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Sommario/riassunto

Did earlier speakers of English use the same speech acts that we use today? Did they use them in the same way? How did they signal speech act values and how did they negotiate them in case of uncertainty? These are some of the questions that are addressed in this volume in innovative case studies that cover a wide range of speech acts from Old English to Present-day English. All the studies offer careful discussions of methodological and theoretical issues as well as detailed descriptions of specific speech acts. The first part of the volume is devoted to directives and commissives, i.e. speech acts such as requests, commands and promises. The second part is devoted to expressives and assertives and deals with speech acts such as greetings, compliments and apologies. The third part, finally, contains technical reports that deal primarily with the problem of extracting speech acts from historical corpora.
