

VERB-BASED FUNCTIONAL MARKERS IN LATIN: MORPHOSYNTAX, SEMANTICS, AND PRAGMATICS AT A CROSSROADS

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Abstract

The object of this paper is the pragmaticalization process undergone by some deverbal pragmatic markers in Latin, such as *inquam*, *rogo*, *quaeso*, and *amabo*. Verbs of knowing, perceiving, and saying tend to be recruited at the level of pragmatics to serve discourse-procedural functions. This relates to some specific traits implied in the semantics of the verbs involved (the cognitive dimension of intellectual effort and focused perception). Latin deverbal markers can be grouped into four main types, depending on their orientation (to the speaker or the addressee) and their corresponding functions. From a theoretical perspective, we show that pragmaticalization can be considered a *continuum* of pragmatic saliency in which the interplay between morphosyntactic routinization in specific contexts and invited semantic inferencing play a crucial role in determining the development of new functions at the discourse level.

Keywords

Latin, deverbal pragmatic markers, pragmaticalization, subjectification

1 Items and functions

Linguistic forms, following a pragmatic approach, can be differentiated in language use between

- forms with a propositional meaning, which encode concepts (*Look at the sea!*);
- forms with a procedural function, which are oriented to one of the participants or to the structuring of the message (*Look, you're not to say anything!*).

This paper focuses on verbs, which usually have propositional content, but which sometimes take on a procedural sense (Watts, 2003), thus developing into functional markers.

In the relevant literature, forms like *you know*, *please*, *look* have been referred to as “discourse markers” or “pragmatic markers”, two terms often used as synonyms. During this research¹ the consideration of several kinds of markers has made it possible to distinguish two principal functional classes: discourse markers (DM) and pragmatic markers (PM). The cover term for the two is “functional markers”, because of their role in language use. In fact, such markers are an elusive category: it is difficult to define them because they come in so many different forms, including multifarious expressions as adverbs, verbs, interjections, phrases, and propositions. I do not consider here markers such as *sis*, *sodes* (from *si vis*, *si audes* “if you want”), since they are results of coalescence, although the process is very interesting.

The Latin functional markers described here are deverbal items having (or diachronically reaching) the status of DM or PM.

Discourse markers are message-oriented and are used to organize the structure of discourse, for example as quotatives (*inquit* and *inquam* in 1a) or as text-cohesion (1b) devices:

(1a)

Sudorem	ille	manibus	detersit	et:	
sweat.ACC	he.NOM	hand.ABL.PL	wipe.PF.3SG	and	
"Si	scires,		inquit ,	quae	mihi
if	know.SUBJ.IMPF.2SG		say.PRS.3SG	REL.ACC.N.PL	1SG.DAT
acciderunt. —	Quid		novi?"	inquam	ego.
happen.PF.3PL	anything.NOM		new.GEN	say.PRS.1SG	1SG.NOM

‘Wiping the sweat (from his face) with both hands “If you only knew” he replied’ what happened to me!’ “Anything new?” said I’ (Petr, Sat. 8)

(1b)

verba,	ut	supra diximus,	legenda sunt	potissimum	bene
word.ACC.PL	as	above say.PF.1PL	select.GER.ACC.PL	especially	well
sonantia					
sound.PART.PRS.ACC.PL					

‘As we have said above, one should select the most euphonious words’ (Cic. Or. 163)

Pragmatic markers are restricted² here to those oriented toward social cohesion, since they can be oriented to the personal stance of the speaker or to the relationship with the interlocutor. The former can be exemplified through courtesy forms (e.g. *amabo*, *quaeso*), and they express subjectivity (2a). Forms like *age* and *scis/scias* highlight the intersubjective value of the interaction (2b).

¹ This article is a product of the PRIN project Contact and Change in the History of Mediterranean Languages coordinated by Marco Mancini (MIUR 2008, prot. EHLWYE); Bergamo University Research Unit, coordinated by Piera Molinelli.

² This restriction is a personal choice, although the term can be used as “a cover term for a number of different kinds of expressions of stance to text (discourse markers) and addresses (e.g. hedges)” (Traugott 2010a: 109). Our choice is supported by data analysis: the verbs here defined as discourse markers vs. pragmatic markers have different morphosyntactic and functional characteristics.

- (2a) Sed, pater, vide ne tibi hodie
 But father.VOC mind.IMP.PRS.2SG COMPL 2SG.DAT today
 verba det: quaeso cave
 trick.SUBJ.PRS.3SG please be.careful.IMP.PRS.2SG
 ‘But, father, mind he doesn't trick you today. Please be careful’ (Plaut. Bac. 744)
- (2b) Age igitur intro abite
 lead.on.IMP.PRS.2SG then inside go.IMP.PRS.2PL
 ‘Come on, then, go inside’ (Plaut. Mil. 925-929)

Pragmatic markers are centered on the channel and/or the participants, with various functions, all of them having a deictic motivation: to raise awareness, maintain contact, modulate the illocutionary force of the utterance (e.g. intensification, e.g. mitigation), or indicate politeness strategies. This pragmatic approach is usually applied to spoken interaction and is observed in contemporary languages; for this reason, applying it to a corpus language such as Latin requires caution.

However, the interface between pragmatics and other levels of linguistic analysis can provide new perspectives, as several studies have already demonstrated. Moreover, the formation of discourse and pragmatic markers can be considered a pragmatic cycle³, a recurring diachronic process, which in Latin as in many other languages gives rise to functional items stemming from fully lexical verbs.

1.1 Discourse markers and pragmatic markers in Latin

In Latin, the distinction between discourse and pragmatic markers is precisely exemplified by the opposition between *inquam* and *dico* (of course in those contexts in which *dico* is used pragmatically).

The morphosyntactic properties and semantic content of both are the same “I say”, but their pragmatic behavior differs.

Inquam is a marker with discursive textual function, it is used as a quotative⁴, and it does not imply an interactional value⁵.

- (3) Itaque subsecutus fugientem ad litus
 So follow.PART.PF.M.SG fly.PART.PRS.M.ACC.SG to beach.ACC

³ The idea of a cycle is due to Jespersen (1917), who described the formation of some negative strategies as a cycle. The application of this definition to the formation of pragmatic markers is discussed in Ghezzi-Molinelli (2013).

⁴ The presence of a quotative in the first person is interesting since it is quite rare in the world's languages. Here it is possible only to mention this peculiarity, but it deserves further investigation.

⁵ *Inquam* is often associated with nominal allocutives such as *domina ... Venus* in Petr. 85 *Itaque timidissimo murmure votum feci et: "Domina, inquam, Venus, si ego hunc puerum basiavero, ita ut ille non sentiat, cras illi par columbarum donabo"*.

pervenī et ut primum extra teli coniectum
 come.PF.1SG and as.soon.as out dart.GEN.SG throw.PART.PAST.M.ACC.SG
 licuit consistere: «Rogo, **inquam**, quid tibi
 be.possible.PF.1SG stop.INF.PRS ask.PRS.1SG say.PRS.1SG INT 2SG.DAT
 vis cum isto morbo?»
 want.PRS.2SG with this.ABL.SG disease.ABL.SG
 ‘So I followed him in his flight, and came to the beach, and as soon as we were out of range
 and could stop, **I said**, “Tell me, cannot you get rid of your disease?”’ (Petr. Sat. 90)

In addition, it is a fixed form and does not occur with modulation⁶ – that is, for example, *Inquam tibi / tibi inquam* is not found, precisely because the deictic dimension is not present.

Dico, on the other hand, can also be used as an attention-getter or as a turn-managing device. In (4) the verb “*tibi dico*”, can be paraphrased as “listen to me”, while the meta-textual quotative function is performed by *inquit*:

- (4) Et sane iam lucernae mihi plures
 and indeed by.this.time lamp.NOM.PL I.DAT many.NOM.PL
 videbantur ardere totumque triclinium esse mutatum,
 seem.IMPF.3PL burn.INF.PRS all-and dining-room.ACC.SG be.altered.INF.PF
 cum Trimalchio: «**Tibi dico**, inquit, Plocame,
 when Trimalchio.NOM 2SG.DAT say.PRS.1SG say.PRS.3SG Plocamus.VOC
 nihil narras? nihil nos delectaris?»
 nothing.ACC narrate.PRS.2SG nothing.ACC 1PL.ACC entertain.PRS.2SG
 ‘By this time, I own, the lamps were multiplying before my eyes, and the whole dining-
 room was altering; then Trimalchio said, «Come you, Plocamus, have you got no story? Will
 you not entertain us?»’ (Petr. Sat. 64)

In Latin, as in Italian, “il *dico* di apertura assomiglia a uno squillo di tromba (“sto parlando, prendine atto, ascolta!”)...Prima di pronunciare il contenuto dell'enunciato ci si premura di ottenere il permesso dell'interlocutore convogliando così la sua attenzione sul contenuto di quanto segue” (Spitzer, 2007: 96).

In this paper we present a classification of Latin verbs that can be used as discourse and pragmatic markers, based on the analysis of materials (private letters, comedies, dialogue) that allow the adoption in written materials of functional-pragmatic approaches that usually apply to spoken interaction.

In particular, a classification of deverbal markers is proposed on the basis of their morphosyntactic, distributional, semantic, and pragmatic features.

⁶ Modulation is intended here as the co-occurrence of a verb with a modifier of whatever nature (an argument as in *dico tibi*, an adverb as in *plane dico*) whose presence determines a variation in the functional domain, for instance the degree of illocutionary force.

The parameters considered include specifically the morphosyntactic productivity of the verb (vs. frozen formulaic forms), freedom of distribution, the possibility of modulation, maintenance of the original semantic traits, and the pragmatic values acquired (hedging, politeness).

The process that causes propositional items like verbs to acquire procedural functions has been discussed in terms of grammaticalization or pragmaticalization (Dostie 2004, Molinelli 2008 and 2010).

The peculiarities of developments giving rise to functional units have in fact contributed to a wide debate on the nature of the changes involved and consequently on the definition of the domains of “grammar” and of “pragmatic functions”. One position (see Traugott 2010, Diewald 2011, Brinton 2008, Traugott & Dasher 2002) supports the need for a broader view of grammaticalization. Traugott (2010), for example, argued for two views of grammaticalization, namely “traditional grammaticalization”, meaning *reduction* (cf. Lehmann 1995), vs. grammaticalization as *semantic-pragmatic expansion*.

A second position (see Erman & Kotsinas 1993, Aijmer 1997, Dostie 2004, Drescher / Frank-Job 2006, Molinelli 2008 and 2010, Ghezzi & Molinelli 2013) considers functional units to be the result of a different process (viz. pragmaticalization), which is defined as the process of linguistic change “in which a full lexical item (noun, verb, adjective or adverb) or grammatical item (coordinator, subordinator, etc.) changes category and status and becomes a pragmatic item, that is, an item which is not fully integrated into the syntactic structure of the utterance and which has a textual or interpersonal meaning” (Dostie 2009: 203).

These differentiations are inherently tied to Diewald’s (2011) recent claim that units of grammar and units of pragmatics are built on different principles of organization and that the term *pragmaticalization* has been introduced to distinguish the domains of grammar from those of pragmatics. However, this suggests, in Diewald’s view, that specific diachronic developments (e.g. German modal particles) should be considered in a “more comprehensive view of “grammar”, which encompasses pragmatic functions” (Diewald 2011: 384).

Deverbal markers can be grouped into four main types, depending on their orientation (to the speaker or the addressee) and their corresponding functions:

Type 1: Verbs of personal stance

We define ‘verbs of personal stance’ as verbs in the first person singular; they are speaker-oriented and characterized by emotive functions (in Jakobsonian terms); in Latin this type include two

groups of verbs: *verba sentiendi* (*credo, puto, opinor*) and *verba declarandi* (*dico, fateor, concedo*), as in (5); they are generally used as pragmatic markers with a mitigating value:

- (5) Servus qui ad pedes Habinnae
 slave.NOM REL.NOM.SG at foot.ACC.PL Habinnas.GEN
 sedebat, iussus, **credo**, a domino
 sit.IMP.F.3SG order.PF.PASS.3SG suppose.PRS.1SG by master.ABL.SG
 suo proclamavit subito canora
 POSS.3SG.ABL declaim.PF.3SG suddenly sing-song.ABL.SG
 voce
 voice.ABL.SG
 ‘A slave, who was sitting at the feet of Habinnas, began, by his master's orders **I suppose**, suddenly to declaim in a sing-song voice’ (Petr. Sat. 68)

Although parenthetical, this group of verbs can be modulated, i.e. their combination with other linguistic elements produces pragmatic effects, such as variation in the degree of intensity:

- *plane dico*, (Cic, Att. 11,6,2 and others)
- *tibi dico* (ex. 4), ex. in Thes. V, 969, 29 ss.
- *ego dicam tibi* (more solemn) used for example in Terence e Plautus (among others: Rud. 388)

Type 2⁷. Verbs of personal commitment

Verba petendi “ask” and “pray” can be used as performatives (e.g. *rogo* and *quaeso*), and in different stages of their evolution are subject to the same process of pragmaticalization. While *quaeso* is in fact the only attested courtesy form from the archaic era onward (Molinelli 2010), throughout Latin diachrony *rogo* maintains a certain degree of ‘divergence’ (Thompson / Mulac 1991) between the pragmaticalized form and propositional uses of the verb. This peculiarity represents a good example of “stratification”, the persistence of original meanings and functions alongside the development of pragmatic values (Hopper 1991: *layering*). *Rogo*, in fact, maintains a richness of forms and syntactic constructions:

- as bivalent verb with a nominal argument (6):

- (6) Si vis sanus esse, Gitonem roga
 if want.PRS.2SG get.well.INF.PRS Giton.ACC ask.IMP.PRS.2SG
 ‘If you want to get well, ask Giton’ (Petr. Sat. 129)

⁷ Types 1 and 2 are often grouped together by scholars, though without referring to a (discourse) markers function; for instance, Pinkster (2008/1990, 203-4) analyses the two classes with reference to their parenthetic value and to their illocutionary force.

- with different types of propositional argument: volitive subordinate sentences at the subjunctive preceded by *ut/ne* (7), indirect interrogative (8), subjunctive (in general the simple predicate; 9-12), imperative (13-14):

(7) Nemo, inquit, vestrum **rogat** Fortunatam meam,
 none.NOM say.PRS.3SG you.PL.GEN ask.PRS.3SG Fortunata POSS.1SG.ACC
ut saltet
 COMPL dance.SUBJ.PRS.3SG
 ‘he said: “None of you ask dear Fortunata to dance”’ (Petr. *Sat.* 52)

(8) Cum et ipsi ergo pallidi
 COMPL and selves.NOM.PL then pale.NOM.PL
rogaremus quis esset
 ask.SUBJ.IMPF.1PL who be.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG
 ‘We turned pale and asked who it was’ (Petr. *Sat.* 16)

Rogo followed by the simple subjunctive is a very common structure⁸ and its syntactic contexts allow us to distinguish two types that differ semantically and pragmatically. The first group includes uses of the verb with the original meaning "pray", and forms in various contexts that are morphologically plural and are immediately followed by the subjunctive – in syntactic and textual contexts that are clear enough to be defined as completive subordinates⁹:

(9) Rogo venias
 pray.PRS.1SG come.SUBJ.PRS.2SG
 ‘(I) pray you to come’ (Tab. Vindol. 312)

(10) Rogamus mittas
 ask.PRS.1PL send.SUBJ.PRS.2SG
 ‘(We) ask you to send’ (Petr. *Sat.* 49)

In the second type, on the other hand, diverse linguistic material can be inserted between *rogo* and the corresponding subordinate, , such as a simple attention-getter (*domine* in 11) or a series of more complex elements (as in 12), whose main structure should be *rogo ei subscribere*¹⁰; this structure is extremely interesting also for the presence of a parenthetical use of the conditional (*si velis*), which is in turn motivated by modulation of the illocutionary force, being a mitigation strategy in the context of an official letter:

⁸ For example in the Vindolanda letters the subjunctive (alone) prevails 5 to 1 over the *ut* structure (cf. Molinelli 2008).

⁹ Moreover, in reference to Latin and similar contexts, Pinkster (1990, 125) considers the optionality of the conjunction of distinctive characteristics of completive subordinates.

¹⁰ The interpretation of such passages always leaves some doubt. Especially in contexts where pragmatic needs are paramount (letters are a good case in point), syntactic structure often becomes ambiguous. In this case I would not exclude either of the possibilities: either the one given in the gloss or the one deriving from the reading *rogo si velis ei subscribere* “I pray you to grant him”, which of course would be less prototypical on a syntactic level.

- (11) rogo domine dignum me
 pray.PRS.1SG Lord.VOC proper.ACC.SG 1SG.ACC
 iudices ut.¹¹
 judge.SUBJ.PRS.2SG COMPL
 ‘I pray you, Lord, to judge me proper to’ (CEL 149, 3-5)

- (12) rogo ergo domine si quod a te
 pray.PRS.1SG then Lord.VOC if what from 2SG.ABL
 petierit velis ei subscribere
 ask.SUBJ.PF.3SG want.SUBJ.IMPF.2SG 3SG.DAT assent.to.INF.PRS
 ‘I pray you, Lord, to assent to what he asked to you’ (Tab. Vindol. II, 250, 5-8 r)

In this second type of context (*rogo*+X+SUB), *rogo* acquires pragmatic prominence, which the spoken language would surely underscore with prosodic prominence.

A second context, characterized by increased syntactic freedom and pragmatic force, occurs when *rogo* is followed by an imperative: Hofmann-Szantyr define similar contexts as *asyndetische Nebeneinanderstellung der Imperative* (vol. II, p. 471), especially when imperatives introduce a *halbinterjektionale Aufforderung* and are followed by another imperative.

- (13) “**rogo**” inquam “noli clamare”
 ask.PRS.1SG say.PRS.1SG not.want.IMP.PRS.2SG shout.INF.PRS
 “‘Not such a noise, please,’ I said’ (Petr. Sat. 137)

- (14) ita **rogo** quam primum aliquit (denariorum) mi
 so ask.PRS.1SG as.soon.as.you.can some money.GEN.PL 1SG.DAT
 mitte
 send.IMP.PRS.2SG
 ‘so please send some money to me as soon as you can’ (Tab. Vindol. II, 343, 14-15)

Rogo, like similar verbs, can be variously modulated as *valde te rogo* (lit. “earnestly you I beg”) in

- (15) respiciens deinde Habinnam 'quid dicis' inquit 'amice carissime? aedificas monumentum meum, quemadmodum te iussi? **valde te rogo** ut secundum pedes statuae meae catellam pingas et coronas et unguenta et Petraitis omnes pugnas, ut mihi contingat tuo beneficio post mortem vivere
 ‘Then he looked at Habinnas and said, “Now tell me, my dear friend: you will erect a monument as I have directed? **I beg you earnestly** to put up round the feet of my statue

¹¹ This example is taken from a petition and this use represents a typical formula of this type of public letters (as similar formulas containing the so-called *verba faciendi: cura, fac*. Cf. for example CEL 87, 5 *cura agas ut illam puellam ad nummum redigas*).

my little dog, and some wreaths, and bottles of perfume, and all the fights of Petraitas,
so that your kindness may bring me a life after death' (Petr. *Sat.* 71)

To verbs like *rogo* and *quaeso* should be added another form, *amabo*, which in spoken Latin is more frequently associated with prayer formulas; *amabo* is originally, according to Hofmann (1985: 281), a complex statement as in *ita te amabo ut hoc facies* "I will love you as long as you will do this", which is already attested in archaic Latin¹²:

- (16) ita te amabit Iuppiter ut tu
so 2SG.ACC love.FUT.3SGJupiter.NOM COMPL 2SG.NOM
nescis
do.not.know.PRS.2SG
'As truly as Jupiter will love you, you don't know' (Plaut. *Aul.* 761)

Nevertheless, already in archaic Latin the proposition gives rise to the formula *amabo / amabo te*:

- (17) **amabo**, Libane, iam sat est
love.FUT.1SG Libanus.VOC already enough be.PRS.3SG
'Please, Libanus, it's enough now' (Plaut. *Asin.* 707)
- (18) dic, **amabo** te, ubi est
say.IMP.PRS.2SG love.FUT.1SG you.ACC where be.PRS.3SG
Diniarchus?
Dinarchus.NOM
'Tell me, I beg of you, where is Dinarchus?' (Plaut. *Truc.* 588)

Type 3 – Attention-getters

Second-person verbs are usually addressee-oriented, and they can function as attention-getters. They are characterized at the pragmatic level by deictic reference and by different degrees of illocutionary force. In Latin such uses are more frequently represented by predicates in the second person singular (rarely plural) of the indicative (e.g. *scis* in 19), the subjunctive (e.g. *scias* in 20), and (pseudo)imperatives (e.g. *scito* in 21). All these forms can be read as desemanticized or introductory formulas, even if the indicative *scis* has the original allocutive value and the subjunctive *scias* and the (pseudo)imperative *scito* maintain exhortative value:

- (19) **Scis** tu me non mentiri
know.SUBJ.PRS.2SG 2SG.NOM 1SG.ACC not lie.INF.PRS.DEP
'You know I do not lie' (Petr. *Sat.* LXXIV)

¹² A similar reduction process develops in *si dis placet* > *si placet* as a courtesy formula less formal than originally.

- (20) **Scias** domo nostrarum
 know.SUBJ.PRS.2SG home.ABL.SG POSS.1PL.GEN.SG
 deorum beneficio omnia recte esse
 god.GEN.PL favor.ABL.SG everything.NOM.PL well be.INF.PRS
 ‘You should know that at our place thanks to the favor of the gods everything is fine’
 (*P. Mich.* VIII 467, 26-27)
- (21) **scito** mae explesse coria CLXX
 know.IMP.FUT.2SG 1SG.ACC finish.INF.PS leather.ACC.PL 170
 ‘You should know that I finished 170 leathers’ (*CEL tab. Vindol.* Θ 24)

Among imperatives with a lower degree of pragmatization (since they are characterized by modulation and stratification) we can list:

- *crede*, with different types of modulation (*mihi, modo...*)
- (21) quae laudas ex orationibus,
 REL.NOM.PL praise.PRS.2SG from speech.ABL.PL
 mihi **crede**, valde mihi
 1SG.DAT believe.IMP.PRS.2SG very.much 1SG.DAT
 placebant
 please.IMP.3PL
 ‘The points in my speeches which you praise, believe me, I liked very much myself’
 (*Cic. Att.* 1,13,5)
- *vide*, similar to It. *guarda* or Eng. *look* (in Plautus, Terence, Cicero (22 & in Hofmann, p. 150), also with modulations *vide modo* or *me vide*. Less common is the corresponding intentional *verbum videndi spectare* (23). Note that in relation to these verbs, Hofmann (LU § 44, 45) speaks of complete *Interjektionalisierung*. Hofmann only cites cases in which *vide* is used when speech is not directed toward anyone in particular or is directed toward the speaker himself (*hoc vide, quae haec fabulast?* ‘Do look at that. What play is this?’, *Plaut. Persa* 11) or in exclamatory apostrophes, which are common in the letters of Cicero (*ac vide mollitiem animi: non tenui lacrimas* ‘Yet see how soft-hearted I am: I could not refrain from tears’, *Att.* 2.21).
- (22) nihil periclist, **me** **vide**
 nothing.N danger.NOM-be.PRS.3SG 1SG.ACC look.IMP.PRS.2SG
 ‘There’s no danger; trust me for that’ (*Ter. Andr.* 350)
- (23) reddam ego te ... mansuetem
 turn.FUT.1SG 1SG.NOM 2SG.ACC tame.ACC.SG
me **specta** **modo**
 1SG.ACC look.IMP.PRS.2SG just
 ‘But I’ll turn you into a tame beast...just look at me’ (*Plaut. Asin.* 145)

	<i>crede, vide</i>						
Type 4 <u>Phatic markers</u>	<i>age, abi, em, (+ marginal) mane, sine, iube,</i>	-	+	-	-	+	A

Note that, once these elements are recruited at the level of pragmatics, some of them develop a clear subjective (speaker-oriented) and intersubjective (hearer-oriented) function, i.e., they are exploited to express meanings centered on the speaker-hearer interaction, which widely concerns, among other things, forms of politeness. Moreover, the notion of intersubjectivity is inherently tied to social and textual coherence, which is guaranteed by elements which both serve as content-oriented devices and fulfill the procedural purposes of expressing the speaker's attitude toward the ongoing discourse and the relationship with the interactional context (Traugott 2010b).

3 Concluding remarks

Pragmaticalization of deverbal markers originates in regular schemata which are systematically exploited (certain tenses, moods, and persons are privileged). Morphosyntactic, distributional, and semantic properties of sources permit them to function as pragmatic rather than discourse markers (Ghezzi & Molinelli, 2013).

It is often the case that the same source gives rise to several markers; this suggests that certain verbs are more commonly used as sources for markers, and this probably relates to certain specific traits implied in the semantics of the verb (the cognitive dimension of senses). Many markers originate in: verbs of knowing (Lat. *scio, credo*), perceiving (Lat. *video*), and saying (Lat. *dico; rogo, quaeso*). This is probably due to the fact that all verbal communication presupposes intellectual effort on the part of the interlocutor and that this effort is constantly focused by specific markers (Dostie 2004).

The rise of new form-function configurations depends on many factors, such as lexical co-occurrence with other structures (modulation), which in turn is susceptible to giving rise to fixed position of elements which are juxtaposed at the syntagmatic level.

Certain traits allow us to identify four classes of verbs used as discourse markers; the four classes are characterized by different behaviors as a result of their peculiarities in relation to both modulation of the illocutionary force and the completeness of their pragmaticalization.

The four classes show specific tendencies on both a (1) micro- and (2) macro-level:

1) Modulation of illocutionary force is achieved through lexical, morphosyntactic, and distributional strategies and seems to affect all verbs belonging to types 1 and 3, while it is decreasing in type 2a and disappears in types 2b and 4.

2) Pragmaticalization consists of a series of processes: decategorialization, desemantization, movement from an open word class to a closed word class, and form fixation, with instances of coalescence (*si audes* > *sodes*), transition from referential to non-referential meaning through invited-inference, subjectification, divergence, and persistence; these processes seem to be characteristic of type 4 and progressively decrease in types 3, 2, and 1. In other words, reading the table from the bottom, verbs that are completely pragmaticalized are also addressee-oriented (*em*, *age*), but this is not the case for attention-getters. Among verbs that are speaker-oriented, only performatives which develop a courtesy value are more pragmaticalized (type 2b).

These observations can also be linked to phonological reduction (Lat. *eme* > *em*, Lat. *tene* > It. *tè*), which in Latin is not characteristic of attention-getters or speaker-oriented markers. The phonological erosion is the result of two combined factors: prosodic prominence of the first syllable and high frequency of occurrence in the forms, which affect articulatory processes (Bybee 2001, 59).

Since these two characteristics are quite common in the verbs described here, it can be assumed that the reduction of the forms takes place only in pragmatic markers with a phatic function but not in those that are pragmatically more salient, being connected with the interpersonal relationship. In fact, both the speaker-oriented and the addressee-oriented markers belonging to type 2b (*rogo*), which become courtesy markers, acquire a social deictic meaning and express the negotiation of the interlocutor's needs.

These phenomena do not happen randomly. If the fixation in position and the coalescence reach the maximum level, a new unit emerges which enriches the class of verb-based markers.

Last but not least, in many of the above-mentioned cases we have a clear increase in subjectification. The features recognized by Dasher and Traugott (2002: 23) as characteristics of speaker-oriented expressions perfectly fit the functional status of these elements, namely: (i) overt spatial deixis (reference to the *hic et nunc* state of affairs, see for example markers belonging to type 4 such as *em*, *tene*, *age*, and *abi* that inherently presuppose deictic anchoring to the source of the locution), (ii) explicit markers of speaker attitude to what is said (with reference to courtesy markers and mitigators as *rogo*, *amabo*, *quaeso*), and (iii) explicit markers of speaker attitude to the relationship between what precedes and what follows, i.e. to the discourse structure, considering that discourse markers are also floor-yielding devices and tools that serve for managing interactional turns.

As regards the four classes, pragmaticalization can thus be considered a *continuum* of pragmatic saliency in which the interplay between morphosyntactic routinization in specific contexts and invited semantic inferencing play a crucial role in determining the degree of integration and retrieval of verbs which are nevertheless undergoing pragmaticalization at the discourse level.

From a sociolinguistic point of view, the four types show some differences, although they may be difficult to elicit with reference to a corpus language whose spoken dimension is mediated by the written medium. The four types presuppose contexts of dialogue, but while the first three appear to be common in various registers, the fourth type is characteristic only of informal spoken language.

To anyone interested in Latin, this type of study can provide a theoretical frame of reference for the interpretation of many conversational contexts that are difficult to explain in purely morphosyntactic terms.

Conversely, the analysis of this phenomenon in long diachrony, which is possible in Latin and the Romance languages, can provide new insights into pragmaticalization and its subsequent relation to grammaticalization, especially as regards the development of markers with pragmatic value.

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