

L'ANALISI LINGUISTICA E LETTERARIA

FACOLTÀ DI SCIENZE LINGUISTICHE E LETTERATURE STRANIERE
UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA DEL SACRO CUORE

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RASSEGNA DI LINGUISTICA INGLESE

A CURA DI MARGHERITA ULRYCH E AMANDA MURPHY

T. NEVALAINEN – E.C. TRAUOGOTT ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of English*, Oxford University Press, New York 2012, 942 pp.

The volume is a collaborative reference work on the history of English through time and space, offering an innovative approach to the analysis of language change in English from different theoretical viewpoints and from different fields. It is the first volume that takes stock of the major shifts and advances in linguistic research in the last decade, namely the dramatic increase in the availability of large electronic corpora and other digital databases.

The volume consists of 68 chapters organised into four parts, each of which represents a major theme driving current research in language change and variation. Part I, *Rethinking evidence*, focuses on the methodological impact of technological advances on theoretically informed empirical research and shows how such advances can bridge the gap between synchrony and diachrony. Part II, *Issues in culture and society*, focuses on the social factors that impact and have impacted change, including the changing role of media over the centuries. Part III, *Approaches from contact and typology*, discusses language contact and its implications as a major “driving force for typological change” while Part IV, *Rethinking categories and modules*, focuses on internal developments in morphology, syntax and information structure.

Sonia Piotti

R.J. WATTS, *Language Myths and the History of English*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2011, 338 pp.

In this thought-provoking and richly documented volume, Richard Watts exposes the long-standing and often unnoticed ideologies which lie behind the narration of the history of English.

Basing his claim upon the socio-cognitive and constructionist notion of myth as “conceptual metaphor”, the author argues that much of what we think about the historical development of English has been mythologised for the purpose of sustaining social, cultural, and political beliefs, positing a “funnel theory” of the history of the language, which expunges or neglects ideologically irrelevant data. In his own historical review of English, the author uncovers, deconstructs, and questions many of the myths, “still alive and kicking”, which have contributed to building a triumphant and hegemonic narrative of English. In so doing, his main aim is to plead for a wider range of histories to cover the other varieties of the language – historical, social, and geographical – which do not fit down the narrow end of the funnel and thus remain untold. Far from being another history of English, this book is a clarion call to linguists to be aware that ideology is an all-important factor of language discourse and that to be able to unearth it is fundamental in order to achieve a more lucid and truthful account of the history of the language.

Chiara Rubagotti

L. FENS DE ZEEUW – R. STRAAIJER, *Long-s in Late Modern English Manuscripts*, “English Language and Linguistics”, 16, 2012, 2, pp. 319-338

The authors discuss an orthographical issue in Late Modern English, which provides an insight into the function of spelling variants used by educated writers, compared to contemporary rules and printing practices. The use of long-s, or <ſ>, in the private letters written by J. Priestley and L. Murray, is contrasted with the printed works of the period, in which the grapheme disappeared. As the findings show a considerable amount of variation in the use of long-s in eighteenth-century manuscripts, it is argued that there is still a need for ‘LModE letter corpora’ to contribute to

'our knowledge of this and other aspects of language usage' (p. 335).

Sonia Piotti

H.J. GIEGERICH, *The morphology of -ly and the categorial status of 'adverbs' in English*, "English Language and Linguistics", 16, 2012, 3, pp. 341-359

The author challenges the traditional assumption of derivational morphology which accords adverbial *-ly* derivational status and gives adverbs lexical category status on a par with nouns, verbs and adjectives. It is argued that adverbial *-ly*, unlike its adjectival counterpart, is inflectional and adverbs ending in *-ly* are rather to be regarded as inflected adjectives, while those adverbs not containing *-ly* are uninflected adjectives: "adverbs cannot be categorially distinct from adjectives" (p. 342-343). Unlike previous research on the single-category claim and the inflected-adjective claim for adverbial *-ly*, which has been mainly carried out on syntactic grounds, this argument is supported on morphological and phonological grounds.

Sonia Piotti

L. BREMS, *The establishment of quantifier constructions for size nouns*, "Journal of Historical Pragmatics", 13, 2012, 2, pp. 202-231

This paper investigates the establishment of size nouns *heap(s)* and *lot(s)* as quantifiers with a similar function to canonical *many/much*. Using a constructional approach, Brems first identifies a chronology of the use of *heap(s)* and *lot(s)* in three distinct form-meaning pairings, determined on the basis of syntactic, semantico-pragmatic and collocational features, namely, lexical head, partitive and quantifier constructions. Basing her claim on in-depth diachronic corpus analysis, she then argues against previous research, showing that it was in fact *lot* which first served as a model for the grammaticalisation of other size noun ex-

pressions, which, in the case of *heap(s)* and *lot(s)*, she proves, was established by c.1780.

Chiara Rubagotti

D. LIU – M. ESPINO, *Actually, genuinely, really, and truly: a corpus-based behavioral profile study of near-synonymous adverbs*, "International Journal of Corpus Linguistics", 17, 2012, 2, pp. 198-228

The authors investigate meaning and usage differences of four synonymous adverbs in the COCA corpus of contemporary American English, adopting the Behavioural Profile (BP) approach, together with manual concordance contextual analysis. The findings describe the frequency of the adverbs (in ascending order, *genuinely*, *truly*, *actually*, and *really*), their register variation, *really* being the most informal, their place in the clause (only *actually* occupies all disjunct positions), their function as modifiers (*really* is mainly an intensifier), and their behavioural patterns with adjectives and verbs.

Caterina Allais

R. MARTINEZ – N. SCHMITT, *A Phrasal Expressions List*, "Applied Linguistics", 33, 2012, 3, pp. 299-320

In this paper, the authors address the problem of how to successfully incorporate formulaic language into language syllabuses and teaching materials. Given the important role that formulaic language plays in English, they argue that it is important to have a list of the most frequent non-transparent multiword expressions in the language. Using a range of specific criteria and items taken from the British National Corpus, they create a phrase list containing 505 items. They highlight the fact that their list could be combined with more traditional wordlists, so as to produce a more complete description of English lexis. They hope the phrasal list will provide teachers and textbook writers with a more prin-

ciplend way of identifying and selecting formulaic language.

James Rock

H. HERRERA-SOLER – M. WHITE ed., *Metaphor and Mills: Figurative Language in Business and Economics*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2012, 328 pp.

The pervasiveness of metaphorical expressions in the discourse of Business and Economics has often been highlighted. This volume provides an overview of state of the art in the field of metaphor studies applied to the area of Business and Economics discourse and explores cultural and linguistic diversity from a variety of perspectives. Both diachronic and synchronic analyses are covered, as well as topics attracting recent research attention, such as the translation of metaphor usage in the fields of Business and Economics. One of the central issues of this book is the discourse-constitutive function of figurative language in the Business and Economics domains, where metaphors are used as vehicles to construct knowledge. Human thought works analogically, and structures models and theories in the same way. Successful metaphors are those that encode abstract concepts in terms of concrete vehicles. For example, images are taken from the domains of war, mechanics and biology, and are used to conceptualise Economics notions. These figures do not only permeate, but actively produce economic thinking: theories have in fact been developed and enriched by means of metaphorical association (Resche 77-102). As the editors put it, figurative language has a strong claim to being the Economy's most productive linguistic mill or factory.

Mirella Agorni

M. CROSS, *Bloggerati, Twitterati: How Blogs and Twitter Are Transforming Popular Culture*, Praeger, Santa Barbara/Denver/Oxford 2011, 190 pp.

In *Bloggerati, Twitterati* Mary Cross offers an ethnographic and sociological perspective on

the origins and consequences of the spread of the digital culture. Blogs and twitters are thriving and are changing practically everything, from news reports, to one's attitudes, perceptions, and even personal relationships. They are thus contributing to the build up of a new, digital identity and culture. The book answers many questions related to the functions and uses of new social media, particularly in the United States. It traces the typical blogger's and twitter user's profile, while probing new areas such as the current and future influence of these internet tools on our lives. In chapter 5, for example, she addresses the question of whether blogs and twitters are hijacking journalism, both positively and negatively. The author highlights the advantages and the side-effects brought by the digital revolution, in a very lively style, often adopting an informal register, so much so that, in the span of ten slim chapters, short paragraphs alternate with comic strips and real examples. Readers are provided with a series of figures, data and references taken from websites, and are invited to discover the transformations they are experiencing, by living in a digital world.

Caterina Allais

B.K. SHARMA, *Beyond social networking: Performing global Englishes in Facebook by college youth in Nepal*, "Journal of Sociolinguistics", 16, 2012, 4, pp. 483-509

Using concepts such as mediascape, convergence culture and global Englishes, the author analyses some Facebook pages over two years by three economically and educationally privileged undergraduate students in Nepal. The study investigates how the advent of social networks has influenced their use of English and their identities. Findings suggest that they use social networks to redefine their relationships and mix English and Nepali, thus developing forms of bilingualism. The paper concludes that online social networking practices have helped to bring about a cul-

tural change among this particular social group in Nepal.

Silvia Pireddu

X. YAO – P. COLLINS, *The present perfect in world Englishes*, "World Englishes", 2012, 31, 3, pp. 386-403

The paper reports on a corpus-based study of regional and stylistic variation in the distribution of the present perfect. The data represent ten English varieties of the Inner Circle and Outer Circle, covering four major text types: conversation, news reportage, academic and fictional writing. The present perfect has been losing ground to the simple past and its distribution can be placed on a continuum, with British English and American English at opposite ends. The findings suggest the influence of various factors including substrate transfer, different degrees of colloquialisation, historical input, and geographical and cultural proximity.

Silvia Pireddu

B. WHYATT, *Translation as a human skill. From predisposition to expertise*, Adam Mickiewicz University Press, Poznań 2012, 445 pp.

This book explores the human ability to translate from a developmental perspective. The theoretical premise outlines three phases of an evolutionary continuum: 1) translation as a natural predisposition of those who know more than one language and use them for communication (natural bilinguals, L2 learners/speakers); 2) translation as a trained ability, resting on an experience-derived body of declarative and procedural knowledge, or "translation competence"; 3) translation as professional expertise. Whyatt hypothesizes that a core aspect of expertise acquisition is learning to build a so-called Knowledge Integration Network (KIN), i.e. the ability to integrate and activate the relevant knowledge needed to translate specific texts, which is developmental in nature. In the second part of the volume, Whyatt discusses the studies she carried out to test

the hypothesis empirically. The tests compared subjects with varying degrees of experience and yielded ample supportive evidence. While having wide-ranging implications for translator training, this comprehensive study also offers insights into the multi-faceted nature of translation and the functions it can serve in multiple contexts and at varying levels of competence, suggesting that we are all, in a sense, translators.

Costanza Peverati

D. FILMER, *The 'gook' goes 'gay'. Cultural interference in translating offensive language*, "InTRAlinea", 14, 2012, <http://www.intralinea.org/archive/article>

The study analyses the Italian dubbing of *Gran Torino* (Eastwood, 2008), as an example of target-oriented translation. The methodology draws on Descriptive Translation Studies, politeness theory, anthropology and discourse analysis. Filmer investigates why the controversial language used in *Gran Torino* ignited different reactions in the United States, where it was harshly criticized, and Italy. Her analysis proves that Italian translators deviated from the original text by adding sexual references typical of the 'Italian way of delivering racial insults,' thus transforming the translation process into a place where the target language imposes its cultural context over the foreign so as to 'preserve its lingua-cultural specificity'.

Claudia Alborghetti

M. WOODS, *Framing translation: Adolf Hoffmeister's comic strips, travelogues, and interviews as introductions to modernist translations*, "Translation and Interpreting Studies", 7, 2012, 1, pp. 1-18

Can paratexts help readers grasp difficult modernist texts? The work by Czech translator Adolf Hoffmeister (1902-1970) might help answer the question if we analyse the paratextual material he produced as a corollary to his translations of Joyce and Shaw. His illustrations can be compared to a

foreignising translation which is 'understandable to a receiving audience' but resistant to 'facile consumption' of the original writers' work. The material analysed is complementary to the original texts and exemplifies Hoffmeister's awareness of the role of translations in defining culture. The translator is visible and mediates between cultures, shaping his own means of expression to best convey the spirit of foreign writing.

Claudia Alborghetti

N.K. POKORN, *Post-Socialist Translation Practices: Ideological Struggle in Children's Literature*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2012, 188 pp.

Children's literature is often subjected to rewriting and manipulation in translation processes. Pokorn's analysis of post-socialist translations of worldwide classics in children's literature shows how political power shaped their production and dissemination. Methodologically, he first compiled a corpus of texts for children translated from any language into Slovene from 1800 to 1945, then considered retranslated works between 1945 and 1955, and then compared translations with their originals so as to discover which are textually manipulated. The adopted theoretical approach brings together political goals, economic interests, and the agents involved in the translation process to lay bare the underlying ideology. The research traces Yugoslavia through history to study how it influenced literature and translations. In particular, Pokorn considers problems related to retranslations, namely style and the 'problematic translator', to analyse forms of censorship in canonical fairy tales (e.g. Grimm's), in Slovene children's best-sellers (*Bambi* and *Heidi* among others) and in classics for adults (e.g. works by Twain and Defoe) later 'adopted' by children. The research strikes a balance between the actual pressure of the Communist Party on translations and the self-censorship by translators who conformed to the ruling ideology of their time.

Claudia Alborghetti

J. LEAVITT, *Linguistic Relativities. Language Diversity and Modern Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2011, 245 pp.

This book investigates the relation between language(s) and thought as perceived in the last five hundred years of Western philosophy. The debate on the existence of many different languages and their importance started in the seventeenth century and can be summed up in the question of whether or not language affects one's way of thinking. Is language a mere tool for expressing one's thoughts or is linguistic variation somehow significant in the reasoning process? Leavitt traces a detailed and clear history of Western modern thought, following the two recurring sides of this argument: 'universalism' – started by the rationalist Descartes, shared by Locke, Newton and Chomsky – which considers the differences in languages as superficial, human perception and reason being universal, and 'essentialism' – inspired by Leibniz's monadism, embraced by Herder, the Romantics, and Wilhelm Humboldt – which considers each language as a distinct whole, manifesting the unique essence and peculiar way of thinking of its people. The author aims to dismantle this long-standing binary misinterpretation by pointing to the work of ethnologist-linguist Franz Boas and his students, whose idea of 'linguistic relativity' emerged in the twentieth century as a third way of engaging with the problem of language specificities.

Chiara Rubagotti

R. CAMERER – J. MADER, *Intercultural Competence in Business English*, Cornelsen Schulverlage, Berlin 2012, 200 pp.

This book introduces BE trainers to the theoretical foundations and practical implications of intercultural communication. In the first part, it is argued that learners must be made aware of the role of language and culture in successful English communication, although the language factor has been largely ignored in intercultural communication and in traditional language teach-

ing cultural aspects have been downplayed. *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* is in this respect a fundamental tool for BE trainers, since intercultural competence is here regarded as language in use. However, the authors claim that a linguistically competent speaker is not necessarily an intercultural competent one.

In the second part of the book, practical issues and the core concepts to be included in a course are covered. It is recommended that problematic discourse situations should be tackled, like disagreeing, criticising and refusing invitations and that attention should be paid to possible sources of misunderstanding, such as different cultural norms in turn-taking. Linguistic strategies that may be particularly useful in intercultural encounters, like compensating, repairing, hedging and using meta-communication are then outlined. The book closes with indications about testing and assessing intercultural competence.

Costanza Cucchi

T.B. TIN, *Towards creativity in ELT: the need to say something new*, "ELT Journal", 67, 2013, 4, pp. 385-397

In this article Tan Bee Tin discusses how communicative language learning tasks can be transformed into creative tasks. Her approach is based on the assumption that humans need complex tasks to innovate and use language to construct new meaning. She observes that many communicative learning tasks focus on meaning 'known to self' rather than 'unknown meaning', which could result in a lack of desire to explore new language. Tan Bee Tin demonstrates that multicultural experiences and constraints can enhance creative language use, providing the reader with some ways to add creativity to language learning tasks.

Valentina Morgana

F. MEUNIER, *Formulaic language and language teaching*, "Annual Review of Applied Linguistics", 32, 2012, pp. 111-129

In this article, Meunier examines how language teaching has been influenced by theoretical findings on the formulaic nature of the language. She outlines why teachers should adopt a formulaic approach in second or foreign language teaching, as well as suggesting three points in time when instructional intervention is possible. This is followed by a review of how formulaic language is covered in three aspects of foreign language teaching, namely, input, classroom activities, and feedback. Her discussion touches on a variety of topics, such as teaching methods and materials, teacher-talk, online tools, and communication activities. She concludes that L2 teaching no longer ignores the formulaic nature of language, however, it still remains unclear how it can be taught effectively.

James Rock

S. MARZO – K. HEYLEN – G. DE SUTTER ed., *Corpus Studies in Contrastive Linguistics*, John Benjamins, Philadelphia/Amsterdam 2012, 171 pp.

I sei contributi di questo volume di linguistica contrastiva hanno l'obiettivo comune di fornire una visione descrittiva e teorica di differenze e somiglianze tra lingue e si basano sull'analisi sia quantitativa che qualitativa di corpora linguistici. Dirk Noël e Timothy Coleman analizzano diversi modi di realizzare la voce passiva in prospettiva diacronica tra inglese e olandese. Bart Defrancq and Gert De Sutter studiano le differenze tra il linguaggio vago in inglese, francese e olandese, sottolineando l'importanza del contesto linguistico e della situazione pragmatica per determinarne l'incidenza. Ian A. Williams analizza l'uso dei verbi in prima persona negli articoli scientifici: in inglese tali verbi giustificano le scelte dell'autore, mentre in spagnolo avvicinano il lettore all'autore. Anita Fetzer and Marjut Johanson si concentrano sull'uso dei verbi 'pensare' e 'credere' nei dibattiti politici televisivi francesi

e inglesi: 'penso' è preferito in inglese, 'credo' è preferito in francese, anche se è relativamente più raro che in inglese. Issa Kanté dimostra che la modalità è una caratteristica intrinseca dei sostantivi che si verificano all'interno delle frasi che cominciano con 'that' sia in inglese che in francese. Il contributo di Aurelia Usoniene e Audrone Šoliene si concentra sulla realizzazione delle frasi epistemiche, dimostrando che la lingua inglese propende per l'uso di ausiliari modali, mentre in lituano gli avverbi di modo sono più usati.

Costanza Asnaghi

D. DOIZ – D. LASAGABASTER – J.M. SIERRA ed., *English-medium Instruction at Universities*, Multilingual Matters, Bristol 2012, 213 pp.

Questo libro esce in un momento molto controverso rispetto alla English-medium Instruction (EMI). Il libro denuncia in più casi quanto la EMI non sia l'unica via verso l'internazionalizzazione degli atenei e quanto essa possa rappresentare un ostacolo verso il multilinguismo. Il volume copre esperienze da quattro continenti ed è diviso in 5 parti: la prima si intitola *The Development of English-medium Instruction*, la seconda *Language Demands of English-medium Instruction of the Stakeholders*, la terza parte si intitola *Fostering Trilingual Education at Higher Education Institutions*, la quarta *Institutional Policies at Higher Education Institutions* e l'ultima si chiude con le *Final Considerations* dei curatori. L'articolo di Doiz, Lasagabaster e Sierra descrive l'impatto dell'inglese come L3 nei Paesi baschi. In gener-

ale gli studenti sono positivi riguardo la presenza di studenti stranieri ma gli studenti locali sono più restii verso i corsi professati in lingua inglese rispetto ai loro coetanei internazionali. Anche l'articolo di Ball e Lindsay riporta l'esperienza di corsi di formazione per docenti in una università dei Paesi Baschi. Per insegnare in questa università i docenti devono avere un livello C1 della lingua che insegnano e devono fare corsi di formazione più o meno lunghi a seconda del loro livello di partenza.

Francesca Costa

U. SMIT – E. DAFOUZ ed, *Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education*, "Aila Review", 25, 2012, 112 pp.

Questo volume monografico tratta della English-medium Instruction (EMI) nelle università. Si parte dal concetto di *Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education* (ICLHE) termine usato in alternativa a EMI ma che sottolinea la stretta connessione tra lingua e contenuto. Il volume è interamente dedicato alle ultime ricerche in questo campo ed esplora i contesti di vari Paesi dove vi è stato uno spostamento dall'insegnamento attraverso la L1 all'insegnamento attraverso la lingua inglese: l'Italia, la Finlandia, la Spagna, la Svezia e l'Austria. I contributi riguardano: *classroom discourse, focus on form, English as a lingua franca*, il punto di vista dei docenti, e le politiche linguistiche delle università legate al multilinguismo.

Francesca Costa