

Pragmatic cycles in Spanish farewell routines

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This paper deals with some Spanish farewell routines i.e. *vale* ('ok') and *cuidate* ('take care') that are connected with Latin *vale* ('goodbye') by form or meaning, hence they could be interpreted as pragmatic cycles (Ghezzi & Molinelli 2014; Hansen 2014, 2018; Pons & Llopis 2020). The objectives of this study are the following: a) to describe the pragmaticalisation process of each item and to inquire about the persistence of Latin *vale* in the history of Spanish (descriptive), b) to reconsider the essential feature of similar meaning in pragmatic cycles (theoretical) and c) to suggest certain clines regarding farewell routines that could be repeated in time and so could give rise eventually to new cycles (predictive). The analysis includes changes of position in relation to discourse units (cf. Pons 2018).

The results show that the Latin *vale/valete* (1, 2) were adopted in Spanish as closing formulas especially in letters (3, 4) since the 15th century onwards but decreased dramatically over the 19th century, just when *cuidate/cuidaos* ('take care of yourself') started being used in dialogues and in letters, especially in farewells (5, 6); this routine has been increasing in use since then.

- (1) Gymn. Numquid me vis?
Lena. Vt valeas.
Gymn. *Vale*. (Maccius Plautus. *Plauti Comoediae*, PDL)

[Trans. Gymn. Do you wish anything of me?
Lena. That you may fare well.
Gymn. Fare you well.]

- (2) mihi omnino iam brevis exspectatio est, Tullioli et Ciceroni salutem dic. *valete*. (Tullius Cicero, *Epistulae ad Familiares*, PDL)

[Trans. I have in any case only a short time to wait. Give my love to Tulliola and Cicero. *Goodbye*.]

- (3) Y vuestra merced no canse en este trabajo que ha tomado. *Vale*. (Luis de Granda, 1538-89, *Epistolario*, CDH)

[Trans. and your worship don't get tired due to the work taken. *Vale*.]

- (4) Este ruego a V. mrd. que pratique, y juntamente que me encomiende a Dios. *Vale*. (Benito Jerónimo Feijoo, 1742, *Cartas eruditas*, CDH)

[Trans. I pray your worship put into practice this plea and also pray for me to God. *Vale*.]

- (5) *Cuidate* y escribe. (Leandro Fernández de Moratín, *Epistolario*, 1822, CDH)

[Trans. Take care and write.]

- (6) — Y no hablemos más del asunto, si os parece. Olvídense todo; contad conmigo siempre, y aún mejor que nunca...; *cuidate* mucho, Miguel. Adiós, Sidora... Adiós, guapa moza. (José María Pereda, *Sotileza*, 1885, CDH)

[Trans. And don't talk more about this matter. Forget everything; rely on me always, now more than ever...; take a lot of care, Miguel. Goodbye, Sidora... Goodbye, beautiful young lady.]

In addition, by the second half of the 20th century the Spanish *vale* was conventionalized as an agreement marker (7) and later routinised as a (pre)closing mark in conversations (8).

(7) – ¿Quieres un poco de café con leche?
– Vale, pero rápido. (CDH, 1960)
[Trans. –Would you like some coffee with milk?
–Ok, but quickly]

(8) H2: Ya hablaremos sobre ese tema.
H1: Pues nada...
H2: ¡Vale! ¡Hasta luego! (CORLEC, 1990)
[Trans. H2. We'll talk about it later.
H1. All right.
H2: Ok, see you!]

Certainly *vale* forms proceed from the same etymon; however, the semantic basis on which the pragmatic function was developed is different: Latin *vale/valete* derived from 'be healthy', whereas Spanish *vale* came from 'be useful' (>accepted), and besides the semantic extension 'be healthy' is rarely used in current Spanish. On the contrary, this meaning is somehow part of the semantic basis of *cuidate* ('take care of yourself to be healthy'). These findings lead us to conclude that meaning is much more relevant than form in cycles and different degrees of semantic granularity should be distinguished.

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Corpora

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