

*YOU* IN FILM DIALOGUE:  
COLLOCATIONS, SPEECH ACTS AND ATTITUDE

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ABSTRACT

The deictic *you* in English performs the essential function of identifying the addressee(s) and defining interpersonal relations (Wales, 1996). Recent studies highlight a high frequency of this pronoun in films, where it promotes characters' identification and addressees' selection, while extending the reference beyond the screen and fostering the viewers' involvement (Pavesi, 2009). Little however has been said on the attitudinal meaning expressed in the context of occurrence of *you* in film dialogue, an aspect that is central to the codification of emotionality on screen. Relying on collocation analysis and the Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), the present corpus-based study aims to fill this gap. The findings highlight how, beside its prototypical diegetic function, *you* in film dialogue works as an extradiegetic 'pointer' signalling emotionally charged sequences. Occurring with both aggressive and endearing language, *you* draws the view-er's attention to plot-developing sequences, thus acting as a propeller of the narration and promoting empathy and emotional participation.