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development / / Leslie K. Arnovick

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NEW SERIES.

Sommario/riassunto The purpose of Diachronic Pragmatics is to exemplify historical

pragmatics in its twofold sense of constituting both a subject matter

and a methodology. This book demonstrates how diachronic

pragmatics, with its complementary diachronic function-to-form mapping and diachronic form-to-function mapping, can be used to trace pragmatic developments within the English language. Through a set of case studies it explores the evolution of such speech acts as promises, curses, blessings, and greetings and such speech events as flyting and sounding. Collectively these "illocutionary biographies" manifest the workings of several important pragmatic processes and trends: increased epistemicity, subjectification, and discursization (a special kind of pragmaticalization). It also establishes the centrality of cultural traditions in diachronic reconstruction, examining various deinstitutionalizations of extra-linguistic context and their affect on speech act performance. Taken together, the case studies presented in Diachronic Pragmatics highlight the complex interactions of formal, semantic, and pragmatic processes over time. Illustrating the possibilities of historical pragmatic pursuit, this book stands as an invitation to further research in a new and important discipline.