The Authority of words

The healing power of vernacular, Latin and other languages in an Occitan remedy collection*

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The large number of diverse medical texts shows that therapeutic matters were of major concern to medieval people. The division of medical texts into the learned tradition, which includes practical or philosophical treatises written in Latin, and the remedy-book genre, which includes the *materia medica* tradition[1] written in various vernaculars, is well-established. However, genres do overlap, and the relationship between Latin and vernacular is more complex than that.[2] This article considers cultural and linguistic diversity through a collection of thirteenth-century remedies written mainly in Occitan but containing multilingual elements, from individual words and letters in Latin, Hebrew and

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[1] The name of the tradition and genre derives from a text by a Greek physician, Dioscorides (c. 40–90 AD), whose work *Peri hules iatrikes* describes approximately 600 plants, in addition to drugs of animal and mineral origins. In the Middle Ages, the work was better known by its Latin title, *De materia medica*, see Jerry Stannard, `The Herbal as a Medical Document´, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 43 (1969), 212–220, at 214. Medieval (and later) pharmacology or *materia medica* is largely based on a Dioscordean tradition, see Iolanda Ventura, `Un manuale di farmacologia medievale ed i suoi lettori´, in Danielle Jacquart & Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (eds), *La Scuola Medica Salernitana. Gli autori e i testi,* Sismel Galluzzo: Firenze 2007, 465–534, at 466; Minta Collins, *Medieval Herbals. Illustrated Tradition*, The British Library and University of Toronto Press: London and Toronto 2000, 31–93.

[2] Irma Taavitsainen, `Early English Scientific Writing: New Corpora, New Apporaches´, in Javier E. Díaz Vera & Rosario Caballero (eds), *Textual Healing. Studies in Medieval English Medical, Scientific and Technical Texts*. Peter Lang Bern, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main et al. 2009, 177–206, at 193–195; Alastair Minnis, *Translations of Authority in Medieval English Literature. Valuing the Vernacular*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2009, x.

Greek, to whole passages in Latin. The focus is on a medical text in which traditional medical authors and authorities, both classical and medieval, are lacking. The article will therefore consider whether the text produces authority by other means, e.g. by language alteration (code-switching)[3]. The hypothesis is that the use of two or more linguistic varieties reflects an interaction between different social or cultural areas. The article asks whether those areas have a special hierarchy between them in medieval medical knowledge, in a text intended more for everyday use than for intellectual purposes. The borrowing of special Latin terms on the lexical level suggests some contact with medical or pharmacological texts written in Latin and reflects the cultural and educational prestige which Latin enjoyed. Moreover, the use of Latin and of other languages, even invented ones, could have had a powerful, even magical allure, at least for a non-Latinate audience. Therefore, special attention is paid to cryptic language, often associated with medicinal magic, and its assumed healing power among other languages. Issues of professionalization, status and gender are discussed in terms of healing, manuscript production and audience. How can language contribute to determining what constitutes a "professional" healer? What determines his or her status: having studied at a university, or skill in combining different traditions?

The use of languages is observed within the framework of the process known as vernacularization.[4] The vernacularization of medical texts, as well as

[3] The term 'code–switching' denotes the concurrent use of two or several languages in a single communicative episode. Patterns of code alternation are closely linked to their larger social context. Päivi Pahta has applied the term in a late medieval English context; see her `Code–switching in medieval medical writing´, in I. Taavitsainen & P. Pahta (eds), *Medical and Scientific Writing in Late Medieval English* (Studies in English Language), Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2004, 73–99; Tony Hunt has also analyzed code-switching in recipes and other medical texts, see Tony Hunt, `Code-switching in medical texts´, in: Trotter, David A. (ed.), *Multilingualism in Later Medieval Britain*, D.S. Brewer: Cambridge 2000, 131–147.

[4] The phenomenon of vernacularization in literature has been exhaustively studied, especially in studies regarding the troubadours and Dante. Here, the phenomenon is considered as a part of the vernacularization of medieval texts dealing with scientific subjects – a more complicated process than earlier views would assume. William C. Grossgrove, `The vernacularization of science, medicine, and technology in late medieval Europe: broadening our perspectives´, *Early Science Medicine* 5 (2000), 47–63; Päivi Pahta, `Vernacularisation of scientific and medical writing in its sociohistorical context´, in Irma Taavitsainen & Päivi Pahta (eds), *Medical and Scientific Writing in Late Medieval English*, (Studies in English Language), Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2004, 1–18; I. Taavitsainen & P. Pahta, `Vernacularization of medical writing in English: A corpus–based study of scholasticism, *Early Science and Medicine* 3 (1998),157–185. See also the recent study on the role of vernacularization in cultural identity by Kirsten A. Fudeman, *Vernacular Voices: Language and Identity in Medieval French Jewish Communities*, University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia 2010.

of other literature, started from the twelfth century onwards.[5] The term is understood here in its broadest sense, not only in terms of language-transfer, but encompassing a vast array of cultural transmission.[6] The discussion of the background and motives of the compiler, as well as the plausible target audience, is an important one. It is also essential to question the epistemological asymmetry and the traditional borderline which lies between 'learned' knowledge and 'popular' belief, as well as their languages, Latin and vernacular.

The analysis is threefold, and examines, first, the particular manuscript, including the collection of recipes and its provenance in the context of medieval Languedoc-Provence; secondly, its prolific articulations related to uses of different languages through the concept of *code-switching*; and thirdly, elements of languages other than Occitan and Latin, including cryptic language and the role of word magic.

1. The manuscript and remedy collection within the Occitan healing tradition

The art of healing prospered early in the region. Before 1250, Salerno was the chief influence on Occitan medical writing, but Montpellier[7] became a centre of medical teaching, together with Bologna and Paris. By the second half of the thirteenth century, Montpellier was the major urban centre on the western Mediterranean coast. The presence of a renowned university added doctors of medicine to the urban elite. The town, known for its herb, spice and dyeing trades, attracted merchants, artisans, pepperers, apothecaries, and other occupations closely related to the practices of medicine and healing, as well as their young apprentices from the surrounding areas.[8]

In the medical works of local authors (such as Bernard of Provence and Raimon of Avignon of the twelfth century and Bernard of Gordon c. 1300), the emphasis is on practical subjects finding support for the dominant influence of

[5] Taavitsainen 2009, 185.
[6] On the broad definition of the term "vernacular", see Minnis 2009, 16.
[7] The medical school in Montpellier acquired its statutes in 1220. The faculties of law, medicine, and the arts gained the grade of university in 1289, Louis Dulieu, *La médecine à Montpellier*, 1, Le Moyen Age, Les Presses Universelles: Avignon 1975, 35.
[8] Kathryn L Ryerson, `Patterns of population attraction and mobility: the case of Montpellier, 1293–1348´, *Viator* 10 (1979), 257–281, at 265–273.

the Constantine corpus and the Salernitan spirit.[9] The Constantine corpus owes its name to the work of Constantine the African[10] and the Salernitan tradition[11] to the medical School of Salerno, from which ideas on dietetics and remedies were widely diffused by works such as *Circa instans* and *Antidotarium Nicolai*.[12] Although these authorities are not mentioned and the recipes do not seem to derive from these frequently used sources, a similar, practical approach marks our Occitan manuscript Cambridge MS R.14.30 and the recipe collection in particular. It is not based purely on contemporary medical theory, but rather on experience and tradition. This typical approach associated with recipes has also been called *experimenta* or *empirica*.[13] According to Danielle Jacquart, these *empiriques* were mostly lay healers in the countryside. Among them there were priests, clerks, notaries, artisans (textile artisans, in particular), itinerant drink sellers, pepperers and herbalists.[14]

In the fourteenth century, the Montpellier region was affected by poor harvests, famine, and the plague, which radically diminished the population. According to Ryerson's evidence, all of the doctors of the university medical corps died during the plague. At the same time, crisis, in the form of the Hundred Years War, made an impact on the town, especially in 1340–1341.[15] Do these circumstances provide an insight into the manuscript, compiled apparently by a non-formal healer? Do they explain why it ended up in England, perhaps during the Hundred Years War?[16] These are pure speculation. Among the recipes, there is no advice for preventing or curing the plague, only for leprosy and other skin diseases[17], with no mention of war or

[9] Linda M. Paterson, *The world of the troubadours,* Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1995, 190–195; Roger M. French, *Medicine before science. The business of medicine from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2003, 89.

[10] Constantine the African (c. 1020–1087) compiled his vast opus, mostly composed of translations from Arabic sources. He translated authors of Arabic medicine into Latin; see Charles S. F. Burnett & Danielle Jacquart eds., *Constantine the African and ʿAlī Ibn Al–ʿAbbās Al–Magūsī: The Pantegni and Related Texts*, Brill: Leiden 1995.

[11] See, e.g. Salvatore de Renzi, *Storia Documentata della Scuola Medica di Salerno*, Nobile: Napoli 1857, 229–256; Ventura 2007, 465–534.

[12] Ventura 2007, 466.

[13] Rider 2011, 93.

[14] Jacquart 1981, 44–46.

[15] Reyerson 2002, 76.

[16] The only hint is the end – the last folios of the manuscript (ff. 235–242), the text of which (Latin and French) is assumed to have been made in England in the fourteenth century.

[17] See classification of diseases in recipes by Brunel 1962, 146–147.

recipes regarding wounds or injuries caused in battle. Including the codicological and paleographical information, it is more likely that the manuscript was compiled during the thirteenth century, or at the latest at the very beginning of the fourteenth century. Like most of the remedy collections, it seems to have been made in and for peaceful conditions, possibly under the wide influence of Montpellierain doctors, physicians and other healers. Either way, there was a pre-existing vernacular remedy genre and audience in England.[18]

The remedy collection in question is included in a thirteenth/fourteenth century Occitan manuscript[19] containing medical tracts and recipe collections in Latin, Occitan and Langue d'oïl. The text is anonymous, as most of the recipe books are, and the first 112 of the manuscript's folio leaves have disappeared, so the dedication is also missing. The small size of the manuscript (14 cm by 10 cm) and its modest appearance suggest that the book was in all likelihood meant for practical use.[20] There is empty space left for initials, but they are not entered. On the basis of dialectical remarks and some references in the text, it has been suggested that it was compiled in the region of Provence or Languedoc, plausibly in or near the towns of Arles or Montpellier. It is not known how the manuscript ended up in England, but it was possibly already there by the fourteenth century.[21]

The manuscript itself is multilingual, and includes Latin medical treatises such as *Trotula de ornatu mulierum* and *De secretis mulierum cum aliis*, as well as other collections of recipes and charms in Latin, Occitan and Langue d'oïl.[22] These other collections are derived from known recipe collections such as *Antidotarium Nicolai* [23] or *Liber de simplici medicina* [24], but the sources of the

[18] See, e.g. on *Leechbook*s and *Lacnunga,* Debby Banham, ´Attribution and Authority in Old English Medical Texts´, *Social History of Medicine* 24 (2011), 57–73.
[19] Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R. 14.30.
[20] Cf. Different uses of medieval herbals in libraries, teaching and healing, etc., Collins 2000, 310.
[21] Paul Meyer, `Recettes médicales en provençal´, *Romania* 32 (1903), 268–299, at 268 and 273.
[22] There are no editions of the whole manuscript; only some passages are presented in edited form, in articles in which the approach is philological. Concerning explicitly the ff. 143v–161r see, Meyer 1903; Clovis Brunel, `Recettes médicales du XIIIe siècle en langue de Provence´, *Romania* 83 (1962), 145–182; Corradini Bozzi 2001; Maria Sofia Corradini `Dialectical differences in medical–botanical terminology in Old Provençal works in Romance and Latin in the context of Hebrew and Arabic', *Berlin Working Papers in Romance Philology* 1 (2004), 51–67.
[23] There were also various vernacular versions of this remedy collection circulating; see e.g. Paul Dorveaux, *L'antidotaire Nicolas. Deux traductions françaises de l'Antidotarium Nicolai. L'une du XIVè siècle suivie de*

Occitan recipe collection in question (ff. 143v–161r) are mostly unknown.[25] It was customary to mingle charms and magic with pharmaceutical preparations[26], but this collection contains an exceptional number of examples of magical remedies, and is therefore rather unique, at least among Occitan material.[27]

Altogether, the collection consists of more than three hundred recipes, mostly for medical and cosmetic use. Nearly all of them are intended for human beings; only one is a veterinary recipe. In addition, there are a few instructions for domestic tasks. Actual cures and ailments address common diseases. Around twenty recipes are meant for dental diseases, fifteen for dysentery and different kinds of fevers, fourteen for gout and earache. Other entries concern various wounds, pains in different places in the body, skin diseases, and internal diseases. There is a visible tendency in the collection to group together recipes related to the same disease or group of diseases. Nevertheless, the grouping is not systematic, and most of the recipes seem to be listed in an arbitrary order and not according to *a capite ad calcem* system utilized in Latin treatises.

In this Occitan collection, healing with plants, animal ingredients, minerals and words involves rules for picking and using herbs, dietary advice, ligatures, suspensions and amulets. Herbs and their use play the major role in this type of healing, probably due to their prevalence and availability. Apart from certain spices (e.g. saffron) and stones (e.g. amber), plants mentioned in this collection are not the imported exotic or expensive goods found in collections influenced by Arabic medicine, but mostly Mediterranean herbs growing in backyards or local herb gardens. They may have been derived and

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quelques recettes de la même époque et d'un glossaire. L'autre du XVè siècle incomplète. Publiées d'après les manuscrits français 25327 et 14827 de la Bibliothèque nationale Paris, H. Welter: Paris 1896.

[24] See, e.g. Ventura (2007, 466) who states that the *Circa instans* was one of the most significant, used and diffused works of the *Scuola Medica Salernitana*.

[25] Meyer 1903, 274 and 288.

[26] E.g. Tony Hunt, *Popular Medicine in Thirteenth–Century England*, Brewer: Cambridge 1990, 1, cited in Catherine Rider, `Medical Magic and the Church in 13th–Century England´, *Social History of Medicine* 24 (2011), 92–107, at 92.

[27] The amount of word magic (charms, blessings, conjurations, incantations and textual amulets) in the recipe collection is 26/337. Otherwise, it is difficult to define a 'magical' cure and distinguish it from other forms of healing, e.g. use of liturgical objects such as holy water or herbs considered as spiritually powerful, i.e. magical. Including all kind of magic in recipes, the amount would be noticeably more significant.

compiled partly from traditional Dioscordean herbal medicine, but many of them appear to come from another, perhaps local, tradition.

Recipes related to menstruation and childbirth occur rather frequently. This was not rare in medieval medical texts, as gynecological and obstetric recipes were needed for women's everyday use, but it was also likely that they were read by men in order to better understand the mechanisms of procreation.[28] Advice for conserving wine and food and other household practicalities (getting rid of harmful insects etc.) among medical recipes has been regarded as proof of a female audience. Concern for health as well as cures and ailments in family circumstances were, after all, considered to be a woman's field in medieval society. The amount of gynecological and reproductive prescriptions has equally led to the conclusion that remedy book collections were aimed principally at woman householders.[29]

However, there are many unsolved questions regarding the intended audience, ranging from the sex and social standing of the compilers, owners, and readers, to the distinctions between the categories of healers.[30] In particular, it is during the following centuries that the use of magic is considered a woman's domain, due to the rhetoric of witchcraft against *vetulae*, old women, and to some extent against midwives. There are, of course, references which link women and magic in the Middle Ages (for instance, the genre of *Secretis mulierum*), but a clearer attempt to connect these two manifests itself from the sixteenth century.[31]

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[28] Monica Green, `Interactive medicine: Incorporating medicine and health into the canon of medieval European history´, *History Compass* 7/4 (2009), 1218–1245, at 1224.

[29] See, e.g. James Weldon,`The Naples manuscript and the case for a female readership´, *Neophilologus* 93 (2009) 703–722, 707; Rebecca Laroche, *Medical Authority and Englishwomen's Herbal Texts*, 1550–1650, Ashgate: London 2009.

[30] See, M. Green, `Women's medical practice and health care in medieval Europe´, in Judith Bennett, Elizabeth A. Clark, Sarah Westphal-Wihl (eds), *Working together in the Middle Ages: Perspectives on women's communities* = *Signs* 14 (1989), 434–473, where it is convincingly argued that women's health was not only women's business; see also Green 2009, 1224–1230. For the categories of practitioners, e.g. Danielle Jacquart. *Le milieu médical en France du XIIe au XVe siècle*. *En annexe 2e supplément au "Dictionnaire" d'Ernest Wickersheimer*, (Hautes Études Médiévales et Modernes 46), Droz: Genève 1981; Champion: Paris 1981, 27–46 and especially on female physicians and healers 47–54; Plinio Prioreschi, *A History of Medicine*, 5, Medieval medicine, Horatius Press: Omaha 2003, 526–536.

[31] Green 1989, 445–451; Kathryn Taglia, 'Delivering a Christian Identity: Midwives in Northern French Synodal Legislation, c. 1200–1500', in Peter Biller and Joseph Ziegler (eds), *Religion and Medicine in the Middle Ages*, (York Studies in Medieval Theology 3), York Medieval Press: York 2001, 77–90.

2. Vernacularization as an intellectual and social bridge:[32] Occitan

The phenomenon of vernacularization begins in the urban centers of Southern and Central Europe.[33] The area of the *lengua d'oc*, or *occitan*, was primary, with its flourishing culture of troubadours, whose vernacular art was written down from the early thirteenth century onwards.[34] While the majority of authors in the early and high Middle Ages wrote in Latin, the first known troubadours, at the end of the eleventh century, composed in a local language that medievalists of today prefer to call Occitan, though it has also been known (somewhat erroneously) as Provençal. In the Middle Ages, Occitan was designated by a variety of terms, some referring to local variants (e.g. *Provensal*, *Lemosi*), others merely to vernacularity (e.g. *Lengua romana*) as opposed to Latin.

The region where the Occitan language was spoken is frequently called Occitania, even if it never existed as a state or political unity. Rather, it is a question of a linguistic and cultural area which encompassed roughly the southern half of present-day France.[35] In addition to literary texts, Old Occitan was used in written form in the fields of administration, religion, science, and law, until it was gradually replaced by the use of French from the Albigensian Crusades (1209–1229) onwards.

In Occitania, as in other regions, early vernacular translations were inspired by a certain consciousness of one's own local culture and the desire to ameliorate the status of the vernacular language. Moreover, in some cases concerning explicitly medical texts, there could also be a moral motive: a means of making medical advice available to the poor, [36] or at least, as in case of our collection, to the "common" people. Lluís Cifuentes has shown how the

[32] The sub-heading is borrowed from the article of Lluís Cifuentes, `Vernacularization as an Intellectual and Social Bridge. The Catalan Translations of Teodorico's Chirurgia and of Arnau De Vilanova's Regimen Sanitatis´, *Early Science and Medicine* 4 (1999), 127–148.

[33] See Cesare Segre, *Volgarizzamenti del '200 e '300*, Utet: Torino, 1953. According to Taavitsainen, the phenomenon begins in the region we call France in the thirteenth century and in the fourteenth in Spain, Portugal, Germany and England, Taavitsainen 2009, 185.

[34] North-Italian copyists and scribes, in particular, were active in compiling troubadour manuscripts, Pierre Bec, *La lyrique française au moyen âge*, 1, Picard: Paris 1977, 50–52; Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiéval*, Seuil: Paris 2000, 55; Susanna Niiranen, `*Miroir de mérite´: valeurs sociales, rôles et image* de *la femme dans les textes médiévaux des trobairitz*, University of Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä 2009, 28–29.

[35] Andrew Roach, `Occitania Past and Present: Southern Consciousness in Medieval and Modern French Politics´, *History Workshop Journa*l 43 (1997), 1–22, at 2–3.

[36] Taavitsainen 2009, 185.

diffusion of Catalan medical texts exemplifies the two main audiences to which vernacular texts were addressed. These were, on the one hand, literate but not Latinate practitioners interested in the medical science taught in the emerging universities, and on the other, nobles and burghers concerned about issues of health and disease, and generally curious about natural philosophy. [37]

The language contains several traits which help to attribute the text to the Southern Occitan language group in the thirteenth century. According to Brunel[38], it is a regional language which also bears marks of local idioms. Meyer[39] determines the provenance to be from the region of Arles, Bouches-du-Rhône, while Corradini Bozzi[40] sees the whole area between Montpellier and Arles as plausible.

The style is the standard recipe style: for disease or problem (x), take ingredients (xx) and do (xxx) with it. Sometimes the recipe ends with the Latin confirmation: *(h)oc probatum est* (xxxx). In this particular collection, classical or medieval medical authorities are never cited, and the possible theoretical backgrounds are thus hidden from the reader. This does not mean that some of them could not derive ultimately from Dioscorides or Avicenna, for instance; however, it seems that they are more related to medical and everyday activities in a high medieval Mediterranean town or village community. Aside from a few exceptions, the terms and expressions – medical, pharmaceutical, botanical or other – are in Occitan, as in the following example, which uses betony – *betoniga* – as the active ingredient. Betony was one of the most used plants in medieval herbal medicine.[41] The recipe is in fact not for healing purposes, but rather represents preventive measures:

[37] Cifuentes 1999, 143–145.
[38] Brunel (1962, 147–148) observes e.g. the lack of the letter h with palatalized consonants l and n (also as graphems ll, il, ill, lg, in, gn, ng, ing).
[39] Meyer 1903, 269.
[40] Maria Sofia Corradini Bozzi, `Per l'edizione di opera mediche in occitanico e in catalano: un nuovo bilancio della tradizione manoscritta e dei fenomeni linguistici´, *Rivista di Studi Testuali* 3 (2001), 127–195, at 150.
[41] A medical treatise called *De herba vettonica* was transmitted during the Middle Ages under the name of Antonius Musa, chief physician to the Emperor Augustus, but is thought instead to have been written in the fourth century when a Roman medical writer ‚Theodorus Priscianus, used it as a source. D. R. Langslow, *Medical Latin in the Roman Empire*, Oxford University Press: Oxford 2000, 67–68.

> *Si vols molt vin beure sens ebrietat. Cos .iij. onsas de betoniga en aiga e aisso bieu enans que comenses a beure del vin.*[42]

Although the terms 'oral' and 'popular' are not equal, there seems to be some sort of connection between supposed popular medical texts and oral tradition, or at least traits of orality.[43] Quintana-Toledo has analyzed recipes in Middle English, and states that one characteristic is the use of the second person singular (*si vols, cos, bieu, comenses*), which signals the virtual presence of addresser and addressee as participants in discourse.[44] Features like formality of expression, repetition, virtual interconnectedness of issues, and lack or paucity of abstraction, are common in oral discourse, as well as in recipes. On the other hand, familiarity both in themes and in interaction is favoured in orality and in the recipe genre. For example, themes such as drunkenness, sexuality, and various ailments and inconveniences related to the most intimate aspects of human life are treated in such a familiar way as to perplex later generations.[45] Some recipes are scratched and partly obliterated, possibly because their character was regarded as superstitious.[46]

In studying the vernacularization of medical texts we have to be aware of the diversity of audiences and interests. Audiences who preferred reading in the vernacular consisted of both professional practitioners, lay healers as well as nobles and burghers, with an interest in practical health care as well as in more theoretical 'natural science.'[47] Nevertheless, these Occitan recipes do not represent 'pure' medical literature, such as Arnau de Vilanova's text in Cifuentes' study, but are practical, in the sense of being directly related to medical activity in the thirteenth-fourteenth century Southern France.[48]

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[42] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 150v. 'If you like to drink a lot of wine without getting drunk. Boil three ounces of betony in water and drink the potion before drinking the wine'. The translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

[43] See Elena Quintana–Toledo, `Orality in the Middle English Medical Recipes of G.U.L. Hunter 185´, in Javier E. Díaz Vera & Rosario Caballero (eds), *Textual Healing*, 153–175.

[44] Quintana–Toledo 2009, 173.

[45] E.g. Meyer (1903, 297 n. 2), who sees no need to translate certain expressions such as *postairol* (posterior). However, he explains that it is not found in dictionaries: "*Postairol* se comprend aisément, quoique non relevé dans les dictionnaires".

[46] See e.g. a recipe, on Cambridge R. 14.30, f. 159r, for love magic: "Si vols eser amatz per femena", 'If you would like to be loved by a woman'. See also Brunel 1962, 146 n. 1.

[47] Cifuentes 1999, 143–145.

[48] Cf. Banham 2011, 58.

3. The prestige of Latin

Although the language switches, the hand remains the same, which implies that the author-compiler was multilingual, at least to a certain level. Of the whole collection of 337 recipes, 26 are written in Latin. It is noteworthy that a whole section of recipes in the beginning of the collection is entirely in Latin. The opening words in the first recipe of the collection are: [*a*]*d fistula vel crancum*, an emplaster or compress recipe for fistula and ulcer of syphilis[49]. The second recipe in Latin deals already with a different subject – a birth charm. As already stated, the recipes are not arranged according to a "from head to toe" system. The ultimate recipe of the collection (in Occitan) is about a wounded man and includes a prognostication model for determining whether he is going to die or not.

Some of the recipes are really show-pieces of *simplicia*, exemplified by this remedy, written entirely in Latin, again using a betony plant:

Ad morsum rapidi canis. Betonica tere et pone desuper.[50]

However, no sources are cited. In learned and in specialized treatises, Galen and Hippocrates are frequently mentioned.[51] Galen, Hippocrates and Avicenna were the most studied authors at the medieval medical faculty.[52] Next in frequency in learned texts come Dioscorides, Soranus, Oribasius, Theodorius Priscianus, Pliny the Elder, and Arab authors such as Mesue, Rhases, Haly Abbas and Averroes, in addition to medieval Latin authors, to mention only some of the most frequently cited authors in various genres associated with *materia medica* texts. General references to doctors, leeches, physicians and masters prevail in more popular registers of writing,[53] but in this text, there are no references to any sort of healers, except to the father of a certain Berenger Pallada, whose case is treated in the following section.

[49] Cf. Recipes nos. 323, 325 and 326 in which *cranc* apparently means ulcer, lesion and not chancre, Brunel 1962, 172. See also Brunel's (1962, 176) glossary.
[50] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 143v. 'For a rabid dog bite. Grind betony and place it on [the wound]'.
[51] Taavitsainen 2009, 182.
[52] At least in the medical faculty in Montpellier, Dulieu 1975, 95.
[53] Taavitsainen 2009,182.

Similarly to other collections, Latin rubrics frequently introduce vernacular recipes.[54] In this collection, Latin rubrics are used only occasionally, not regularly. Some examples of the Latin rubrics are: *ad oculos* (for eyes), *ad fluxum sanguinis* (for bleeding), *ungentum* (ointment). One kind of rubric is the word *item*, a written convention in Latin texts which occurs introducing successive vernacular recipes for the same disease.

Some recipes are mixed and use both Latin and vernacular, as in this recipe for cooling the buttocks. Some words are apparently missing, which makes the reading uncertain:

> *Ad refrigendum* lo postairol. *Accipe stercus asine virgini mulieri.* curgilla verament. *Fac sibi balneum. Et homini asini inveni.*[55]

The reasons for this bilingualism can only be guessed at: Decency regarding certain words such as *lo postairol*? However, this coyness is not apparent when it comes to naming the female genitals.[56] Is it ignorance, the compiler not knowing or remembering the word *curgilla* in Latin? Other possibilities are that he or she was writing in a hurry or perhaps planned to write a preliminary version and complete it later. The manuscript appears an unfinished working version, written by one scribe, with no initials, illustrations, or ornamentation. The manuscript may have been meant only for the compiler's own use, permitting use of any language he or she felt comfortable with in each situation.

Religious code-switching can provide some information about the compiler's knowledge of liturgical texts and his or her possible educational background. It is often associated with magic and will therefore be treated in a separate section concerning word magic. Apart from religious discourse, the code-switching from Occitan to Latin is used on special occasions, firstly in certain written conventions (*hoc* or *oc probatum est*, *item)*, secondly, in medical

[54] Pahta 2004, 91.

[55] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f.159v. 'For chilling of the bottom. Add excrement of female donkey for women. … pumpkin properly. Make a bath. And for men, excrement of young donkeys'. Cf. the correction in Brunel 1962, 172, note x: "Ad refrigerandum lo postairol. Accipe stercus asine virginis, mulieri; et homini, asini juvenis. Curgilla verament. Fac tibi balneum".

[56] For example, because there are certainly several words for the male genital organ in the vernacular, one might think that *veretrum* (penis) is in its Latin form for reasons of decency. However, the female genital organ is named in the vernacular throughout the collection; it is simply "con". See, e.g. Cambridge MS R.14.30, f. 150r–v: "A verugas *veretri* o del con […]", emphasis mine.

and anatomical terms (for example, *inpetigo, paralizis, veretrum,* note the *graphia* (spelling)) and thirdly in pharmaceutical terms such as *argentum vivum, ungentum* including botanical names.

It is understandable that exotic, imported spices (*cardamomum, gingiber, nux muscata*, etc.) or special healing stones (*lapis armenius, lapis lazuli*) are called by their Latin or other foreign names, but it is curious that many ordinary plant names such as dill, mugwort, milfoil, leek and sage *(anetum, artemisia, millefolium, porrum, sagium)* are mentioned only in their Latin names. These are common plants and in the Middle Ages were well-known and frequently used for medical or flavouring purposes. It has to be kept in mind that not all medical texts are translations from Latin originals and recipe collections in particular do not necessarily have university pedigree. However, certain terms and expressions in vernacular texts are shared with academic tradition, and as such signal an underlying academic text.[57]

A possible explanation, however, lies in the influence of Latin recipe collections, in which the use of certain terms and expressions was already fixed. One conceivable factor might be the compiler's attitude; his or her wish to show his or her knowledge and expertise in the matter, which was supposed to give some prestige and authority to the collection. It cannot be ruled out that the Latin names were preferred for achieving accuracy and terminological unambiguity, as was done from the renaissance period, and as is done even today in many countries in the fields of medicine and pharmacology. This was not done systematically in the Middle Ages, but there already existed a long tradition of employing Latin names particularly in the field of botany.[58]

The chemical element *argentum vivum*[59] (mercury) is a relatively frequently used ingredient in recipes. The word was equally used both in its Occitan (*argent viu*) and Latin forms in the collection. Nevertheless, there are no proper alchemistic recipes in this collection. Switched specialized terms can then be considered part of professional rhetoric. On the other hand, in addition to indicating membership in a certain group, code-switching can also have an exclusive function in denying access to a group to outsiders, who in this case

[57] See I. Taavitsainen, `Middle English recipes: Genre characteristics, text type features and underlying traditions of writing´, *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 2 (2001), 85–113, 195.
[58] W.T. Stearn, *Botanical Latin. History, Grammar, Syntax, Terminology and Vocabulary*, Nelson: London and Edinburgh 1966, 14–26.
[59] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 144r.

might consist of the general reader or a person asking for help, the patient him- or herself.[60]

4. Gamut of word magic

Among herbal recipes, dietary advice and magical rituals, the written word was regarded as having magic or therapeutic powers. In consequence, the collection includes short texts to be recited and especially written on parchment, paper, leaves or other blank surfaces, and worn on the body. They were thought to protect and heal, and to bring the wearer good fortune. These brief texts are termed textual amulets by modern scholars. Some elements in these amulets are borrowed from other cultures and languages, melding knowledge of medical handbooks, Christian scripture and liturgy with traditional magic and local folk cures, as well as classical learning from the Mediterranean world.[61]

Medieval terminology described textual amulets as brief written texts or the materials upon which they were written, such as Latin *charta*.[62] It was important that the written texts were put on virgin parchment (*pargamen verge* or *carta verge* in Occitan recipes) or some other blank surface, so that the palimpsested or otherwise used surface would not affect or undermine the force of the magic words.

Religious code-switches tend to occur in remedy books – a feature reflecting the importance of religion and belief in healing in general.[63] The strong influence of liturgical material, as well as the tradition of medical knowledge in monasteries, point in fact to monastic influence, but as Richard Kieckhefer justifiably deduces, healing was not always in the hands of monks, or women, or physicians.[64]

A remedy for fever indicates that someone should pick vervain while pronouncing the words *In nomine Patris et Fili et Spiritus Sancti Amen* and the Lord's prayer, and grind it up and give it in holy water as a drink.[65] The

[60] Pahta 2004, 86.
[61] Donald C. Skemer, *Binding words. Textual amulets in the Middle Ages*, Pennsylvania State University, University Park 2006, 76–77.
[62] See Skemer 2006, 13.
[63] Pahta 2004, 97.
[64] Richard Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1997, 7th ed., 57.
[65] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 145v.

religious force is thus doubled by the use of Latin liturgy and by consuming the holy water as a potion. Liturgical fragments, bits of prayer and praise were already used in the magical amulets of late antiquity, serving as a vehicle for spiritual strength. The *Pater Noster* was considered the most effective of prayers, because of its seven petitions that Christ had taught his disciples, but also because it could be recited from memory or written down as a spiritual shield against evil powers.[66]

The following examples are from the same folio leaf. The recipes involve cures for fever, one of the most common symptoms of several diseases. In the first one, the Latin names apparently represent Christian figures: martyrs, saints and popes, even if the orthography of proper names is rather original. For example, Gesilius might signify the pope Gelasius II who stayed in Occitania in 1118–1119 and was buried in Cluny.[67]

> *A febres a sanar. Escrieu aiso en carta verge e lia al col del febros: Stephanus. Portarius. Sanbucius. Diontius. Eugenius. Gesilius et Quiriatius*[68].
>
> *Item. Per .viiij. dias, sobrel cap del febros: Quicumque vult […]*[69].

Quicumque vult in the second example comes from the Athanasian Creed. It is taken from the opening words *Quicumque vult* (whoever wishes (to be saved)).[70] There are some individual words or letters in Greek (A, Ω) and in Hebrew (e.g. *adonai*), but it seems to be commonly held that Latin has greater healing virtue in word magic.[71] Frequent contact between Spain and Occitania, together with the Jewish presence there, presuppose active collaboration on medical ideas. There was reciprocal interaction between Occitan Jewish scholars and their

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[66] Skemer 2006, 91.
[67] On the vicissitudes of Gelasius II, see e.g. Claudio Rendina, *I papi. Storia e segreti*. Newton Compton, Roma 2002, 406–407.
[68] Cambridge MS R. 14.30 fol. 146r. 'For fever to cure. Write on blank paper and wrap around the neck of the patient: *Stephanus. Portarius. Sanbucius. Diontius. Eugenius. Gesilius et Quiriatius*'.
[69] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f.146r. 'The same. For nine days, on the head of the patient: *Quicumque vult* […]'.
[70] P. Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom, with a history and critical notes*, 2/3, Harper and Row: New York 1919, 66.
[71] Louise M. Bishop, *Words, stones, and herbs. The healing word in medieval and early modern England*, Syracuse University Press: New York 2007, 73.

Christian colleagues in the field of translation of religious and scientific, including medical, texts. Jewish physicians enjoyed respect in Christian society, but the co-existence was not without conflicts, mostly caused by Christian physicians in order to dishonour their Jewish colleagues.[72] However, the reputation of Hebrew as a language of learning and religion shows in recipes written in a vernacular other than Occitan.[73]

As for the Greek language, the letters A and Ω symbolize not only medical learning but also alpha and omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, which became a symbol for Christ due to the phrase "I am the alpha and the omega" in the Book of Revelation (e.g. verses 1:8, 21:6, and 22:13).

There are no direct references to Arabs or Arab learning in this collection. *Et oc custodiunt saraceni*[74] is the utterance at the end of one recipe. The actual recipe preceding the final Latin utterance relates that if a pregnant woman first meets a beautiful woman, the baby will be beautiful, too. Without any specific arguments, Brunel identifies *saraceni* as gypsies and not as Arabs, probably on the grounds of the fact that a place of pilgrimage later frequented[75] by gypsies, Saintes-Maries de la Mer, is mentioned in another recipe in the previous folio leaf.[76] It seems that the prognostication skills of a separate ethnic group (whether Arabs or gypsies) were approved of in the community of the compiler, which means an Occitan village or urban community of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. This kind of mention can give an 'international' air to the collection. Its purpose might also be associated with the expected curiosity of

[72] Ram Ben–Shalom, `The Tibbonides' Heritage and Christian Culture: Provence c.1186–c.1470´ in Danièle Iancu–Agou and Élie Nicolas (eds), *Des Tibbonides à Maïmonide. Rayonnement des juifs andalous en pays d'oc médiéval. Colloque international Montpellier, 13–14 décembre 2004*, Cerf: Paris 2009, 109–119, 111–112. See also J. Shatzmiller, ´Contacts et échanges entre savants juifs et chrétiens à Montpellier vers 1300´, in *Juifs et Judaïsme de Languedoc,* (Cahiers de Fanjeaux 12), É. Privat: Toulouse 1977, 337–344; J. Shatzmiller, *Jews, Medicine, and Medieval Society*, Berkeley 1995.

[73] See e.g. Mark Zier,´The Healing Power of the Hebrew Tongue: An Example from Late Thirteenth Century England´, in Sheila Campbell et al. (eds), *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture*, St. Martin's Press, New York 1992, 103–118.

[74] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 160r; No. 330 in Brunel 1962, 173.

[75] I am indebted for this notice to Professor David Abulafia, who in discussion at the conference *Seeing, Hearing, Reading and Believing. Authorities in the Middle Ages* in Helsinki on 20 September 2010, clarified that gypsies did not yet gather in Saintes–Maries de la Mer in the thirteenth century.

[76] See "Sancta Maria de la Mar", in Cambridge R. 14.30, f. 159v (no. 324 in Brunel 1962, 172); and f. 160r (in Brunel 1962, 149).

the audience, or with an interest in making observations of a 'folkloric' and 'anthropological' nature and writing them down for a larger audience.[77]

According to Brunel, Saintes-Maries de la Mer is associated with another 'ethnic' healer: a certain Pallada, a name that Brunel states is Greek. According to the recipe, it was actually Pallada's son Berenguier Pallada who made the curing bath (of cooked turtles) and reported its efficacy to the compiler. Nevertheless, it is the only precise personal name of a patient (and last name of a healer), and at the same time raises questions about his Greek origin and its possible prestige and relation to medical knowledge.[78] There is no physician under this name in Wickersheimer's exhaustive list of medical practitioners; only one physician called "Bérenger" who assisted at Guilhelm VIII of Montpellier's the final moments in 1202, and a later Catalan medical author, Bérenger de Thumba, in the 1330's.[79] If either of these had the surname Pallada, it should certainly have been mentioned in sources. Perhaps this rare precise mention of a patient's name and a place, and the fact that Saintes-Maries de la Mer is mentioned twice in the collection, give a clue to the possible location of the compiler.

The value of textual amulets is enhanced by the dignity of Latin and the power of liturgical words. The same effect can be sought by the use of cryptic formulas. In addition to natural languages such as Occitan and Latin, artificial or constructed languages are often applied in recipe collections. The vernacular can be switched to the cryptic or magic language.[80]

> *A trastotas febres: Escrieu aiso <u>en pargamin verge</u>* […]: + on lona onu oni one onu onus oni one onus […][81].

[77] See, the Old English *Lacnunga*-collection, Banham, 6.
[78] Brunel 1962, 149; See also Jacques Heers, *Esclaves et domestiques au moyen âge dans le monde méditerranéen*. Paris: Fayard, 1981, who discusses the origins of slaves (prisoners of war, 'Saracens'), and the slave trade from East to West, ('pagans' and Greeks).
[79] Ernest Wickersheimer & Danielle Jacquart, *Dictionnaire biographique des médecins en France au Moyen Âge*, 1, Droz: Geneve 1979 (reprint), 68–69; According to Michael R. McVaugh (*Medicine before the Plague*: *Practitioners and Their Patients in the Crown of Aragon*, 1285–1345, Cambridge History of Medicine: Cambridge 1993, 50), Wickersheimer mistakenly identifies Bérenger de Thumba with Berenguer Eymerich.
[80] Especially on magical languages, see Umberto Eco, *La ricerca della lingua perfetta nella cultura europea*, Laterza: Bari 1993, 193–208.
[81] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 146r. 'For all fevers. Write thus on virgin parchment and place on the altar beneath the chalice until three masses have been sung over it + *on lona onu oni one onu onus oni one onus* and then attach it to the patient's neck'.

The litany of magic words is reminiscent of some (pseudo-)Latin conjugation,[82] but there are many cases where the charms or textual amulets are in an incomprehensible form. The following recipe gives the cure for a woman suffering from excessive menstrual bleeding:

> *A curamen de sanc de las femenas que per natura lo perdo. Escrieu aquestas caractas ins en .i. tauleta que sia d'estang e lia la sobrel ventre:* apoono[83].

At the end of the recipe, there are some drawn figures, whose function might be magical or astrological.[84] However, written astrological explanations are lacking, which might be a sign of a pseudo-learned compiler.[85] The following prediction includes a cryptic inscription not written on parchment but on a plant (laurel) leaf. At issue here is determining whether a sick person is going to die or not:

> *Si vols saber sil malautes si mora o si vieura. Escrieu aquestas caractas en una foilla de laurier e pausa sobrel piez, e si parla, vieura d'aquel mal senes dupte; si non, mora ne*: GbopooSD[86].

Cryptic formulae, or at least inscriptions which yield no obvious meaning to the reader, have been found in ancient amulets of Roman, Greek, Egyptian, and Semitic origin. Their use of phonetic, alliterative, assonantal, and syllabic patterns have led scholars to believe that they were meant to be sung or intoned instead of spoken in a normal speaking voice. It is nevertheless possible that words that appear to us to be gibberish were derived from some foreign language. It can also be assumed that a large part of the magical language was

[82] Pseudo-Latin and quasi-Latin are also known within the Old English texts; see Banham 2011, 58.
[83] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 147r. 'Write these letters on a small tablet made of lead and tie it on her abdomen: *apoono*'.
[84] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 147v.
[85] Kieckhefer 1997, 9; See also, e.g. *De spermate*, where "magic" is related with "mathematic" and "astronomye", line 646 (P. Pahta, *Medieval embryology in the Vernacular. The case of De spermate*, Mémoires de la Société Néophilologique de Helsinki 53, Helsinki 1998, 253), and the definition of the word "magic" in the glossary (Pahta 1998, 271).
[86] Cambridge MS R. 14.30, f. 147v. 'Write these letters on a laurel leaf and place it on his feet, and if he speaks, he will die of it: *GbopooSD*'.

neither expected nor intended to be understood. Furthermore, people without reading and writing skills might tend to see written words as magical, even if no magic had been intended.[87]

The position of the art and practice of prognostication shows that the borderline between medieval 'learned' medicine and 'popular' medicine is not easy to define on the basis of current beliefs and practices. At first glance, examples of prognostication in recipes seem to form one of the groups of magical recipes. Recipes are often more likely to introduce omens rather than symptoms as a means, for instance, of recognizing the signs of dying. At the same time, these omens serve as a guide for action. Prediction by omens and signs was also used for instance for winning a duel, and in baby lore in areas such as fertility, determination of an infant's sex, pregnancy, and birth beliefs. The term 'lore' is justified in this context, because the traditional character of predictions is confirmed in the recipes themselves: for instance, in the baby lore confirmed by *oc custodiunt saraceni*. The "art and science of predicting"[88] was nevertheless equally essential in medieval medical university training and practice, and related to a doctor's diagnostic skills and his ability to weigh up a patient's physical and mental condition in general. Beyond the medical interests of prognostication, it could be of direct material profit: if the patient was likely to die, he or she would not pay the fee to the doctor, and therefore the treatment could be stopped. More than pure magic, use of prognostication in diverse contexts can be regarded as a pattern of thinking and acting in an uncertain situation.

Similarly, the borderline between magic and other cures is difficult to define when the recipes advise taking baths with cooked turtle flesh for rheumatism, or when dove excrement cooked in vinegar is believed to cure toothache. For us, nearly all the recipes offering remedies using herbs, animals, stones, or words seem to be matters of belief, not of reason or experience. Magic (or participatory consciousness[89]) plays an essential role in healing in many cultures, and the supernatural is often involved in many aspects of disease and healing, although charms, blessings, adjurations, spells, the carrying of tokens

[87] Bishop 2007, 71; Kieckhefer 1997, 65; Skemer 2006, 28; C. Bonner, *Studies in magical amulets chiefly Graeco–Egyptian*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1950, 186–188.
[88] Alberto Alonso Guardo, `Los pronósticos médicos en la medicina medieval: El Tractatus de Crisi et de Diebus Creticis de Bernardo de Gordonio´, *Lingüística y Filología* 54 (2003), 436.
[89] See, e.g. Bishop 2007, 148–149.

or amulets, the observation of signs or omens, and cures are not necessarily called "magical"[90]. In this context, magic has not only explained the world by providing answers to questions that cannot be answered in other ways, but also shaped human thought and behaviour in a deep and far-reaching fashion. As is known and also observed in this article, magic is very closely linked to religion.[91]

5. Conclusion

In the thirteenth-fourteenth century Europe, the increasing use of different vernaculars in medical as well as in other fields of writing brought about a raise in the status of vernaculars as literate languages. Nevertheless, the ideological power of Latin remained undeniable. The language of the Mass and devotions, and the authoritative language of learning and literacy, was also assumed to have magical power. The use of languages in the Occitan recipe collection reflects a heterogeneous textual community, an ordinary situation with medical recipe collections where the vernacular but also Latin was used, by professional practitioners, clerics as well as lay people, in mixed language situations and increasingly popular contexts. The multilingual text reveals the dynamic of language contact and language change.[92]

Different languages are accepted as vehicular modes for different discourses (e.g. medical, botanical, ritual-magical), each with its own conventions and highly valued functions. In other words, code-switching can occur in positions where it is necessary to distinguish the roles of the participant languages.[93] Audiences of vernacular medical texts manifested different competences: some were illiterate, many were monolingual, and some were bi- or multilingual. But as Mark Amsler observes in the context of late medieval England "everyone in the speech domain was part of a multilingual

[90] Kieckhefer 1997, 7.
[91] L. N. Magner, *A history of medicine,* Marcel Dekker: New York 1992, 9.
[92] Mark Amsler, `Creole Grammar and Multilingual Poetics´, in *Medieval Multilingualism: The Francophone World and Its Neighbours*, ed. Keith Busby and Christopher Kleinhenz. Turnhout, Brepols 2010, 15–42, here at 23–24.
[93] Carol Myers-Scotton, *Duelling Languages*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 1997.

community and a discursive regime ordered by Latin and vernacular textualities". [94]

Regarding the use of languages and code-switching, it is evident that some members of the Southern-Occitan community had to have a command or rudimentary knowledge of Latin. The intended audience for vernacular texts, or at least some of the audience, was also presumably literate in other languages at some level, at minimum recognizing individual words and symbols. It is not unreasonable, but also not necessary, to conclude that the compiler was a practising physician. He or she could be an Occitan equivalent of an English 'leech', who was a healer without formal education. One early editor, Paul Meyer, proposed in 1903 that he might be a village "quack"[95]. On the basis of the abundance of herbs, spices, and other pharmaceutical material, the possibility that the compiler was a kind of pharmacist or druggist is also not to be excluded. The gender of the compiler remains open, but these kinds of activities were in principle not limited only to male healers.

Our healer, however, literate in the vernacular and to some extent in Latin, must have belonged to a group which has some education, but presumably not a university degree. The collection contains some material in Latin, some translated from Latin into Occitan, a good deal probably composed in Occitan, and some in Occitan with an admixture of Latin, cryptic expressions, attempts at Greek, Hebrew and perhaps astrological, iconographical or magical signs, and versions of these. Many of the recipes are, or contain, word magic or texts to be written down as textual amulets. Moreover, there are no mentions or citations of standard authorities or other healers. As Debby Banham has observed with Old English texts, vernacular medical compilers did not necessarily "play the citation game". Textual authorities hardly seem to have concerned them at all. [96]

The code-switching might give enough of a learned air to the collection. In this context, the role of magic is not negligible; for a non-Latinate audience, Latin and entries of other languages, even invented ones, could have had a powerful, even magical allure. The authority of different languages varies. Latin is used for special terms, and its use is doubtlessly related to the

[94] Amsler 2010, 21.
[95] Meyer 1903, 288.
[96] Banham 2011, 62.

educational status of the compiler and, at the same time, to that of the possible audience. Although the written vernacular is not fully standardized, its use is established and deliberate. The most interesting hypothesis is that these kinds of recipe books were compiled, not for purely medical purposes, but also for antiquarian, anthropological or folkloric purposes, in the modern senses of the terms.[97]

In summary, the code-switching shows that the compiler was competent in different domains of the medical/experimental/magical field and enabled his or her audience to employ it and use its power. Word magic, often close to code-switching, appears to have worked often enough to maintain belief in its efficacy. The self-correction of diseases and problems led people to interpret improvements in health and solutions to other problems as direct consequences of magical participation. Such diseases and physical problems included fevers, wounds and bleeding, labour pains, depression, sexual dysfunction, and common aches and discomfort. Chance phenomena and transitional situations, such as bad luck, birth, finding a lover or spouse, reproduction, and death, also invited magical use of words. Medieval remedy books prove that magic, folklore, and medical learning were not distinct, but were used together, combined in unique mixtures for greater effect in the quest for a better quality of everyday life. The hierarchy between different languages can alter according to their function, but the very use of multiple languages highlights the general authority of words.

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[97] Banham 2011, 60.