

Dear Colleagues,

Here enclosed is the Report of the SLIN Workshop that was held in Rome on 1-2 October 2010. The workshop itself was very enjoyable and productive, whilst the social dinner was not just a gastronomic delight but also most entertaining.

As Report writers, and on behalf of the entire SLIN group, we would like to thank Stefania Nuccorini for so generously hosting us at Roma 3.

Nicholas Brownlees and Massimo Sturiale

## **SLIN Workshop, Rome, 1-2 October 2010**

### **Friday 1 October**

The workshop began at 3.30 pm on Friday 1 October. In all there were twenty participants, including not just colleagues from Rome (David Hart and Elizabeth Glass, to name just two), but also, for example, from Bari (Nicola Pantaleo), Bergamo (Maurizio Gotti), Cagliari (Luisanna Fodde and Gabriella Mazzon), Catania (Carmela Nocera and Massimo Sturiale), Florence (Nicholas Brownlees and John Denton), Genoa (John Douthwaite), Milan (Laura Pinnavaia and Paola Tornaghi), Naples (Gabriella Di Martino). In all, not just a very reassuring expression of interest and affection for our association, but also for one another. Indeed, part of the reason why the Workshop was held in Rome was so that we could wish David Hart, one of the founding fathers of SLIN way back in 1988 (sorry, David), our best wishes for his retirement.

In fact, in her Welcome Address to the Workshop, Stefania Nuccorini immediately saluted David, underlining not just his distinguished teaching and scholarly career but also the very real humanity that is so obviously part of his essential being.

The members present on Saturday also sent a very heartfelt message of support, esteem and the fondest of wishes to Domenico Pezzini. In the letter, that was signed by all, we expressed our most sincere desire to see him with us at the SLIN conference in Cagliari.

After the Welcome Address, held as was the entire Workshop in the highly relaxing and comfortable 'Sala Professori della Presidenza', Maurizio Gotti and Nicholas Brownlees presented research they are presently undertaking in seventeenth-century studies. Maurizio's was entitled "Tradition and Innovation in Stylistic Criteria in the 17th Century", whilst Nicholas spoke about "Language and reporting strategies in English and Italian diplomatic newsletters (1690-1703)". The abstracts below provide a good summary of the main points of the respective presentations:

### **Maurizio Gotti, Tradition and Innovation in Stylistic Criteria in the 17th Century**

The 17th century in England represents an interesting period of transition as far as stylistic matters are concerned. On the one hand traditional values – dating back to the Greek-Latin rhetorical school and reaffirmed by Renaissance scholars – were maintained in the appreciation of existing texts and followed in drafting new ones. On the other hand, new criteria were proposed as more appropriate to the needs of scholars.

To exemplify the coexistence of both old and new stylistic principles, this paper will investigate the analysis of the style of the Bible carried out by Robert Boyle in his essay *Some Considerations Touching the Style of the Holy Scriptures* (1661).

Robert Boyle's work has been selected as paradigmatic of the views of this period not only because they have been widely acknowledged by contemporary and subsequent scientists and critics for their stylistic innovations, but also because they are rich in metatextual and metalinguistic observations which were greatly influential in raising contemporary scholars' awareness of stylistic issues.

Nicholas Brownlees, **Language and reporting strategies in English and Italian diplomatic newsletters (1690-1703)**

This contribution examines at both a textual superstructure and semantic macrostructural level (van Dijk 1985, 1988) two sets of diplomatic newsletters that envoys sent back to their respective Secretary of State at the turn of the eighteenth century. The first set of original manuscripts consists of letters sent in 1703 by Sir Lambert Blackwell, England's envoy to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, to England's Secretary of State, the earl of Nottingham. The other collection comprises the similarly weekly newsletters Francesco Terriesi, Tuscan envoy to England, wrote in 1690 to the Grand Duchy's Secretary of State. The analysis shows that whilst the discursive context and aims of such correspondence result in a similar superstructure and macrostructure in the two sets of newsletters there are nevertheless significant stylistic differences in the reporting of the weekly news. Although this is the first cross-linguistic research of its kind, it draws on previous work by Fitzmaurice (2006, 2008) and Okulska (2006) regarding other aspects of English diplomatic correspondence.

Following the presentations there was much discussion about aspects relating to the research topics specifically and more generally to the history of English language as a discipline. The debate was very stimulating, and—so, so nice—there was no worry about running over the statutory 20 minutes + 5 minutes discussion time!

Following the presentations, and very enjoyable tea break on a spacious terrace, Maurizio Gotti introduced the section entitled 'Discussion and any other business'. This discussion touched on various aspects of the SLIN organization, and, in particular, on the future editorship of the much loved SLIN Newsletter. As can be imagined, Nicola Pantaleo (looking more sprightly than ever) was begged and implored to carry on with the editorship. Yes, indeed, we can assure everyone that every possible rhetorical structure, ruse and stratagem, (not to mention less ethical incentives) were placed in front of Nicola, but our man from Bari—he too a founding father of SLIN—would not budge. He said that the time had come for a change, he would be participating as actively in SLIN events as ever, but from now on it would be best for the Newsletter to be edited by others.

At this point we (Nicholas Brownlees and Massimo Sturiale) enter the scene because in their infinite .... ( what word is most suitable?) the Workshop participants decided that the next editors should indeed be us. Naturally enough, we are honoured and excited by the trust placed in our capabilities, but right from now, we would like to stress that for the Newsletter to succeed it must be a forum for all SLIN Members. Therefore, please send us your ideas as to how the SLIN Newsletter can develop and what it can contain.

Furthermore, in order to be sure that you are still interested in receiving SLIN information, we would be very grateful if you could email us just confirming that you would like to be kept on the SLIN email list.

**Saturday morning (2 October)**

John Denton presented the recently published book edited by Nicholas Brownlees, Gabriella Del Lungo and John Denton (eds.), *The Language of Public and Private Communication in a Historical Perspective*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010, ISBN: 1 4438-2141-1 (Hbk).

In the words of Gabriella Del Lungo's "Introduction" (pp. 1-23) to this "volume of essays":

[It] is the outcome of the initiative taken by three scholars of the university of Florence to host the biennial Italian conference on the History of the English Language in Florence in January 2009. The conference gathers Italian researchers working in the field of the history of English language. The event is traditionally designed as a forum for participants to discuss topics which are the focus of recent disciplinary interest; to foster a lively debate internationally renowned scholars are invited and the participation of young researchers is encouraged

(1). The theme chosen for the Florence conference was *The language of private and public communication in a historical perspective*.

All of us are very pleased with these words which highlight the aim of the SLIN group and its contribution to the scholarly research in the field of English historical linguistics not only within the Italian geographical boundaries.

This aspect was also pointed out by John Denton's presentation when the papers collected in the volume were briefly listed:

- Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade "Communicative Competence and the Language of Eighteenth-century Letters";  
Marina Dossena "We beg to suggest": Features of Legal English in Late Modern Business Letters";  
Alessandra Levorato "Keywords, Collocations and Ideology: An Analysis of the Castlereagh Act of Union Correspondence in its Political Context";  
Antonio Bertacca "The Language of Charles Darwin's *Red Notebook*";  
Gabriella Di Martino "Motions and Emotions in a Lady Traveller's Writing";  
Giovanni Iamartino and Angela Andreani "In the Queen's Name: The Writings of Elizabeth I between Public and Private Communication";  
John Denton "Hail Mary" Goes Underground: Public and Private Religious Discourse in 16th century England";  
Laura Wright "Eighteenth-century London Non-standard Spellings as Evidenced by Servants', Tradesmen's and Shopkeepers' Bills";  
Nicholas Brownlees "*Capt. Badiley's answer unto Capt. Appleton's remonstrance* (1653): The Recontextualisation in Print of Private Correspondence";  
Udo Fries "Identifying Diversity in English Newspapers in 1701";  
Birte Bös "Dialogic Quotation Patterns in Historical News Reports";  
Elisabetta Cecconi "Witness Narratives in 17th century Trial Proceedings: A Case Study of Historical Courtroom Public Discourse";  
Thomas Christiansen "The Evolution of a Distinct Australian Lexis as seen in the Public Discourse of Nineteenth century Bush Ballads and Spoken Verse";  
Alicia Rodríguez-Álvarez "Spanish Borrowings in Early Modern English Travelogues and Dictionaries, or How to Make the New Reality in the Spanish Colonies Intelligible to English Readers";  
Salena Sampson "Adjective Comparison in Early Modern English: Variation across Genres in Public and Private Discourse";  
Alice Spencer "Etymology, Genealogy and Hagiographical *Auctoritas* in the Works of Osbern Bokenham: Redeeming the Public Voice of English Poetry";  
Eleonora Chiavetta "A simple and popular description": Popularization of Natural Science in the *Natural History Rambles* of J.G. Wood";  
Roberta Mullini "Gull'd by the enchanting Tongues of *Quack* and *Zany*": The Rhetoric of Nostrum Marketing in Speech and Print in Early Modern London".

The book is very promising and undoubtedly of interest to many since it covers various fields such as historical correspondence, 17<sup>th</sup>-and 18<sup>th</sup>-century print news, 16<sup>th</sup>-century liturgy and political discourse, the language of quack doctors, late modern travel writing, personal notebooks, and 18<sup>th</sup>-century public discourse of shopping. John Denton, before leaving the floor, encouraged the participants to order the book for their university libraries and we are doing the same with our readers.

To go back to the activities of the SLIN group, Luisanna Fodde and Gabriella Mazzon announced the launch of the website ([www.slin15.it](http://www.slin15.it)) for the the fifteenth National Conference **DIALOGIC FORMS IN ONE THOUSAND YEARS OF ENGLISH TEXTS – FROM OLD ENGLISH TO LATE MODERN ENGLISH** to be held in Cagliari, 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> May 2011. The Conference will be jointly organised and hosted by the Facoltà di Lingue e Letterature Straniere, the Dipartimento di Linguistica e Stilistica, and the Centro Linguistico di Ateneo.

The names of the invited speakers and the titles of their papers were also announced:

**Jonathan Culpeper** (University of Lancaster) “*The dialogue of plays in a historical pragmatics perspective*”;

**Andreas H. Jucker** (University of Zurich) “*Politeness in Early Modern English Dialogues*”;

**Irma Taavitsainen** (University of Helsinki) “*Dialogue in Textbooks 1500-1800*”.

As announced in the first circular papers should be 20 mins in length, with around 5 to 10 mins allotted for discussion.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words in .doc or .pdf or .rtf format are to be sent to BOTH local representatives of the scientific committee, whose email addresses are provided below.

The deadline for abstracts is the **30<sup>th</sup> of November 2010**, acceptance will be notified by the **15<sup>th</sup> of January 2011**.

Local representatives of the scientific committee:

Luisanna Fodde ([fodde@unica.it](mailto:fodde@unica.it))

Facoltà di Economia

Centro Linguistico di Ateneo

Gabriella Mazzon ([gabrina9004@alice.it](mailto:gabrina9004@alice.it))

Facoltà di Lingue e letterature Straniere – Dipartimento di Linguistica e Stilistica

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Finally, one last excellent piece of news. We are delighted to report that John Douthwaite has offered to host SLIN 16 at the University of Genoa. More information regarding the date and conference topic will be provided at Cagliari in May.

At this point, the Report must finish. Our best wishes to you all, and please don't forget to send us all suggestions for the forthcoming SLIN Newsletter.

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