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Imperatives and Other Directive Expressions in Latin

A Study in the Pragmatics of a Dead Language

Author: Rodie Risselada

As the recent *hausse* in pragmatic studies shows, linguistic attention is increasingly focussing on aspects of language use. Making use of recent insights developed within speech act theory, discourse analysis, and sociolinguistics, this book deals with the various expressions that were used in Latin to perform so-called directive speech acts, i.e. orders, requests, advice, proposals, suggestions, etc. On the basis of a large corpus of comedy, correspondence, and instruction texts the expressions concerned (imperatives, subjunctives, future indicatives, as well as modal expressions and various other lexical expressions of directivity) are investigated against the background of the verbal interactions in which they typically occur. As regards its contribution to Latin linguistics, the present study adds a number of refinements to our knowledge of this well-documented language, for instance with respect to the reference of the subjects of the so-called imperative II ending in -to, the conventionalized speech act functions of interrogative *quid* and *quin* directives, and the diachronic process of conventionalization of *velim* requests.

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