

LATIN LANGUAGE AND ITS STUDY IN THE MODERN WORLD

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Annotation

This article explores the critical role played by historical sources in the study of the Latin language, emphasizing their significance in unraveling linguistic evolution, cultural nuances, and societal dynamics. Focusing on various types of sources, including literary texts, inscriptions, legal documents, and personal correspondences, the article delves into the linguistic analysis and structural features inherent in each category. The examination of syntactical and grammatical structures, along with the exploration of lexical variations and the cultural context embedded in historical sources, provides a comprehensive understanding of Latin across different genres and periods.

Keywords: lingua Latina, Romance languages, types of historical sources, linguistic evolution in literary texts.

Аннотация. В этой статье исследуется критическая роль исторических источников в изучении латинского языка, подчеркивается их значение для раскрытия языковой эволюции, культурных нюансов и общественной динамики. Сосредоточив внимание на различных типах источников, включая литературные тексты, надписи, юридические документы и личную переписку, статья углубляется в лингвистический анализ и структурные особенности, присущие каждой категории. Рассмотрение синтаксических и грамматических структур, наряду с изучением лексических вариаций и культурного контекста, заложенного в исторических источниках, обеспечивает комплексное понимание латинского языка в различных жанрах и периодах.

Ключевые слова: латинский язык, романские языки, типы исторических источников, лингвистическая эволюция в литературных текстах

Introduction

Latin (lingua Latina, Latin: [ˈlɪŋɡʷa ɫaˈtiːna], or Latinum, Latin: [ɫaˈtiːnɔ̃]) is a classical language belonging to the Italic branch of the Indo-European languages. Considered a dead language, Latin was originally spoken in Latium (now known as Lazio), the lower Tiber area around Rome.[1] Through the expansion of the Roman Republic it became the dominant language in the Italian Peninsula and subsequently throughout the Roman Empire. Even

after the fall of Western Rome, Latin remained the common language of international communication, science, scholarship and academia in Europe until well into the 18th century, when regional vernaculars (including its own descendants, the Romance languages) supplanted it in common academic and political usage. For most of the time it was used, it would be considered a dead language in the modern linguistic definition; that is, it lacked native speakers, despite being used extensively and actively.

Latin is a highly inflected language, with three distinct genders (masculine, feminine, and neuter), seven noun cases (nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, ablative, vocative, and vestigial locative), five declensions, four verb conjugations, six tenses (present, imperfect, future, perfect, pluperfect, and future perfect), three persons, three moods, two voices (passive and active), two or three aspects, and two numbers (singular and plural). The Latin alphabet is directly derived from the Etruscan and Greek alphabets.

By the late Roman Republic (75 BC), Old Latin had evolved into standardized Classical Latin. Vulgar Latin was the colloquial register with less prestigious variations attested in inscriptions and some literary works such as those of the comic playwrights Plautus and Terence^[2] and author Petronius. Late Latin is the literary language from the 3rd century AD onwards, and Vulgar Latin's various regional dialects had developed by the 6th to 9th centuries into the ancestors of the modern Romance languages.

The study of Latin language involves a deep exploration of historical sources that offer valuable insights into linguistic evolution, cultural nuances, and societal dynamics. This article delves into the analysis and structure of historical sources as essential components in understanding and mastering the Latin language.

Types of historical sources. Historical sources in Latin encompass a wide range, including literary texts, inscriptions, legal documents, and personal correspondences. Each type presents unique linguistic features, offering students a diverse set of materials to analyze and interpret.

Linguistic evolution in literary texts. Literary texts, such as works by Cicero, Virgil, or Ovid, provide a rich foundation for linguistic analysis. Studying the syntactical structures, vocabulary choices, and stylistic elements within these works aids in understanding the evolution of Latin across different periods.

Inscriptions as linguistic artifacts. Epigraphic inscriptions on monuments and artifacts serve as linguistic artifacts, offering snapshots of colloquial Latin usage. Analyzing inscriptions provides students with a glimpse into everyday language, regional variations, and the influence of Latin in diverse contexts.

Legal documents and formal Latin. Legal documents, such as the works of jurists like Justinian, showcase formal Latin. These sources contribute to the study of Latin legal terminology, providing insights into the precision and specificity required in legal language during different historical periods.

Personal correspondences and everyday Latin. Personal letters and correspondences unveil the more conversational aspects of Latin. The language used in these informal exchanges

reveals colloquial expressions, idioms, and the personal nuances of everyday life, enriching students' understanding of Latin beyond formal contexts.

Syntactical and grammatical analysis. The syntactical and grammatical structures found in historical sources form a crucial focus of analysis. Students explore sentence construction, word order, and grammatical intricacies to decipher the nuances of Latin language usage in various genres.

Lexical variations across genres. Historical sources also exemplify lexical variations across genres. Legal texts may feature specialized vocabulary, while poetry may showcase a more diverse range of expressive language. Recognizing these variations enhances students' lexical competence and adaptability.

Cultural and societal context. Analyzing historical sources extends beyond language itself, incorporating cultural and societal contexts. Students explore how linguistic choices reflect societal norms, power structures, and cultural values, providing a comprehensive understanding of the broader historical landscape.

Interdisciplinary connections. Historical sources facilitate interdisciplinary connections, allowing students to integrate their Latin studies with history, archaeology, and sociology. Collaborative projects and interdisciplinary approaches deepen the understanding of Latin's role within broader historical narratives.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the analysis and structure of historical sources in the study of the Latin language are integral to unraveling the linguistic, cultural, and societal intricacies of this ancient language. Literary texts, inscriptions, legal documents, personal correspondences, and other historical sources provide a multifaceted lens through which students can comprehend the evolution of Latin across different periods.

By scrutinizing syntactical and grammatical structures, students gain a deeper understanding of the language's nuances. The exploration of lexical variations across genres, from formal legal language to everyday correspondences, enhances linguistic competence and adaptability. Moreover, the cultural and societal context embedded in historical sources enriches the study of Latin, illustrating the language's dynamic role within broader historical narratives. The interdisciplinary connections fostered by historical sources not only deepen linguistic proficiency but also provide a holistic perspective on the ancient Roman world. Through the analysis of inscriptions, legal texts, and personal letters, students transcend the traditional boundaries of language study, engaging with the diverse facets of Roman life and thought.

In essence, the study of Latin through historical sources transcends linguistic boundaries, transforming it into a captivating journey through time, culture, and the rich tapestry of human expression.

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