

Let's get this straight:

exhortatives expressing speaker commitment in contemporary Spanish

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Speaker commitment in Spanish can be expressed with various linguistic categories, such as discourse markers (e.g. *por lo visto* 'apparently', *a mi parecer* 'in my opinion', Martín Zorraquino – Portolés Lázaro 1999), different types of particles (e.g. *sinceramente* 'sincerely, to be honest', as understood by Santos Río 2003), and verbs (e.g. *afirmar* 'to assert'). This study deals with a number of Spanish verbs that can express or modify speaker commitment, and focuses on their use in exhortative forms, which are interesting in that they are oriented both to the speaker and to the interlocutor.

The Spanish exhortative is expressed with the 1st person plural subjunctive. Exhortatives expressing speaker commitment are quite often used metadiscursively, as in *digamos* ('let's say'), and may be grammaticising to discourse markers. We also find exhortatives in more explicit expressions of the speaker's attitude towards the utterance, as in *seamos honestos* ('let's be honest').

In line with their deontic nature, exhortatives do not only refer to a 1st person or speaker role, but they can also target the hearer or interlocutor. Thus, these exhortatives may not only express the speaker's commitment (e.g. to being honest) but also suggest the type of commitment that is expected from the interlocutor when he/she takes over the speaker's turn. I will therefore investigate other factors that may co-determine the relation between the exhortative and the interlocutor, such as switches from 1st to 2nd person or explicit mention of the interlocutor.

I will then contrast the analysis of these phenomena in a general corpus of contemporary Spanish (CREA, Davies) with a corpus of Spanish political texts. Issues of speaker commitment are particularly important and problematic in political texts, since politicians are often not the writers of the texts they commit themselves to by pronouncing them in public. On the other hand, the consequences of speaker commitment are particularly far-reaching in political life due to the highly performative nature of political discourse.

I hope to show that exhortatives, though formally 1st person plural forms, function in a particular way with respect to speaker commitment, allowing to transfer (part of) the burden of speaker commitment to the interlocutor. Furthermore, I will show how interlocutor-oriented strategies are exploited in more 'charged' text types like political discourse.

References

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