PREFIX DERIVATION IN LATIN

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Astract

According to Michèle Fruyt, there are six types of word-formation in Latin: suffixation, nominal compounding, verbal compounding, preverbation, agglutination and recategorisation[1]. Ordinarily these are brought together into three main types: derivation with suffixes and prefixes, compounding and recategorisation.

Prefix derivation in Latin is the subject of many studies and research works from different points of view: phonological, morphological, syntactical, semantic, pragmatic, etc.

The aim of this article is to analyze and describe the main features of Latin prefixes and preverbs from the morphological and semantic point of view.

Key words: *word-formation, derivation, prefix, preverb, preposition*

Résumé

Selon Michèle Fruyt, en latin il y a six types de formation des mots: suffixation, composition nominale, composition verbale; pré-verbation; agglutination et changement de catégorie. D'habitude, ces types sont réunis en trois types plus larges: dérivation par suffixes et préfixes; composition; changement de catégorie.

La dérivation par préfixes en latin a fait l'objet de mantes études et travaux de recherche, envisagés sous diverses perspectives: en phonologie, en morphologie, en syntaxe, en sémantique, en pragmatique, etc.

Le but de cet article est d'analyser et de décrire les grands traits des préfixes latins et des préverbes, dans les perspectives morphologique et sémantique.

Mots-clés: *formation des mots, dérivation, préfixe, pré-verbe, préposition*

Consistent with the terminology created by A. Martinet, prefixed derivatives are called by Christian Touratier prefixed synthemes. Prefixes are derivational affixes attached before the base to create complex lexical units[2]. They have a semantic function, but not a syntactic one because the resulting derivative or syntheme always preserves the syntactic category of

[1] Fruyt, 2011, p. 157-175.

[2] Touratier, 1994, p. 316. The term *syntheme* was created by Martinet to designate complex lexical units made up of two or three stems or a single word containing a syntactic unit consisting of at least two morphemes: a stem and an affix.

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the lexemes that the prefix is attached to[3], e.g. *dūcĕre* and *adducĕre* are verbal lexemes, both the simple form and the derived one belonging to the morphosyntactic class of the verb, or *procurator* and *procurāre* are a noun and a verb derived with the same prefix from a noun and a verb, respectively, so each of them maintains their previous morphosyntactic class.

The process of derivation is very old in Latin, being present in other Indo-European languages and can be traced to the Indo-European stage in which the prefixal morphemes had lexical autonomy. That seems to be attested by the hesitant archaic behaviour of some Latin prefixes in situations such as the ones with tmesis glossed by Paulus Festus: *ob uos secro* or *sub uos placo*, equivalent to *obsecro uos*, *supplico uos*[4] respectively.

Most of the prefixes are homonymous to prepositions. Prepositions are not semantically autonomous in that they have no lexical signified: "in Latin prepositions are not at all morphemes"[5]. Being words with grammatical meaning they only function as bound morphemes by attaching themselves to a lexeme with casual flexion, as morphemes with discontinuous signified, or to a verbal lexeme, as a prefixal morpheme.

Prefixes have a semantic value, but the meaning of the prefixed derivative cannot always be inferred from the addition of the meaning of the elements entering the compound; in this case, we speak about semantic opacity or non-transparency, e.g. the meaning of the derivative *interficĕre* "to kill" from the simple verb *facĕre* "to do" with the prefix *inter-* can not be deduced from combining the meaning of the prefix with that of the base.

Since most of the prefixes are homonymous to their corresponding prepositions in older grammars, prefixed derivatives are commonly called compound words. As a matter of fact, Guy Serbat considers that there are enough arguments to group prefixed derivatives together with compound words, given that most prefixes are found as prepositions, rather than including them together with suffixes within the class of affixes[6].

But homonymy to prepositions disguises their different properties. Thus, the verbal syntheme becomes transitive by prefixation, although the simple verb is intransitive: *ire ex urbe* in contrast to *exire urbem*, a situation

[3] «Les synthèmes dont le morphème conjoint est un préfixe appartiennent à la même catégorie syntaxique que le lexème auquel ils s'ajoutent; ils n'ont donc qu'une valeur sémantique».

[4] Gabriela Creția, "Derivarea cu prefixe" in *Istoria limbii române*, vol. I, p. 97.

[5] Touratier, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

[6] Serbat, "Quelques questions à propos de la création lexicale", in *Opera disiecta*, p. 450.

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which shows that "the preverb performs a syntactic action on the phrase"[7] which differs from the behaviour of homonymous prepositions.

Prefixed synthemes are motivated and therefore most often easily analyzed by the speakers. The segmentation of the prefix poses no problems, although in combining a prefix with a base some phonetic changes may occur, such as: the assimilation of consonants or contraction of vowels, e.g.: the prefix *cum-* becomes *com-*, *con-*, *coll-*, *cor-* or *co-*, according to the initial sound of the simple form; in the case of the simple verbs with an initial vowel prefixed with *pro-* an epenthetic *-d-* occurs, e.g. *ire – pro**d**ire*; the preservation of the intervocalic *-s-* without rhotacization in formations such as *de**s**inō* which comes from *de-* and *sinō*, since the etymology of the word is strongly perceived, although in other circumstances there rhotacization occurs: *habeō – dirhibeō* from *dis- habeō*.

By prefixation, the initial syllable of the verb becomes internal and, as a result, the phenomenon of apophony appears: *f**a**cĕre – interf**i**cĕre*, *h**a**beō – dirh**i**beō*, ***a**gere – ad**i**gere*, *t**a**ngere – att**i**ngere*, *d**a**mnare – cond**e**mnare*. In other cases the vowel of the simple form is maintained: *fr**a**ngere – affr**a**ngere* not *affringere*, *d**a**mnare – praed**a**mnare* not *praedemnare*, *d**e**cus – ded**e**cus* not **dedicus*[8].

In some words, motivation was lost because between the prefix and the initial base there was a fusion which does not make it possible to delimit the constituents and, as such, they are perceived as single, unanalyzable morphemes and not as synthemes. This is the case, for example, of *nemo* which is made up of *ne* and *homo* or *debeō* formed by *de* and *habeō*.

Prefixes can be added to nouns, adjectives, verbs or adverbs.

Not only prepositions can be prefixes. There are several elements that have lost their lexical autonomy and are no longer used in synchrony except as prefixes: *in-*, privative *im-*, *dis-*, *re*(*d*)-, *se*(*d*)- and others.

The following parts of speech can function as prefixes:

- adverbs: *retro-*[9], *intro-*, *intra-*: *retro-agō*, *intro-ducō*, *intra-muranus*, etc.
- numerals: *bi-* or *bi-*: *bi-ceps*; *bi-dens*; *bi-frons*; *bi-gener*; *bi-pes*, etc.

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[7] Serbat, "Aperçu d'une analyse syntaxique des préverbes", in *Opera disiecta*, p. 146. Also, Idem, "Préverbation et émergence d'un datif postverbal en latin", p. 133-142.

[8] Bader, in her book *La formation des mots composés en latin*, 1962, notes that: «la non-apophonie est de rigueur dans les intensifs et diminutifs (*peraeque*, *subsalsus*), sauf parfois quand l'adjectif est en *-to-*, mais non dans les privatifs (*inīquus*, *difficilis*), d'où des oppositions telles que *peraequē/inīquus*, *peramīcus/inimīcus*, *perfacētus/īnficētus*, *praefacilis/difficilis*, *subsalsus/īnsulsus*, *persapiēns/īnsipiēns*» p. 365.

[9] All the words compounded with *retro-*, except *retrouersus* and *retrorsus*, are post-Augustan, and sometimes are written separately.

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- prepositions that may also be adverbs: *ante-*, *post-*[10]: *ante-fero*; *ante-meridianus*; *post-habeo*, *post-pono*, etc.
- prepositions which, originally, are adverbs: *circum-*[11], *contra-/ contro-*, *extra-/ extro-*, *intra-/ intro-*, *super-*, *supra-*: *circum-do*; *contro-uersia*; *intra-clusus*, etc.
- adverbs in Late Latin : *foris-*, *minus*, *plus-* : *forin-secus*[12], *pluri-fariam*, etc.
- *semi-*, *sem-*, *se-*: only very few of these compounds are ante-Augustan; most of them belong to the post-classical age: *se-mestris*, *sem-esus*, *semi-deus*, *semi-cinctium*, *semi-funium*, *semi-piscina*, *semi-spatha*, etc.

Derivation with prefixes creates nominal lexemes – nouns or adjectives – verbal lexemes and adverbial lexemes. The process is used mostly to create verbs; therefore prefixes that are preverbs are the most frequently examined.

Diachronically, one can observe the preference for certain prefixes in some periods, for example, in the archaic period the derivation with *ne-*: *ne-sciō*; *se-*/*sed-*: *se-parō*, *sed-itio*; *por-* allomorph of *pro-*: *por-rigō*, *pol-liceor* or *ambi-*, *amb-*, *am-*, *an-*[13]: *am-fines*, etc.

An indicator of the age of a prefixed derivative is its phonetic behaviour.

For example, the fact that in some formations with *prae-*, *circum-* or *post-* there is no manifest action of the apophony on the stem of the simple verb is interpreted as an indication that they are more recent than those in which the phenomenon occurs: *circumagō* vs. *adigō*.

Semantic relationships of synonymy, antonymy, or homonymy are created between prefixes. There are also some prefixes with polysemantic behaviour.

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[10] «L'emploi comme préverbe est rare et sans doute récent», Ernout-Meillet, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine*, 1934, p. 797.

[11] In composition the final consonant *-m* of the preverb remains unchanged before consonants, but before vowels, according to Priscianus and Cassiodorus, it was written in like manner, but not pronounced, except before *j* and *w*. But there are exceptions even in the best manuscripts: *circu-itus*; *circu-itio*, or *circueo* together with *circumeo*. With the verbs compounded with *circum-*, this preposition is never repeated before the following object; e. g. we do not find *circumstare circum aliud* or the like. Cf. *Latin-English Dictionary* by the Rev. John T. White and the Rev. J. E. Riddle, 1880, p. 298.

[12] Analogous to *extrin-secus*.

[13] Cf. Festus, 4, 22: *am praepositio loquelaris significat circum, unde supra seruus ambactus, i. e., circumactus dicitur*, apud Ernout, Meillet, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

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For example:

- privation or negation are expressed mostly by *in-*/*im-* or *ne-*: *insanus*, *iniustus*, *improbitas*, *inique*; *nefas*, *nedum*, *nego*, but there are other prefixes that can express the same meanings: *a*(*b*)-: *amens*; *de-*: *demens*; *ue-*: *uesanus*, etc.;
- antonymic relationship between: *pro-* which means "before, in front" as in *progredior*, and *re*(*d*)- "back": *regredior*; *per-*, a prefix which augments and creates superlatives such as *perpinguis*, and *sub-* which diminishes as in *subpinguis*; *dis-* which means separation, opposite direction, *dis-currō*, *di-uersus*, and *con-* which means joining: *con-currō*, *con-uersus*, etc;
- intensive or superlative meanings can be expressed by *prae-* and *per-*, as in *permagnus*, *praeclarus*, but also by *con-* as in *condensus*, and *ex-*, *e-*, *ec-*, *ef-*: *expoliō*, with the same values.

De- may be taken as an example of a polysemantic prefix; it can express:

- distance (from the top down): *de-spiciō*;
- privation : *de-sum*, *de-decus*;
- conclusion of an action (aspectual value): *de-uincō*.

From the last example we see that some preverbal morphemes can have aspectual value[14]. Usually the derived verb expresses the non-durative or finite aspect in relationship to the simple verb, for example *faciō*, expresses the imperfective aspect of the action while *per-ficiō* and *con-ficiō* express the perfective aspect of the action.

In parasynthetic[15] formations as *in-cale-scō* the inchoative or durative aspect is expressed both by the preverb *in-* and the suffix *-sc-*[16], or *con-ticu-*

[14] Vide Hubert le Bourdellès, «Problèmes syntaxiques dans l'utilisation des préverbes en latin», in André Rousseau, *Les préverbes dans les langues d'Europe. Introduction à l'étude de la préverbation*, Villeneuve d'Asq (Nord), Septentrion, 1995, p. 189-199.

[15] The term parasynthetic was created by Arsène Darmesteter in *Traité de la formation des mots composés dans la langue française comparée aux autres langues romanes et au latin*, 1894, p. 96: «Cette sorte de composition est très riche: les mots qu'elle forme, et que l'on désigne du mot *parasynthétique*, offrent ce remarquable caractère d'être le résultat d'une composition et d'une dérivation agissant ensemble sur un même radical, de telle sorte que l'une et l'autre ne peut être supprimée sans amener la perte du mot». Parasynthetics are verbs created by decategorization from nominal bases, nouns and adjectives, to which a prefix and a suffix are simultaneously attached, e.g.: «*cor*, *cordis* donne *ac-cord-are*, **cordare* n'existe pas; *femina* donne *ef-femin-are*, **feminare* n'existe pas; *ferus* donne *ef-fer-are*, *ferare* n'existe pas; *rudis* donne *e-rud-ire*, *rudire* n'existe pas» Darmesteter, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

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ere where the preverb *con-* denotes duration while the simple form *tacu-ere* expresses the perfective aspect.

In the course of time the semantics of some prefixed formations is becoming blurred and therefore the need to strengthen it with other prefixes is felt, as it happens in the cases of: *ad-al-ligāre, co-re-sus-citare, co-ad-im-plēre* instead of *al-ligāre, re-sus-citare, ad-im-plēre*.

In forming parasynthetics it is also noted that some prefixed derivatives favour particular suffixes. There are many such formations:

- nouns in *-ia, -ium, -tas, -tio, -tudo*: *in-certi-tudo, per-tracta-tio,* etc.
- verbs: *per-sub-horre-sc-ō,* etc;
- adverbs: *per-suasi-bil-iter*, etc.

The overloading with suffixes and prefixes is a growing phenomenon in Late Latin, being a characteristic of Christian writers. On the other hand, there is the opposite phenomenon with some writers, which prefer the simple verbs. Some of the verbs are obsolescent and their prefixed forms were no longer perceived as semantically analysable, but as single morphemes, such as: *expiare, relinquere*, *consolari*, etc. Artificially, the simple forms began to be used in their place: *piare*, *linquere*, *solari*[17].

Further I shall present a very brief description of the main Latin prefixes. I will take as a reference point not the syntheme resulting from this process, but the typical semantic features of the principal bound morpheme, which are mostly common to nouns and verbs.

Prefixal elements which appear only in compounding

- *ambi-*, and the allomorphs *amb-*, *am-*, *an-* means, "around, round about, on both sides": *amb-ages*, *amb-aruales*, *amb-iguus*, *amb-ustus*, *am-iciō*, *am-plector*, *an-quirō*, etc.; they should not be confused with words composed with the numeral *ambō, ae, a* which means "both"– of two objects whose duality is assumed as already known[18].
- *dis-* and its allomorphs *dif-*, *di-*, *dir-*, mean the general idea of "division, separation, negation": *dis-pliceō, dif-ferō, dis-similis*, *dif-ficilis*, *dis-cors*, *di-moueō*, *dir-imō*, etc.;

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[16] Vide Haverling, "On the *sco-* suffix, on the prefixes and on the development of the Latin verbal system", in *Linguistic Studies on Latin*: *selected papers from the 6th International Colloquium on Latin Linguistics*, Budapest, 23-27 March, Edited by József Herman, John Benjamins B.V., 1994, p. 41-53.

[17] Touratier, *op. cit.*, p. 317.

[18] Cf. Charisius, GLK, I 65, 26: *Ambo non est dicendum, nisi de his qui uno tempore quid faciunt, utpote reges Eteocles et Polynices ambo perierunt quasi una*; *Romulus autem et Africanus non ambo triumpharunt sed uterque*; *quia diverso tempore*.

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- *in-* is a negative or privative prefix; denominative, which does not apply to verbs, although there are the verbal forms *in-scius* şi *in-decet*[19]. It has phonetic variants: *im-*, *il-*, *ir*, *i-*: *in-iuria*, *in-gratus*, *im-berbis*, *im-modestus*, *il-laudatus*, *ir-ritus*, *ir-reparabile*, *i-gnoscō*, etc.;
- *ne-* and the phonetic variants *nec-*, *neg-*, *n-*, express negation: *ne-fas*, *nec-opinatus*, *neg-otium*, *n-umquam*, etc.;
- *re-*, *red-* express the general idea of "move back, opposition, repetition, renewal, reciprocity, restoration to original state": *re-bitō*, *re-spiciō*, *red-imō*, *re-luctor*, *re-bellō*, *re-salutō*, etc.;
- *se-* and its phonologic variants *sed-* and, most probably *so-* indicate "separation, privation": *se-cernō*, *se-cedō*, *se-cludō*, *se-curus*, etc., *sēd-itio* is the only compound which preserves this form of the prefix[20], and *so-* in *so-luō*;
- *ue-* is a privative or negative particle; it selects nominal bases on which it creates nouns and adjectives: *ue-cors*, *ue-sanus*, *ue-grande*, etc.

Prefixes homonymous with prepositions:

- *ab-* and its phonetic variants *a-*, *abs-*, *as-*, *au-* generally mean separation, "from, away": *ab-ducō*, *a-uolō*, *abs-tineō*, *as-portō*, *au-ferō*, etc.;
- *ad-* and its numerous allomorphs *a-* (before the consonantal groups *-sc*, *-sp*, *-st*), *ac-*, *af-*, *ag-*, *al-*, *an-*, *ap-*, *ar-*, *as-*, *at-* express "proximity, closeness to the idea of movement": *ad-eō*, *ac-cipiō*, *af-fero*, *ag-gredior*, *al-loqui*, *an-nectō*, *ap-pellō*, *ar-ripiō*, *as-seruō*, *at-tentō*, etc.;
- *ante-* or *anti-* has the broad sense "before" *ante-cedō*, *ante-ferrō*, *anti-capiō*, etc.;
- *circum-* or *circu-* denotes "around, round about, all around, about": *circum-eō*, *circum-dō*, *circu-itus*, etc.;
- *cum-* and its phonetic variants *com-*, *col-*, *con-*, *cor-*, *co-* generally denote "sociative and comitative meanings, joining, accompaniment, community, connexion of one object with another, reciprocity"[21]: *com-parō*, *com-mutō*, *con-ferō*, *con-cidō*, *cor-ripiō*, *col-loquor*, *co-eō*, *co-optō*, *co-operō*, etc.;

[19] Doubtful forms; cf. Ernout, Meillet, *op. cit.*, p. 474 and 479.

[20] Cf. Ernout, Meillet, *op. cit.*, p. 917.

[21] Vide. Zaliznjak and Shmelev, "Sociativity, conjoining, reciprocity, and the Latin prefix *com-*" in *Reciprocal constructions, I*, 2007, p. 209-230.

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- *de-* denotes the idea of going out or departure from a fixed point to which a thing was originally attached; accordingly it occupies a middle position between *ab*, which merely denotes an external departure, and *ex*, which signifies movement from the interior of a thing: *de-ducō*, *de-spiciō*, *de-sum*, *de-cidō*, etc.;
- *ex-* and its phonetic variants *e-*, *ec-*, *ef-* have many meanings: "the motion from the interior or from a lower to a higher position, a change of nature, removal; connected to the idea of coming away from, and so leaving or being separated from; completeness"; increase the power of the simple word, hence the superlative sense especially in post-classical Latinity; also negation or opposition to the idea of the simple word: *ex-eō*, *ef-fugiō*, *ef-ferō*, *ec-ferō*, *e-mittō*, *e-moueō*, *ef-ficiō*, *e-disco*, *e-durus*, *ef-ferus*, *ex-pallidus*, *e-normis*, *ex-abundo*, etc.;
- *in-* and its variants *im-*, *il-*, *ir-*, *i-* signify "presence, state or action in a place, mental actions or innate qualities, action accompanied with motion in space horizontally, in upward direction, in downward direction, in front of, before, over, in, within, against, in an augmentative force derived from the idea of mounting upwards, and so increasing": *in-sum*, *in-cogitō*, *in-eō*, *im-ponō*, *in-suescō*, *in-ducō*, *in-erro*, *im-perō*, *il-lidō*, *ir-ruō* *im-pleō*, *in-canus*, etc.;
- *indu-*, *endo-* are archaic forms of *in-* reinforced with the semantic value: *ind-agō*, *ind-ipiscor*, *indi-gena*, *ind-igeō*, *ind-oles*, *ind-uō*; *indu-perator*, *endo-perator* and *indu-gredi* are nonviable poetic forms.
- *inter-*, *intel-* with spatial sense denotes local relations: "between, among, in the midst of, within, interward, separation or division, interval and distance, division or distribution, augmentation, reciprocity": *inter-rumpō*, *intel-ligō*, *inter-ficiō*, *inter-cedō*, *inter-cidō*, *inter-cipiō*, *inter-arescō*, *inter-bibō*, etc.;
- *ob-* and the phonetic variants *obs-*, *oc-*, *of-*, *op-*, *os-*, *o-* denotes "direction", "opposition": *ob-ambulō*, *obiiciō*, *ob-loqur*, *obmoueō*, *obstineō*, *occidō*, *oc-currō*, *officiō*, *opponō*, *ostendō*, *omittō*, etc.;
- *per-*, *pel-* signify: of space "a large extend or circuit traversed", of time "duration, continuity, traverse, frequency"; also "completeness, excess, superlative degree, negation": *per-agro*, *per-uadō*, *per-ueniō*, *per-sequor*, *pel-liceō*, *per-ficiō*, *per-fectus*, *per-tenuis*, *per-magnus*, *per-iratus*, *per-grandis*, etc.;
- *post-* denotes "posteriority in time or location, behind, back,

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backwards, after, afterwards": *post-hac*, *pos-tilla*, *pos-tquam*, *post-ponō*, *post-habeō*, *post-partor*, *post-scaenium*, *post-positius*, etc.;

- *prae-*[22] denotes "temporal or spatial anteriority, superiority, superlative degree": *prae-ceps*, *prae-cipiō*, *prae-dicō*, *prae-cox*, *prae-altus*, *prae-clarus*, etc.;
- *praeter-* is a derivative of *prae-* with the suffix *-ter*; it denotes: "past, beyond"; "in passing, going by"; "besides, in addition, further"; "deeply"; "exception": *praeter-mittō*, *praeter-eō*, *praeter-ea*, *praeter-itio*, *praeter-lambō*, *praetor-quam*, etc.;
- *pro-* and its phonetic variants *prod-*, *por-*; means, of place: with motion: "before, in front; in the presence of; for, in favour, for the benefit; for the place of, instead of"; in local relations: "before, above; forward, onward, downward direction"; of time: "before, previous, beforehand, long ago, in remote time"; "presiding over", "in comparison with, in accordance with"; "negation": *prod-eō*, *prod-esse*, *pro-ficiō*, *pro-ficiscor*, *pro-pagō*, *por-tendō*, *pro-auus*, *pro-clinō*, *pro-dicō*, *pro-crastino*, *pro-portio*, *pro-festus*, etc.;
- *sub-* and its many variants: *suc-*, *suf-*, *sug-*, *sum-*, *sur-*, *sus-*, *su-* have the basic meaning locality: "under" which develops secondary meanings such as, "substitution, succession" and figuratively "inferiority, diminishing": *sub-igō*, *sup-ponō*, *suc-cedō*, *sub-stituō*, *sub-legō*, *sub-oles*, *sur-ripiō*, *sub-absurdus*, *sub-agrestis*, *sug-gerō*, *sup-primō*, *sur-gō*, *su-spiciō*, etc.;
- *subter-* is derived from *sub* with the suffix *–ter* and means "underneath, beneath, below": *subter-actus*, *subter-fundo*; by metonymy: "underneath, i.e. closeby, near": *subter-labor* and "secretely, privately, clandestinely: *subter-fluō*, *sub-terō*, *subter-duco*, *subter-fugiō*, etc.;
- *super-* cumulates numerous meanings, the basic and metonymical meaning implies both local and temporal features; figuratively, it also intensifies the meaning of the base: "over, above, on the top of, on, upon, on high, across; higher than something else; on the upper side; beyond, past, longer than, besides, in addition, after, over and above, excess, presiding over, higher than

[22] Vide Benveniste, «Le système sub-logique des prépositions en latin», Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Copenhague, *V, Recherches structurales*, 1949, in which the distinction between preposition and preverb is not made, as the author underlines in note 2, in Benveniste, *Probleme de lingvistică generală*, 2000, p. 125-132.

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others": *super-aedifico*, *super-aceruō*, *super-leuō*, *super-impendens*, *super-fluō*, *super-gredior*, *super-iaciō*, *super-sedeō*, *super-stes*, *super-cilium*, *super-ficies*, *super-effluō*, *super-iectus*, *super-exaltatus*, *super-gaudiō*, etc.

- *trans-*, *tra-* was originally a present participle[23]. In compounds[24] its literal meaning is: "across, over, beyond, past, on the further side": *tra-ducō*, *tran-siliō*; *trans-habeō*, *trans-fluō*, *trans-fretanus*, *trans-montanus*, *Trans-padanus*, and figuratively it signifies: "through; the change from one state or condition to another; the transference from one person or object to another; throughout or from the beginning to the end; intensity": *trans-cīdō*, *trans-figō*, *trans-figurō*, *trans-formō*, *trans-nominō*, *trans-vendō*, *trans-legō*; *trans-glutiō*, *trans-vorō*.

Brief conclusions

The process of creation of new words by prefixation is an active one in Latin, but it shows changing productivity in the history of the Latin language. In the classical period it was preferred to compounding. This offered Romance languages a rich lexical inventory and a model for their own creativity.

Latin prefixes form a system of relationships of synonymy, antonymy, homonymy and polysemy. The semantic analysis shows that their main value is that of local relatum which derives values such as evaluative, actional, telic, ingressive, modal or aspectual, sometimes exhibiting a convergent tendency among them.

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[23] Cf. Marouzeau, 1910, p. 26.

[24] Before vowels it remains unchanged; before consonants the pronunciation and the orthography varies between *trans-* and *tra-*: *trans-dō* and *tra-dō*; as a rule, it disappears before another *s*: *transiliō*, *tran-scendō*, *tran-spiciō*.

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