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The first two volumes in the series ‘Studies in Greek and Latin Linguistics’ were written in the same department and under the same supervisors, but are of unequal interest. In reviewing them, I write not as a professional classicist (which indeed I am not), but as a general linguist with a classical education. For a common feature of both books is that the study of Latin is modelled on various theoretical investigations, which are themselves directed to, or at least primarily illustrated with, English. In Dr. Bolkestein’s hands the method is successful and illuminating; in Dr. Vester’s case, its value is limited.

The principal aim of Dr. Vester’s thesis was to investigate the semantic functions of ablatives such as ira, audacia, virtute, furore (broadly nouns of emotion or psychological quality) in conjunction with different types of verb. For example, in virtute culpam nostram corrigerere debemus, the function of virtute is instrumental; in audacia et temeritate certant, the ablatives have the function of an adverb of manner (1); in Poppaea mortem obit fortuita mariti iracundia (71), the function is of an adverb of cause. Similar roles are played not only by simple adverbs (for example, acriter in acriter pugnatum est), but also by the ablative of a gerund (for example, commemorando in eam rem commemorando renovare). These are investigated in a similar fashion,
and are compared with predicative participles (for example, in dixi
tacens), which, in Dr. Vester's account, have no specific semantic
function and are subject to no special restrictions.

The main problem in this kind of study is to decide which seman-
tic class an element belongs to. Like other scholars, Dr. Vester
often relies explicitly on her own judgment. But she also tries to
introduce ostensibly objective tests, analogous to those that various
authors have proposed for English. For example, two elements
have the same function if they can be coordinated: thus, in celerrime
fortissimeque ... remigante, both adverbs have the general function
'Manner', even though the first is, more specifically, 'predicate-
oriented' (qualifying the sense of the verb) and the second 'agent-
oriented' (86 f.). Again, some types of verb can readily be used in
the imperative (English Find the answer) and others not (compare
Know the answer). For living languages such tests are notoriously
unsafe. For example, it is quite easy to coordinate a manner adverb
and an instrumental (English He fought bravely and with every weapon
at hand); if this is dismissed as a zeugma, it is only because one has
already decided, on subjective grounds, that the functions are dif-
ferent. In dealing with a dead language, the method is even less
helpful. Dr. Vester generally tries to find examples in texts; but (as
she is well aware) the fact that there is no attested instance does not
prove that a construction is impossible. She is therefore forced to
use her judgment, saying at some points that a gap in her evidence
is probably accidental and, at others, that it is probably not. It is
not clear that such decisions are any less subjective than the
primary intuitions which the tests are designed to support.

There is also a conceptual problem that affects her whole in-
vestigation. In, say, fortiter pugnare one can talk about the collocation
of an adverb with a verb: more specifically, of an 'agent-oriented'
manner adverb with a verb that denotes an action controlled by an
agent. On this and other evidence, one may be led to posit the rule
that adverbs of this type do not occur with verbs that do not have
the 'control' feature. But then consider a collocation such as fortiter
mori (50). Dying is not inherently an action over which an agent has
control; however, in the context of Dr. Vester's example (reliqui
quid esse, nisi ut fortiter moriatur?), the collocation as a whole refers to
a 'state of affairs'—dying bravely—where the subject does have a
choice. For such reasons, Dr. Vester says that, strictly speaking,
she is studying the semantic function of adverbials not in conjunc-
tion with verbs as such, but 'with' (e.g. 77) states of affairs. But this