Long sentences, long words – short sentences, long words? Typological Studies on Menzerath’s law

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Abstract In recent studies on the relationship between linguistic units of different levels (e.g., word and sentence length) it has turned out that it is extremely important to distinguish intra-textual from inter-textual approaches: whereas in an inter-textual perspective, there seems to be only weak evidence in coincidence with well-known linguistic regularities, intra-textually oriented studies prove to be relevant, among others, for purposes of text classification (cf. Grzybek and Stadlober 2006).

Short sentences, however, seem to represent exceptions to rule, in so far as they do not follow the general tendency described by the Menzerath law, saying that an increase in sentence length goes along with an increase in word length. The present study is a detailed analysis of this phenomenon and tries to find out, if we are concerned with language specific, text typological of other factors.

Key words: TEXT CLASSIFICATION, DISCOURSE TYPES, SYNTAX

References


