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**Mikulová, Jana. (2023). *Evolution of Direct Discourse Marking from Classical to Late Latin*. (172 pp.). Leiden: Brill. ISBN 978-90-04-52499-6.**

Giovanbattista Galdi

Jana Mikulova (henceforth M.) provides a thorough description and diachronic analysis of the choice and frequency of direct discourse markers in a broad corpus of Latin literary texts. The book consists of five chapters (pp. 1–131) followed by the bibliographical references (pp. 133–142) and an ‘Index Locorum’ (pp. 144–147).

In the first chapter (‘Introduction’, pp. 1–8), the author illustrates the three main goals of the work, i.e., to ‘1. identify changes in the choice and frequency of methods used for marking direct discourse; 2. examine when new methods started to appear and increase in frequency, and examine their grammaticalization; 3. identify factors that could account for the changes, distribution, and variation in the methods for marking direct discourse’ (p. 1). The following section describes the analysed texts (pp. 2–6). The search was carried out in Brepols’ databases *Library of Latin Texts* (Series A and B) and *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*. The corpus extends over a time span of eight centuries, which M. subdivides in four periods: Classical (ca 90 BCE – 14 CE), Postclassical (ca 14–200), Late I (ca 200–500) and Late II (ca 500–813). Globally, M. examined 26 (sections of) narrative texts written by 20 different authors, whereby every century is represented by at least one work. The analysis includes both narrative and, to a lesser extent, argumentative works. However, the reasons that led to the choice of these specific texts are not made entirely clear. M. points out that ‘if a query showed no results or a very low frequency, the given author or text was removed from the group of eligible texts’ (p. 2), but then one wonders why several, especially late works such as Augustine’s and Caesarius’ *Sermones* or

the *Historia ecclesiastica tripartita*, which feature hundreds or even thousands of instances of direct discourse, are not even mentioned in the study. The last section (‘Data Set for the Analysis’, pp. 6–8) introduces the 2.634 instances of direct discourse detected, illustrating their distribution and frequency (per 1.000 words) according to author, work and period.

Chapter two (‘Theoretical Preliminaries’, pp. 9–37) begins with a brief explanation of the technical terms most frequently used in the work, notably *reporting clause* (i.e., the clause ‘in which a speech or thought act is described’), *reported clause* (‘in which the content of this speech or thought act is given’), *quotation* (‘directly represented utterance’) and *quote* (‘quotation from an authority’). Paragraph one (‘Direct Discourse’, pp. 11–18), offers a clear and sensible illustration of the criteria enabling to identify and define direct discourse, as opposed to ‘non-direct discourse on the one hand and syntactically and/or functionally similar structures on the other’ (p. 11). To this purpose, M. combines different perspectives that include both a cognitive and a syntactic approach, but she also considers certain expressions incompatible with indirect discourse. Prototypical direct discourse (which constitutes an abstract model) is hence defined as characterized by (a) the presence of two deictic centres (the current and the represented speaker), (b) the presence of both a current and a represented speech situation, (c) syntactical independence, with an illocutionary force of its own, (d) the semblance of a verbatim reproduction of a previous or future utterance and (e) compatibility with certain expressions usually excluded from indirect discourse.

The following paragraph ('Structures Similar to Direct Discourse', pp. 19–27) examines the structures that 'share some properties with direct discourse but differ in others' (p. 19) and therefore were left out of the analysis. These include 'pure quotations' (pp. 19–21), namely utterances 'that cannot be attributed to a concrete (i.e. represented) speaker' (p. 19), 'mixed quotations' (pp. 21–24), i.e., (mostly) quotes from authorities that, as opposed to literal quotations, 'are syntactically integrated into a sentence and the discourse' (p. 21) and verbs of communication typically found in the first person singular (*credo, opinor, inquam* etc.), of which the function is not to introduce a represented discourse but to strengthen the illocutionary force of an utterance (pp. 24–27). Paragraph three ('Direct Discourse Markers', pp. 27–37) includes a detailed description of all means adopted by authors to signal direct discourse. A distinction is made here among: (a) 'verbal markers' (pp. 28–30), which encompass 'generic verbs of speech' (e.g. *dicere*), 'specific verbs of speech' (e.g. *promittere*), including support verb constructions, and a variety of verbal forms that may introduce direct speech, (b) 'non-verbal markers' (pp. 30–32), which consist of proper names, nouns and pronouns and (c) 'zero markers' (pp. 32–34), i.e., when a quotation is not signalled by any explicit marker. The chapter is concluded by a short section on punctuation (pp. 34–35), and a paragraph concerning the grammaticalization of quotative markers (pp. 35–37).

Chapter three, which constitutes the bulk of the study, deals with 'the marking of direct discourse in the examined texts' (pp. 38–106) and has a mainly descriptive function. The research questions are clearly listed in the introductory paragraph (pp. 38–39): 'which markers appear in which texts and periods and how frequently'; 'in which morphological forms do markers appear'; 'whether and how often they mark monologue and/or dialogues'; 'whether a verbal mark-

er takes objects or addressees, it is modified by adverbials, or cataphoric elements appear that announce a quotation'; 'whether markers are adjacent to direct discourse and whether they are preposed, postposed, or interposed'; 'what type of subject verbal markers take; whether there are typical and repeated patterns of use'. Further on in the study (p. 117), M. asserts that 'explication via a decrease in literacy and stylistic training runs the risk of being vague and too easily at hand when there is a shortage of other satisfying explanations'. This seems to be the reason why she makes the disputable choice of leaving out of the discussion by and large questions related to the different literary genres involved in the analysis (epistles, historical works, biographies etc.) and to the potential impact that these may have had on the choice of the markers (only a few remarks are found in chapter four). Particularly, the study would have benefited from a closer look at the style and language of the texts, some of which are notoriously characterized by a higher incidence of colloquial (or non-classical) features (e.g. Petronius' *Satyricon*, Egeria's *Itinerarium* etc.). Furthermore, M. does not provide any information about the transmission of the texts (which would have been relevant especially for the period Late II) and whether – and, if yes, how often – the manuscripts transmit alternative readings instead of the (non-)verbal marker (two exceptions are passages (142) at p. 93, and (143) at p. 95). The first paragraph ('Verbal Markers', pp. 39–84), consists of the analysis of *inquit, ait, dicere, loqui* and their compounds, as well as other verbal markers. The longest section is devoted to the first three verbs which unsurprisingly cover the overwhelming majority of the instances (1.711, i.e. ca. 65% of the attestations). Each of them is discussed according to more or less the same schema, with shorter subsections dealing with the verbal forms employed, the frequency of use, the position

and adjacency of the verb with respect to the reported clause, the patterns of the reporting clause (e.g. the indication of the addressee or the use of cataphoric expressions referring to direct discourse), and a brief summary. Moreover, in the section dwelling on *dicere*, the uses of the finite verbal forms (shortened as *dico*) are presented and discussed separately from those of the present participle (shortened as *dicens*). Several interesting and non-obvious findings emerge from this part of the study. Concerning *inquit* (pp. 40–53), a plain decrease in frequency is observed between the classical and the later period. The fact that the verb generally features after a short beginning of direct discourse generates a ‘break in the discourse’, which, according to M., should be given a pragmatic motivation, for it ‘maintains the attention of the reader and creates an expectation and curiosity about continuation’ (p. 53). Moreover, *inquit* is almost never accompanied by an addressee, adverbials or cataphoric expressions. Quite antithetical is the picture with *ait* (pp. 53–59), which, rather unexpectedly, increases its frequency in periods Late I and II, usually precedes the reported discourse and takes an addressee in one third of the instances. Finally, *dicere* (pp. 59–70) features in 52 different forms and seems hence to at least partly supply the defective paradigm of *inquit* and *ait*. However, M. remarks that this cannot be the main reason for its choice, for it mostly features in the third person (singular and plural) of the present and perfect indicative (34% of the instances) and in the present participle (29%), whereby the latter spreads in the Late periods under influence of biblical translations (see also below). In addition, substantial differences emerge between *dico* and *dicens*, because the former occurs much more frequently with an explicitly expressed addressee, as a marker of dialogic turns and before short reporting clauses. Section four (pp. 70–71) illustrates the use of *loqui* and its compounds, while section five

focuses on ‘other verbal markers’ (pp. 71–85): these include ‘a few rare generic verbs of speech (e.g., *infit* [...]), specific verbs of speech (e.g., *confiteri* [...]), and secondary verbs of communication’ (p. 71) such as verbs of thinking and phasal verbs. All these verbs may function as the only markers of a quotation or can be combined with a (mostly generic) verb of speech (the latter use spread, via the bible translations, in the work of Christian authors). Out of the 185 ‘other’ verbs identified by the author, however, the vast majority (141, i.e. 76%) occur just once and only five appear in all four periods. M. devotes a longer discussion to the two most frequent ‘other’ verbs, *respondere* (pp. 75–77) and *clamare* and its compounds (pp. 77–79), but she also addresses other less common verbal markers, subdividing them in 10 different groups and highlighting the importance of the context for the identification of a verbal expression as a marker. Paragraph two dwells on non-verbal markers (pp. 85–90). Several of the examples collected here can easily be accounted for by the ellipsis of a verb of communication inferable from the previous context, but remarkably M. chooses to treat them in the same way as the non-elliptical instances. Paragraph three deals with the relatively few cases of ‘zero markers’ (pp. 90–94), a use which is almost entirely confined to the classical and early post-classical period. The conclusive paragraph discusses the instances of ‘multiple marking’ (pp. 94–106), that is, when a quotation is marked by ‘two or more verbs of speech [...] that can function as quotative markers independently’ (p. 94). After dwelling on the difficulties of identifying unambiguous instances of the phenomenon, M. illustrates its frequency and diachronic distribution, pointing out that the highest percentages are found in Christian authors, probably under the influence of biblical translations. Multiple marking can only have two patterns, namely a combination of two *verba dicendi* and a *verbum dicendi* with

another verb, whereby in the large majority of the cases one of the two verbs occurs in the present participle (e.g. *respondit dicens*, *nuncians dixit*, etc.). However, although one may intuitively assume that the participle mostly follows the finite verb, the author does not provide any statistical data about the word order of the two verbal elements, so that one cannot assess whether their position is stable or changes over time.

Chapter four ('Discussion', pp. 107–127) is devoted to the discussion and interpretation of the findings and consists of four paragraphs. In the first one ('Overview of the Use and Characteristics of Direct Discourse Markers', pp. 107–112), M. gives a concise answer to the research questions posed at the beginning of the previous chapter (pp. 38–39, see above), recalling the distribution and frequency of all strategies adopted to introduce reported speech. Among the several interesting results resumed here, M. observes that there appears to be a change in the use of markers in diachrony, but the old system is not completely replaced by a new one. Therefore, 'the development should be rather described as a broadening of available means and a decrease in frequency and change in use of some classical markers and marking strategies' (p. 112). The 'factors in use and development' of markers are addressed in the following paragraph (pp. 112–124), with a distinction between 'factors for diachronic trends' (pp. 113–118) and 'subjective factors' (pp. 118–124). With regard to the former, M. addresses the crucial problem of the influence of biblical Latin on Christian and Late Latin. This section, however, shows some shortcomings related to both the general presentation of the topic (no references are found for instance to the Nijmegen-school and to the numerous publications by Christine Mohrmann on Christian Latin) and to the spread of *dicens* in Late, notably Christian sources (see also the discussion at pp. 125–126). For on the one hand, the lat-

ter phenomenon is rooted in bible translations, where it constitutes a calque of Greek λέγων (M. mentions this at p. 60 but does not specify how many instances of *dicens* in the *Vulgata* derive from λέγων), but, on the other hand, it is strictly related to both the more general expansion of the present participle (mainly in the nominative case) in the Late period and to its various non-classical uses, such as the 'absolute nominative' or its employment instead of a finite verbal form; these related developments are barely touched upon in M.'s discussion, although the literature on the topic is extensive (e.g. S. Elkund, *The Periphrastic, Completive and Finite Use of the Present Participle in Latin, with Special Regard to Translations of Christian Texts in Greek up to 600 A.D.*, Uppsala (1970), P. Greco, "La subordinazione participiale nel primo libro della *Historia Francorum* di Gregorio di Tours (I)", *Medioevo Romano* 29 (2005), pp. 3–71, and G. Galdi, "Zum sogenannten Nominativus Absolutus im Lateinischen: neue Auslegungen zu einem alten Problem", *Symbolae Osloenses* 91/1 (2017), pp. 28–80). Furthermore, in the very few references to the *Vetus Latina* (which, notoriously, played a very important role for Jerome's translation and, more generally, for the formation of Christian Latin), this work is presented as if it were a unitary translation (no mention is made of the various manuscripts). Finally, when discussing the reasons behind the expansion of *ait* in Late Latin to the detriment of *inquit* (pp. 115–116), M. omits mentioning the possible influence, once again, of biblical language, for according to her data (fig. 10, p. 109), in the analysed *Vulgata*-fragment, *ait* prevails over *inquit* with a ratio of 34:1. The section devoted to 'subjective factors' dwells on the elements that may have influenced the individual choices of authors: these include pragmatic reasons, the existence of favourite structures that were not (necessarily) shared by contemporaries and the adherence to prestigious

models (here M. makes a perhaps too simplistic distinction between ‘Classical standards’ and biblical language). One of the most interesting observations found here concerns the possibility of distinguishing speaking characters in dialogic contexts by means of the use of different markers (in the *Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis*, for instance, *inquit* appears to mark ‘the speech of the representative of Roman power’, p. 120). In the concluding paragraph (‘Grammaticalization’, pp. 124–127), M. identifies an incipient stage of grammaticalization for *inquit* and *dicens*, but she also cautiously admits that the indications emerging from her study are not sufficiently substantial to allow for generalizations.

The main outcomes of chapter four are summarized briefly in the final conclusions (pp. 128–131).

Summing up, M.’s monograph fills an important gap in the scholarly literature on Latin linguistics, by providing a valuable and well-established study of the strategies adopted by ancient authors to introduce reported speech. Despite certain shortcomings, such as the lack of attention given to stylistic matters or to the complex problem of Christian Latin, M.’s presentation and discussion of the data appear accurate and convincing and her work will be very useful not only to Latinists but, more generally, to any linguists working on the topic.

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