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Some universal premises about vocatives and their applicability to the study of languages in contact

Abstract:

The vocative – by nature pragmatic – is one of the linguistic elements that is most useful for understanding communicative intentionality in various speech acts. Through its definition, description, and functional analysis, I will propose a classification at the semantic-pragmatic level that considers the identity, socio-affective, and cultural components of the interlocutors and the entire communicative context in areas of high ethnocultural confluence.

Man!

What's up, my dog?

Anita!

Oh my God!

These are some examples that show the wide range of pragmalinguistic uses of vocative forms.

For the communicative purpose among Spanish speakers with different native languages to be successful, the illocutionary force indicating devices and the socio-pragmatic norms of each of the cultural codes used in the communicative act must be taken into account. Since vocatives are essential for carrying out a communicative exchange because there is a need to have an addressee, they are present in all speech acts (Alonso Cortés 1999a: §62.8.1.). In this way, the range of analysis of communicative intentionality encompassed by vocative forms is so broad that it allows for an understanding of language use in almost all its social manifestations.

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