

English Abstract

How should one address an interlocutor?

Studies on address practices in European languages

Addressing one's interlocutor forms an important part of communication. However, the choice between an informal T-pronoun (e.g. *sinä/tu* in Finnish/French) and a formal V-pronoun (e.g. *te/vous* in Finnish/French), for instance, can be difficult even for native speakers, let alone for foreigners. This is the first book in Finnish to deal with the address practices of 13 languages spoken in Europe: Czech, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish and Swedish.

Each chapter deals with one language. The articles throw light on the historical development and current use of forms of address from different perspectives. The uses of forms of address are studied in literature, plays, films and authentic interactions. Attitudes towards address practices are examined using questionnaires and interviews. The approaches and methods used vary from semantics to pragmatics and from sociolinguistics to conversational analysis.

In the chapters of this volume, the use of both pronominal and nominal forms of address are discussed. Most of the languages studied contain two pronouns of address, Hungarian three, and modern English only one. In Italian and Spanish, the use or number depends on the region. In many languages, the V-form is unmarked (e.g. French, German), whereas in some the T-form is unmarked (e.g. Finnish, Swedish). Nominal forms of address are used in all languages, but their frequency and contexts of use differ considerably. For instance, titles are important for expressing politeness in Czech, Polish and Portuguese, but they are generally avoided in Finnish or Estonian. In Russian, a wide variety of name variants are used.

This volume is intended for everyone interested in the linguistic study of forms of address. Practices of address are constantly changing, and

they are a mirror of societal transformations. Understanding different address practices is important in intercultural communication, language teaching and translation.