that participles from all mentioned verbs can be used
  - *onomata*: nouns denoting persons, with the remark that there are actually no such nouns, with one or two exceptions
  - adverbs
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P. M. Roget, *Thesaurus*, entry nr. 638, from the 1936 edn.

638. Waste.—N. consumption, expenditure, exhaustion; dispersion etc. 73; ebb; leakage etc. (*exudation*) 295; loss etc. 776; wear and tear; waste; prodigality etc. 818; misuse etc. 679; wasting etc. v.; rubbish etc. (*useless*) 645.

    mountain in labor.

    v. spend, expend, use, consume, swallow up, exhaust, deplete; impoverish; spill, drain, empty; disperse etc. 73.

    cast —, throw —, fling —, fritter- away; burn the candle at both ends, waste; squander etc. 818.

    ‘waste its sweetness on the desert air,’ cast -one’s bread upon the waters, — pearls before swine; employ a steam engine to crack a nut, waste powder and shot, break a butterfly on a wheel; labor in vain etc. (*useless*) 645; cut a whetstone with a razor, pour water into a sieve; tilt at windmills.

    leak etc. (*run out*) 295; run to waste; ebb; melt away, run dry, dry up.

    Adj. wasted etc. v.; at a low ebb.

    wasteful etc. (*prodigal*) 818; penny wise and pound foolish.

    Phr. *magno conatu magnas nugas: le jeu n’en vaut pas la chandelle.*
the entry “praying and sacrificing to the gods” in Pollux 1.25–30

- the state of purity of the worshippers
- what humans do when they pray and sacrifice
- nouns for acts and processes humans do when praying and sacrificing to gods
- the word used to express a single object, the smoke that is produced from the sacrifice
- the properties the animals brought to sacrifice should have
- a term used for the roast meat of the sacrificed animals
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the entry “dispose/sell merchandise” in Poll. 3.124–5

- verbs meaning ”to sell” (without PoS tagging)
  - pragma
  - onoma
  - adverbs
  - a special phrase used for the selling of slaves
  - adjectives for slaves who have been sold several times
  - verbs for sellers who sell expensive and cheap
  - words to denote the place where slaves and merchandise is sold
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the entry “buy” in Poll. 3.125–7

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  - some *onomata*
  - *pragmata*
  - nouns and substantivized adjectives denoting “the merchandise that is sold”
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