SLIN

NEWSLETTER

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Contents:

1. SLIN and HEL Conferences and Seminars

§ 9SLIN headed "English Historical Pragmatics" was held in Naples on 13 to 15 May last to the full satisfaction of both organizers, who are to be specially thanked for being kind, efficient and omnipresent, and participants who in more than fifty attended the crowded sessions - 3 plenary lectures by A. Jucker, L. Wright and A. Hubler and 22 between papers and posters - in the sumptuous premises of Suor Orsola Benincasa Institute.

It is recommended that the final texts of the papers which will be selected for publication in the Conference proceedings should reach the organizers by **September 10** next.

In the opening session the figure of Thomas Frank and his determining role in the progress of History of English studies in Italy were aptly evoked by Gabriella Di Martino - a worthy following up to the official commemoration held at Naples university on 7 December last during the presentation of a Memorial Volume edited by Dieter Stein and Rosanna Sornicola (*The Virtues of Language*, Benjamins, 1998).

A detailed report, midway between lyrically evocative and factually evaluative is offered by our experienced, hardly replaceable 'regime chronicler' Richard Dury on pp. 3-11.

The 'business meeting', which as usually concluded the conference, was mainly devoted to making collective decisions on subject, place and time of 10SLIN Conference, due in 2001, and to the two-yearly Seminar. The University of Pavia, Collegio Ghislieri, was provisionally designated with the agreement of the local colleague John Meddemen and the most likely period was identified with late September. As to the topics these will be left to the National Committee to assess on the basis of the ideas and suggestions put forward in the meeting.

The SLIN Seminar will take place at Bergamo University in early May, 2000. Further details will be provided in the next issues of the *NL*.

§§ A succinct reminder of some major forthcoming conferences is given below:
- 3ICOME: Dublin, July 1-4, 1999. Organizer: Prof. Peter J. Lucas (e-mail english@incentive-conf.ie)
- 32nd Annual Meeting of SLE: Ljubjana (Slovenia), July 8-11, 1999 (e-mail: mojca.golob@ff.uni-lj.si)
- XIX AIA Conference: Milan, September 21-23.

- 11ICEHL: Santiago de Compostela (Spain), September 7-11, 2000. Organizer: Professor Teresa Fanego (e-mail 11icehl@usc.es)
- 5ESSE: Helsinki, August 25-29, 2000. Organizer: Professor Matti Rissanen (e-mail: ESSE5-2000@helsinki.fi)
- 1SHEL: Los Angeles (US), May 28-30, 2000. Organizers: Proff. Robert Stockwell and Donka Minkova. Featured speakers: Richard Bailey, Thomas Cable, Anthony Kroch, Elizabeth Traugott. Abstract deadline: December 15, 1999; one-page abstracts to be sent to Professor Donka Minkova, Department of English, UCLA, 405 Hilgard Av., Los Angeles, CA 90095, US. Any further information as well as a copy of the registration form can be obtained accessing http//www.humnet.ucla.edu/SHEL/ .

§§§ 14th International Conference of Historical linguistics, Vancouver (Canada), 9-13 August, 1999. Contact Professor Laurel Brinton, ICL XIV, Dept. of English, UBC, Vancouver, BCV6T 1Z1, Canada. E-mail: ichlxiv@interchg.ubc.ca

§§§§ 2MAVEN (Major Varieties of English): Lincoln University, UK, 9-11 September, 1999. Contact P.B.Nayer, Dept. of Humanities, Lincoln University, Brayford Pool, Lincoln LN67TS; e-mail: pnayar@ulh.ac.uk

2. Reports on 9SLIN and 20ICAME

The 9th SLIN Conference, Naples, 13-15 May 1999 (R. Dury)

Naples - irregular, uncontrollable, impossible, incomprehensible, indescribable... Near its centre, perched on the side of St. Elmo's Hill, is the *unique* Istituto Suor Orsola Benincasa, a complex of associated private educational institutions, from primary school to University, housed in a 16th-17th century monastic 'citadel' that, like Naples itself, 'has the chaos that comes from being a series of additions'. Yet this multi-level labyrinth within a labyrinth also contains magical islands of order and light, prime among them the cloister garden of rose-bushes, with its pergola walks and majolica tile decorations, flanked on one side by a superb glazed cloister walk, like a long conservatory: double-height and palm-lined.

It was near this garden, in the Sala degli Angeli, a lofty and luminously top-lit former church, that 53 members of the SLIN group met for their 9th National Conference, deftly organized (on the established format of 20 or so speakers in two-and-a-half days) by Gabriella di Martino and the 'Naples group', a conference praised by one visiting speaker for the friendliness of the participants and the high quality of the papers.

Thursday started with a commemoration of Thomas Frank, the principal founder of the SLIN group, by Gabriella di Martino. This was followed by Andreas Jucker, leading light of historical pragmatics, who gave us an overview of the discipline. First he tackled the problem of the lack of past spoken texts by means of taxonomies of text-types from a pragmatic p-o-v in order to clarify their closeness to the representation of speech. The classificatory scheme finally chosen was based on one axis of communicative immediacy/distance and another running from a concentration of written code features to a concentration of spoken code features. This was then exemplified in a characterization of the embedded speech in court records: the account of conversation in the courtroom, and the account embedded within this of conversation outside the courtroom.

In the second part of the talk we looked at diachronic speech analysis, taking as an example the study of insults across time. Here, the levels (seen as dichotomies or continua) chosen to characterize speech acts and trace their evolution went from form (ritual vs creative insults), to semantics (possibly-true insults vs invitations to 'go forth and multiply' etc.), context-

dependence, speaker's attitude and interlocutor reaction. The insults of St. Cecilia to the prefect Almachius in Chaucer's Second Nun's Tale were then located on the axes to give a 'profile' of the type of speech act. The talk was concluded with a mapping of the area of historical pragmatics and its research possibilities.

There was then just enough time for John Douthwaite's to present his poster on pragmatic interpretation of a detective story, in particular the interaction of interpretation via conversational maxims with interpretation via genre expectations.

Lunch was a buffet offered by the Istituto and served in the cloister walk. This was followed by a tour of a part of the complex (an ideal place to film a Gothic novel): up stairs, along corridors, across terraces, down steps, into churches and through halls. The tour accomplished its object: we all had even less of an idea than before of the Istituto's shape, height or breadth.

The afternoon started with Patrick Leech (Bologna), humorous and ironic, presenting his poster on a historical study of textile terminology. This was a superb poster with maps (showing trade- and language contact), charts, and small flip-pads of classified vocabulary (which showed a great deal of change in this terminological system).

The first paper of the afternoon was a scholarly study from Gabriella Del Lungo (from Florence) of speech representation in the *Book of Margery Kempe*. Framing devices to mark off direct speech were first examined ('he said' reporting clauses, but also the use of names or titles and also simple discourse sequences such as question and answer). These devices helped both reader (in the absence of quotation marks) and listener (since such a narrative would often be read out), and they also give emphasis to the authoritative spoken word. Authority is also gained through 'vividness', as the narrative becomes a present drama in which the recipient has to collaborate in the creation of meaning. Examples of this vivid and framed direct speech also have the meta-narrational function of marking crucial points in the plot.

Gabriella Di Martino then talked about eModE written didactic dialogues in language-teaching texbooks (Jucker's 'prospective speech representation' and Culpeper & Kytö's 'constructed dialogues with a minimum of narratorial intervention'). Though at first blush such dialogues might seem a little distant from actual speech, the very useful distinction was made between depersonalized dialogues aimed at communicating information and function-centred dialogues. The latter can be taken as being closer to real spoken exchanges and the examples given of bargaining at the market and negotiating for lodgings (from Caxton, Florio and Bellot) showed a fascinating array of politeness strategies.

The paper by Maria Luisa Maggioni (Cattolica, Milan) which ended the first group of papers, was a report of work in progress: a study of women's speech in ME verse romances, seen in the context of women's cultural roles. The interesting point that the words of women – always in private speech - are non-stereotypical might link up with Gabriella Del Lungo's observations on the textual function of quoted speech.

After the coffee break we heard David Hart (of Roma 3) about modality and power in Shakespeare, again a report of work in progress, in this case aimed at a classification of speech acts in Shakespeare. Interesting contrasts were made between similar speech acts made by Gertrude and Claudius in *Hamlet* Iii (asking Hamlet to stay etc.). Discussion was just moving on to the 'deontic' character of the plots in *The Merchant of Venice* when the inexorable clock forced a fast-forward to conclusions.

Nicholas Brownless of Florence was next, speaking of the creation of English newspaper discourse. Taking the combination of information, opinion and entertainment as distinctive characteristics of the modern newspaper, he was able to demonstrate the key role played by Thomas Gainsborough as newspaper editor 1622-4. Before this date, newspapers were collections of dispatches in which we referred to the inhabitants of the town from which the report was written. Gainsborough created a clear editorial line and a fixed Anglocentric point-of-view through prefatorial commentary and occasional 'editorial notices'. An analysis of the pragmatic features of these texts shows how he adopted a typical newspaper 'oral mode of address', using the first person pronoun and a consensual we. This was a clearly-organized talk that gained interest from its completely new way of seeing things.

Our attention was next turned to the history of English linguistics by Maurizio Gotti (leader of the 'Bergamo group') with an interesting study of the treatment of the 'central modals' in 18th-century grammars and the evolution of an understanding of their pragmatic meaning. The innovators here were Lowth (1762) and Ward (1765) whose explanations and paraphrases begin to take account of use (intention, desire, point-of-view etc.) in an interactive situation. It seems that Lowth was even the first to apply the logical terminology of 'mode' and 'modal' to this area of language.

The afternoon ended with a contribution from Marina Dossena (now in Milan but still working in Bergamo) who spoke about early accounts of the 19th-century Highland Clearances. A variety of discourse strategies and forensic rhetorical devices were used to convince the reader of the crofters' case. The use of quoted speech received particular attention: the long-ish direct testimony of sufferers (containing many features attesting strength of feeling) and the fragment of highly-charged speech (the latter seeming to link up with what Gabriella Del Lungo had been saying earlier). The re-presentation of such authentic texts makes reply difficult (perhaps, we thought - remembering Balkan parallels - justifiably so)

After this good day's work, we walked in chatting groups back along the regally-named Corso Vittorio Emanuele, which slowly winds itself around the side of St. Elmo's Hill; picking our way along the narrow pavements (narrowed further by dog and car) to the Hotel Britanique. Then, freshened, we assembled to walk down the hotel's private hillside steps to a charming, noisy, crowded but ventilated restaurant, specializing in uncountable antipasto dishes that just kept coming: crispy fried morsels, pungent tastes of the sea, tumbled indefinable mixtures – a veritable *Naples* of flavours and colours and textures.

Next morning, the view from the bedroom balcony showed a misty sea, palms waving in the breeze and sunlight catching the tops of the buildings, while below the morning traffic was making its presence felt. Breakfast was pleasant among the starched napery, with waiters acting like servants in an 18ᵗʰ-century play: free spirits who were also attentive and friendly.

The entrance to Suor Orsola was spectacular. Not the plain courtyard and low dark atrium and the long lift ride, but the long low-arched grotto-like corridor that seemed to follow the curve of the hill, bringing you to steps and then an unexpected floor-to-ceiling window with a view over the bay and port with cranes and moored ships, the roof of the Galleria and other monuments and a mass of housetops and tall palm trees. Proceeding down the corridor to the Sala degli Angeli, the day started with Vanda Polese from Naples who gave us a discourse analysis study (with examples from *The Pickwick Papers*) of how reader and fictional participants interpret and disambiguate pronouns (or fail to do so) when they refer to a lengthy stretch of text.

Laura Pinnavaia (from the Cattolica, Milan) gave an interesting talk on the subject of 'idiomatic expressions' (distinguished from totally opaque 'idioms') involving animals. A study of selected articles from 200 years of *The Times* yielded not only an impressive number of these, but also showed that such collocations, far from being 'fixed', are now usually transformed, to mark the presence of the writer and involve the reader in an awareness of a shared linguistic culture.

Conversational analysis was the area of the next contribution, from Giuliana Diani (Pisa). This started from the studies of Pomerantz, Aston and Merlini on agreement strategies and applied them to a series of dramatic texts from Shaw to the present, to show the varying functions of repetition, use of *yes* and re-elaboration ('Good' – 'Very good'). We understood that clear agreement has to be stronger than the prior assessment, and that re-elaboration (following pragmatic analysis) is more co-operative since it encourages the continuation of the exchange.

The great thing about the coffee break, which came next, was being able to step out to a level section of some steps (with a small walled garden off them on the other side) leading up from an old entrance. This blocked the view but did not stop a refreshing sea breeze blowing here all of the three days we were there.

After the break Rolando Bacchielli from Urbino put to full use his long-term study of phrasal verbs in a revealing study of such verbs in Chaucer. Not only did Chaucer use a notable number and variety of them, but he even emphasized the particle through multiple and reduplicated particles (*look down upon, blown up and down*), verb-particle inversion and line-final placement. Apart from their obvious convenience in adapting words to metre, such forms seem also to have been used as a characteristic register feature and to give an oral flavour to the narrative.

Next to speak was Nicola Pantaleo, Newsletter Editor, animator and in many ways personification of the SLIN group, who informed us, with his typical dry humour, on the subject of addressee pronoun switching in medieval religious prose: the 'modulation' from singular and personal to plural and impersonal (to create a consensual world), or from plural and impersonal to singular (a finger-pointing strategy of great rhetorical effect in sermons). The rhetorical effect of a combination of these strategies was illustrated in a humorous closure by a translation of the *furbo* Neapolitan saying 'He who has had, has had, has had; he who has given, has given, has given; let's forget about the past – we are from Naples, my fellow-countryman!'

We returned to *The Canterbury Tales* with Gabriella Mazzon and a report on 'a first tentative dip into a large subject': a study of the verbs referring to the activity of speaking. These were divided into verbs of speech accompanied by gesture (*blessen*), or by non-linguistic noise (*crien*); performative verbs (subdivided into Searlean representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations); metalinguistic verbs, referring mainly to discourse organization (*concluden*); and verba dicendi (*seyen, tellen*). Illustrations were then given of the interesting uses to which this database will now be put: the study of semantic and collocational changes, as well as of the pragmatic significance of the choice of performative verb.

The morning ended with Letizia Vezzosi from Florence offering an explanation to the mystery of the s-genitive: the dying form that bounced back. This was a careful study of the data in the Helsinki Corpus, accompanied by impressive analysis with the help of graphs (unfortunately on the ohp's these were too small to be easily legible). In OE morphological lightness of the possessor NP is the most important factor determining the use of the s-genitive; in ME animacy becomes the 'knock-out criterion', followed by lightness. In eModE, however, the No. 2 spot is taken by Topicality, which apparently then climbs to No. 1 in PrE (i.e. the s-genitive tends to go with a possessor known to the hearer).

Lunchtime came and most people went off to a trattoria in the centre, leaving a handful of others behind in the slow-moving midday quietness of

Suor Orsola. The cloister garden was warm in the sun and caressed by cool breezes, sprinklers whispered discreetly among the roses, and groups of graceful *fanciulle* passed along the palm-lined passageway, like the dream vision of shy deer in a dappled glade. Three o' clock came; and went; time stood still; and in the Room of the Angels a slim black cat snoozed on Antonio Bertacca's jacket.

Then voices, footsteps, the main group returned from their memorable lunch, and the afternoon session started a hour late, to nobody's great concern. First to speak was Laura Wright from Cambridge, who specializes in research based on unpublished court records from early modern London, in this case witness depositions before the Court of Bridewell 1559-1610. These records contain the most vivid narratives, the most unexpected fragments of emotionally-charged speech and such patterns of simple but almost epic interaction that the story is stamped home like an illustration.

In an attempt to understand the fragmentary, non-linear nature of the narratives, Labov's structural framework for 'oral versions of personal experience' was applied to them. It worked quite well for the story of Mawdlin Gawen (1575) but was not so useful in the case of Agnes Wilson (1575), mainly because these records are usually not of a single voice but of sequences of depositions starting from dialogue and used to build up the story.

Pausing only to pick up and carry the exploring slim black cat to the door, the speaker then went on to say that the *details* that make these narratives so fascinating to us were possibly strategies to convince the listeners: by invoking a picture (the waterman looking out of the window and saying it was too early for a boat; Agnes Wilson taking the ring of the door in her hand to stop anyone coming in; the tag of Richard Cowper's hose banging against the wainscot as he creeps into the study) or quoting exact words ("Pichars haue eares", "if you come nowe you shall see some"), both of which have an authenticity that cannot be easily challenged.

Sacrificing our coffee break we then moved straight on to Giovanni Iamartino from Milan, who, like Maurizio Gotti the day before, drew our attention to a significant stage in the awareness of pragmatic factors in the history of English linguistics. We were still in the 18th century, but now not looking at grammars but dictionaries, or rather the great work by Samuel Johnson. Taken on a guided tour of significant entries by our witty *cicerone* we were able to see how Johnson's usage labels and notes convey innovative explicit pragmatic information about intention-dependent meaning and about discourse function ('to add emphasis').

The present writer was unfortunately unable to listen to the following speaker (on the replacement of *ye* by *you*), but did hear the interesting following talk, the last of the day, by Roberta Facchinetti from Verona (with Bergamo connections). Her topic was the collocation of central modals with five intensifier adverbs conveying possibility, as revealed in the 17th century part of the *Early English Prose Fiction Corpus*. On the ohp grid of modals/adverbs, three cells of clearly higher numbers were effectively picked out in red: *may + perhaps*, *might + perhaps*, and *could + possibly*. In all these cases modal and adverb have a similar epistemic meaning: the adverb further reduces the urgency of the assertion as well as disambiguating the type of modality.

For dinner that evening we walked down steps and narrow alleys to the Riviera di Chiaia where a fresh wind and dramatically swirling clouds over the sea for a time threatened rain that luckily passed away. The *cena sociale* was on the terrace of 'La Bersagliera', with the bobbing boats of the *porticciolo* between us and the Castel dell'Ovo. Over the hubbub of the other diners, Nicola Pantaleo gallantly made a speech of wit and good humour, toasting among others, the five group members who had achieved promotion in the last year (Gabriella Mazzon, Antonio Bertacca, Luisanna Fodde, Letizia Vezzosi and Nicoletta Vasta and the present writer). The evening continued in a relaxed convivial mood with general visiting from one table to another.

Saturday morning started with an old friend of Italian Anglists, Axel Hübler now at Jena University, who gave us a report on a new project investigating the interaction of gesture and language. A taxonomy of gestures (based on McNeill 1992) was followed by observations on their interrelation with speech (their correlation with the peak of a tone-unit; the probable parallel evolution of both channels). After this preface, the hypothesis was advanced that we can see a historical movement to control and restrict gestures, as evidenced in the 'courtesy books' of the 16th and 17th centuries.

The evidence that this very same period saw the coining of many new 'gestural idioms' (idiomatic expressions referring to gestures), leads to the idea that the two phenomena may be related. Repression may certainly have led to greater awareness of the phenomenon (so more talking about it), but there may have also been a mechanism of substitution (people didn't gesture, they talked about gesturing).

The next to speak was Maria Lima from Naples, who looked perceptively at Bellot's *Familiar Dialogues* (1586), a text for French learners of English, already referred to by Gabriella di Martino on the first day. The difficult situation of the Huguenot exiles is shown by the modulation from the presentation of the reader as part of an 'outsider' or an 'insider' group; this distinction was then used to interpret the text: from the classification of dialogues (with their 'inside' or 'outside' settings), to the use of the central modal verbs, the object of special attention.

Luisanna Fodde from Cagliari ended the conference well with her study of African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), in particular, features of the tense-aspect system (*done told*, *be done melted*) which have

apparently recently also taken on an pragmatic 'colouring' indicating a range of strong emotions. This was then tied into the debate on the origins of AAVE: African creole or shared rural folk speech? Conclusions were in favour of the second hypothesis, though the dialect can now seen to be diverging from white vernacular, for example in the affective colouring of tense-aspect features previously examined.

After the following business meeting and a lunch of Neapolitan abundance and good-natured hospitality at 'La Chiacchierata', scene of the (now understandable) late lunch of the day before, most people said goodbye, agreeing that it had been an excellent conference. Naples itself, no more understandable than when we first arrived, had revealed some of its charm and beauty. Strange, though, that returning home, everywhere else seemed in contrast so untrafficked, so quiet, so spacious. Naples!

(R. Dury)

20th Annual Meeting of the International Computer Archive of Modern / Medieval English (ICAME)
"Corpus Linguistics and Linguistic Theory" – Freiburg (Germany), 26th-30th May 1999 (M. Dossena)

Maybe more than once in our lives we may have agreed with Burns that "The best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft agley", but in the case of the XX ICAME Conference the thorough organization of Christian Mair and his staff ensured that absolutely everything should be as perfect as it could be. Even the warm weather contributed to the success of a meeting the pleasant atmosphere of which was constantly perceptible at all levels.

The Conference took place in a former fifteenth-century convent, i.e. in one of those buildings which look quiet, solemn, and elegant (though not altogether inaccessible) and invite reflection. Maybe Freiburg itself is like that: a friendly town whose relaxed elegance is obvious in the details of the flower market surrounding the Gothic *Münster*, the gabled houses and the *Bächle* (crystal-clear rivulets which run along the oldest streets and which in the Middle Ages were useful both in the event of fires and as a domestic water-supply; nowadays, they are a refreshing glimpse of running water on sunny afternoons and, as tradition has it, if you happen to step into one of them accidentally, you'll marry someone from Freiburg...).

As soon as the Conference opened, it was clear that the academic side of the event was going to prove equal to the high standards set in previous editions and even newcomers were immediately involved in the bubbly scientific conversations which enlivened the coffee-breaks. The topics covered in 48 papers and 14 posters ranged from modality (papers by Roberta Facchinetti, 'Be Able To vs. Can/Could in PDE', Graeme Kennedy, 'The Distribution of Modals in Complex Verb Phrase Structure' and Ylva Berglund, 'Gonna and Going To in the BNC') to stabilized expressions, to the discourse of press conferences (Peter Howarth), to varieties of PDE (AusE, NZE and even Kenyan English being in the spotlight on various occasions).

Learner corpora (especially ICLE, the International Corpus of Learner English, research in the Italian branch of which is co-ordinated by Maria Teresa Zagrebelsky) featured quite prominently, more or less in the same way as the new ICE corpora and ..., yes, the long-awaited, much-expected, and greatly-appreciated, new ICAME CD-ROM with its collection of corpora old and new. Knut Hofland presented it in the context of other

software demonstrations and in the environment of a book exhibition which focused on state-of-the-art reading material, but in which you could also spot an intriguing box of older books (remainders, basically!) which added a sprinkle of old times' flavour to our perception of how fast and fruitfully research has been developing in the field of corpus-based studies.

The Conference itself had been preceded by a smaller seminar on dialectology and indeed a relatively substantial number of historical dialectologists attended throughout the five days, thus showing that the ICAME family is growing on that level too; in this context, the paper by Keith Williamson on the tagging procedure being followed in Edinburgh for the preparation of a linguistic atlas of Older Scots proved of considerable interest both to historical linguists and to the more technically-minded. This paper was presented on the second afternoon, when the Conference split into two workshops, a synchronic one and another with a specific diachronic focus chaired by Matti Rissanen, the highlights of which were the papers by Irma Taavitsainen and Päivi Pahta, 'Noun Phrase Structures in Scientific Language: The Corpus of Early English Medical Writing 1379-1750', Christina Schneider, 'Popular and Quality Papers in the Historical Rostock Newspaper Corpus', and Marianne Hundt, 'Grammaticalisation of Voice in Get-Constructions'.

As for the social programme, this was also a sequence of pleasant surprises. On the first two evenings lively conversation continued over al-fresco dinners in a restaurant overlooking the city and the surrounding hills; it seemed as if the walk up to the place itself was designed to allow us to unwind from the conference, since the road took us across the town and then up the paths winding along the slopes of the Schlossberg to enjoy gorgeous sunsets. The Conference banquet, instead, was more than vaguely reminiscent of a wedding breakfast ("Nope, nope, not me, I never stepped into any *Bach!*!") and it was organized in a stylish *Keller* where different types of local wine could be tasted and assessed in their suitability to the various dishes: in this task we were helped by the expert descriptions of the manager of the Keller, whose skilful interpreter was Christian Mair himself.

Before the banquet the group had been taken on an afternoon excursion into France, visiting scenic Riquewihr and Colmar, two of the most picturesque places in Alsace. On the way there a peaceful scenery of terraced vineyards and storks' nests opened up before us and we were pleasantly reminded of the existence of the European Union when, right in the midst of one of the bloodiest battlefields in history, we could cross the Rhine without even thinking of showing our passports. The drive back, instead, was through romantic moonlit woods, the charm of which allowed you to imagine all sorts of nocturnal creatures busy amidst the trees: owls, badgers, and, who knows, maybe even elves...

The next morning some of us woke up to be on their way back home, while others stayed on for the final part of the conference which featured such distinguished speakers as Stig Johansson ('Corpora and Contrastive Linguistics'), Anneli Meurman-Solin (On the Development of Prepositional Ditransitive Collocations') and Dieter Mindt ('An Empirical Grammar of the English Verb'). Finally, as Geoffrey Leech thanked the organisers, the groups' thoughts were already beginning to wander to the southern hemisphere, where the next ICAME Conference will be held in what promises to be an increasingly busy Y2K, at no less a venue than Sydney, Australia.

(M. Dossena)

3. An annotated bibliography on phrasal verbs. Part 2. (R.Bacchielli)

An outline of diachronic description:

It is a paradox that the most vital and problematic part of speech, the particle, has attracted little attention among classically-minded grammarians and linguists. It does not come as a surprise, therefore, that phrasal verbs have had to wait until the end of the 19[h] and the beginning of the 20th century for diachronic investigation and for adequate coverage in grammar books and dictionaries.

The origin, growth and development of phrasal verbs remain in any case largely unexplored. The conclusions drawn so far on the basis of the pioneering inquiries conducted at the turn of the century and afterwards cannot be taken for definitive, because a complete census of phrasal verbs age by age, text by text, author by author, category by category, term by term, in the written production handed down to us has never been attempted. Furthermore, given the fact that we have no informants for the early periods, we lack the support of prosodic, intonational and phonetical features (cp. in any case Harrison 1892, Eitrem 1903 and Ellinger 1910). This makes it impossible to write an exhaustive and definitive history of phrasal verbs. The *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* and all the other corpora now made available will hopefully open a new era in this field of research (Hiltunen 1994).

To draw a more realistic picture of the situation we have first to clear the ground from wrong hypotheses, exaggerations and useless hazy generalizations. The theories evolved recently on the Scandinavian (Logeman 1906), French (Mustanoja 1960, Marchand 1960/69 deals with the development of post-particle verbs within the changes brought about by the Norman Conquest), and Celtic (de la Cruz 1972) origin of phrasal verbs have to be disproved. Phrasal verbs are a native development that in some measure received a boost from those languages. The commonly accredited view that phrasal verbs originate from the disruption of prefixed verbs must also be handled with care. The disruption of the prefix system only left large open spaces for a further growth of phrasal verbs that coexisted with them and pre-existed prefixed verbs. If we assume a typological perspective we get a clearer idea of how to envisage the problem: the cyclical development of languages from synthetic and highly

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inflected (with free word-order) to analytical / phrasal systems (with fixed word-order) supplies the background of the verb-particle evolution. The free word-order of I.E. languages allowed for verbs to be followed by particles: this is witnessed by the verb-particle structures present in Sanskrit and Gothic. Then begins the synthetic phase by which a large number of particles assumed a preverbal position, and even became verbal prefixes, such as we find in Latin, Greek and all the Germanic languages. But not all the particles underwent that change, some of them continued to be autonomous and were postponed to verbs. Moreover, a number of prefixes continued to be shifted after the verb in certain syntactic situations (separable prefixes), so much so that even on the basis of the few specific investigations attempted so far (Wende 1915, Mitchell, B. 1978, Denison 1981, Hiltunen 1982, Cavanaugh 1986, Ogura 1992), we do not know for sure to what extent the prefixation of particles to verbs was a word-forming process and to what extent it was the result of the syntactic organization of the sentence (word-order). In fact, the increase in phrasal verbs coincides with the gradual adoption of a new, fixed word-order (SVO). We have to consider also that if a number of particles became prefixes, all the new particles that appeared around the millennium A.D. (away, down, round, etc.) were decidedly inclined to assumed post verbal position. There are other more marginal facts that draw water to our mill: from the very beginning English has had a vocation for postpositions, as is witnessed by "the dangling preposition" which was obligatory in O.E. in relative clauses introduced by _e or with zero relative (this construction was so deeply entrenched in O.E. that Lass (1987)'s theory that the dangling preposition might be a "Scandinavianism in English" is untenable), the use of the object or pronoun object + preposition, very frequent in poetry from OE times (_att enngell comm annd stod hemm bi) down to Chaucer (that stood hym bisyde, I go my tale unto), and the slightly belated prepositional passive. If prefixed verbs largely outnumber verb-particle constructions in the written production of early and middle O.E., the latter ones, which occasionally crop up in ancient literary texts, must have thrived at the level of speech which continued more closely the old I.E. tradition. This purports to say that with the advent of writing a bias for prefixed verbs prevailed in high cultural spheres, also because of native and foreign literary models. Furthermore, from late O.E. the particle became more and more pervasive: it came to be postponed also to O.E. verbs that already possessed a prefix and to the newly borrowed Romance verbs, either single, or prefixed, that theoretically did not need a particle. In the M.E. period we have a very variegated typology of verb compounds among which particled verbs begin to prevail in number and extension of expressive force. Prefixed verbs, on the other hand, already in decay, were only occasionally re-launched by gloss-makers, translators and poets archaically inclined. The most intriguing aspect of the language of the Middle Ages in

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England is the coexistence and interchangeability of verb types that could be usefully paired into linguistic equations through which were mediated the notional and cultural exchanges that characterize that age.

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Phrasal derivatives:

Phrasal derivatives (runaway, runner-up, washing-up, talking-to, built-in, zipper-upper, a/the tidying up of, etc.) have had an astonishing development from EModE, but even scrupulous lexicographers are not aware of this extraordinary fact, probably because they suffer from the same myopia they have applied to phrasal verbs until recently. Even the OED seldom treats them as independent lexical units deserving full treatment in main entries and one has to look far and wide to discover them in the innumerable quotations that exemplify their parent phrasal verbs. This disregard, which is responsible for a regretful black spot in contemporary English lexicography, can partly be explained by the fact that a considerable number of them belong in slang, dialect, scientific and technical jargons, and marginal spheres of use. The reason why we should care more about them is that they have become more and more pervasive in Modern English under the spur of "consumeristic technology". As to diachronic investigations, moreover, they miss out completely. I have recorded about three thousand such terms, but I am sure I am considerably short of the mark. Their high productivity is a salient feature of contemporary English.

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Comparative studies and single-language studies in a Germanic and Indo-European perspective:

Interest in the comparative study of phrasal verbs in the various Germanic languages has been indulged in only in the pioneering phase of diachronic research, but since the descriptive preoccupation of modern dictionary-makers, particularly for educational purposes, has come to the forefront, a new branch of comparative and contrastive linguistics seems to be dawning. Nonetheless, cross-linguistic studies of phrasal verbs within and without the I.E.domain of contemporary languages still remain something to be desired and consequently the other Germanic languages are still wanting a linguistic description of the phenomena analogous to English phrasal verbs. On the other hand also diachronic comparisons between Old English, Old Norse, Gothic and Old High German are at a standstill. As to current interests, the most obvious comparisons with Swedish, Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic have not progressed far. According to Mossé (1947, p.196) and Hiltunen (1983, p.38), only Icelandic seems to have developed a phrasal system comparable to the English one, but I have not been able to locate any comparative stydy. The existing literature on contrastive studies of separable/inseparable verbs in the Germanic languages and on the "dangling preposition" in Swedish, to make one more example, is not easily available. Moreover, the alluring proposition of comparing English phrasal verbs with their, if any, counterparts in the Romance area has never been pursued. We do have a number of idiomatic V + P combinations in Italian: Non mi va giù, L'ha fatto fuori, Fatti sotto, Dacci dentro, Non tirarti indietro, Se la fa sotto, Se ne ciabattò via dalla stanza [a recent succeful invention which sounds like an attempt by someone with a fairly good knowledge of English to adopt an English model for creative purposes], but it seems we are not sufficiently motivated in the present state of research to confront with such an enterprise.

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On the Web:

If you are a clever Net surfer, Internet can supply precious help and information. Choose Alta Vista and Yahoo preferably as the best providers: enter "English phrasal verbs" or "Verb-particle combinations" as keywords and you soon come to know what is being done around the world for the teaching (a formidable task for teachers of English) and learning of English phrasal verbs. Almost all the services provided are for advanced ESL students: one can take quizzes and then check his/her answers right away, becauses courses are interactive, with exercises for self-study and self-correction. One can put queries and get the answers from field experts in a reasonably short time. Specific updated bibliographies are supplied and also addresses of bookshops from which one can buy books on phrasal verbs by e-mail. But if educational preoccupations are dominant, the Web on the other hand also provides good service for academics: profiles of scholars, their current research projects, lists of their publications, information about seminars and conferences, e-mail addresses and so on and so on. Recently one service featured a desperate appeal from Poland for "a history of phrasal verbs", something that has never been attempted and that, given the present "state of the art" and the situation of research explained above, will not materialize in a short time and in definitive terms.

Conclusion:

A syncretic view of the problem.

The vast and complex realm of V+P combinations must be viewed as containing two parallel systems: 1) that of "phrasal verbs proper", "prepositional verbs" and "phrasal-prepositional verbs" whose "compounds" are charged with an unpredictable degree of idiomaticity (their meanings are not the sum of the literal meanings of the component parts) and fit into a maze of classes and subclasses of patterns (this is the real phrasal system that is a hard challenge to both teachers and linguists); 2) that of free combinations which have a literal meaning, but can fit into the same classes and subclasses of patterns as "the phrasal system".

Both systems through conversion, derivation, analogy and expansion produce "phrasal derivatives" which, in typological terms, constitute the most advanced stage of lexical development in the whole I.E. family. Because of the persisting disregard for phrasal derivatives, their relationship with their parent base verbs has attracted very little attention, both among linguists and teachers and a systematic synchronic and diachronic study of them is still wanting. All the phrasal derivatives produced by the two systems above easily undergo expansion of form and

meaning generating idioms that are a further challenge for teachers and scholars alike.

At the level of phrasal derivatives the two systems described above are rejoined into one and the same lexical family where they coexist inextricably entangled and compete in generating new forms and meanings. We are convinced, though, that a syncretic view of this extraordinary development is a good starting point for any kind of inquiry that one may wish to undertake: typological, historical, syntagmatic, semantic, lexical or socio-linguistic. The aim of this bibliographical guide would fall flat, if a more conscious understanding of the formidable problems we are faced with would not emerge.

(R. Bacchielli)

4. "Saxons? No, Britons, of Course!" (a DNA research by L.Rogers and J.Harlow)

SAXONS? WE'RE ALL ANCIENT BRITONS HERE!

by Lois Rogers and John Harlow [*The Sunday Times* 22.3.98]

WHATEVER the cultural distinctions between the English, Scottish and Welsh, in genetic terms at least, there is no difference between us - we are all ancient Britons.

The first genetic map of the British Isles has revealed that we are united by common DNA that dates back at least 10,000 years to the last Ice Age.

Waves of invading Romans, Vikings and Germans may have left their cultural stamp on the conquered people, but they caused barely a ripple in the gene pool, according to scientists at Oxford University.

The research suggests that Britons are biologically similar, even if they perceive themselves to be the descendants of distinct racial groups. Those who claim to be descended from marauding bands of Celts or Anglo-Saxons will be disappointed by this research. Others who prefer to promote their continental lineage and claim fashionable Norman descent ignore the much more powerful inheritance of the ancient Britons, whose genes have overwhelmed all subsequent residents of the British Isles.

The Institute of Molecular Medicine at Oxford has profiled 6,000 people and, by comparing their blood samples with DNA extracted from the remains of Stone Age people, discovered that 99% can trace their origins directly back to the Britons who populated the fertile wooded valleys carved out by Ice Age glaciers when Britain was still joined to the European mainland.

The scientists say that anybody who knows that their maternal grandmother was born in the British Isles is almost certain to be genetically identical to a paleolithic ancestor, through a family chain genetically untouched by "newcomers" such as the Celts, who arrived in 700BC from Austria.

They have even been able to distinguish between the different waves of Stone Age immigrants who walked across the "land bridge" from southern Europe up to 50,000 years ago.

Bryan Sykes, professor of human genetics at Oxford University, led the project to examine the nature of "Britishness", part of an international effort to explain how humans, spreading out from Africa and the Middle East, occupied Europe.

"There were several waves of expansion of the first anatomically modern humans," he said. "We can now identify genes that go back to these."

Two of the geneticists, Eileen Hickey and Catherine Irven, have already mapped their own genes and found they both come from the original hunter-gatherers, dating back up to 50,000 years, who settled the west coast of Ireland.

The project is examining genes from structures called mitochondria, responsible for programming activity within individual cells. This DNA is inherited solely through the maternal line. Specific genes and their mutations have been compared to DNA derived from about 20 ancient skeletons from Britain and the Continent.

Sir Roy Strong, the cultural historian, said he was not surprised by the findings: "It indicates there has been a continuity pervading more strongly in British culture than the champions of the Celts or Anglo-Saxons would boast.

"It is good news for those worried by new Labour's devolution plans. It indicates that a thread of Britishness will survive, no matter what the politicians say or do."

The research could also illuminate mysteries that have baffled historians for years. Richard Coates, professor of linguistics at Southampton University, said: "We never understood why so few Celtic words survived into modern usage. Maybe they were not as important as we thought.

"It also raises speculation about names of rivers such as Severn, Tyne and Humber, which are suspected of being older than the Celts. It may not have just been genes we inherited from ancient Britons."

Our genes may be the same but historic social differences remain. Plaid Cymru, the political party that promotes Welsh independence, said that shared genes did not undermine the importance of cultural heritage. "The Welsh are distinct in every way from a typical Londoner," it said.

Bill Longsleet, who runs the Anglo-Saxon Society, dedicated to honouring the Germanic tribes that arrived in Britain from AD500 to AD1000, said the genetic mapping "demeaned and insulted" traditional ideas of Britain.

Longsleet, who claims that his family tree runs back to Athelstan, Anglo-Saxon king of England (AD927-AD939), said: "This casts us all back into the Stone Age. I am not sure I want to go there."

When the European Union-funded project is completed in five years' time, more than 15,000 people, mostly volunteers at blood-donation centres, will have been "mapped".

The team has already made a start on a second project to track male inheritance through the Y-chromosome, which confers maleness.

"Our first gene study has underlined how similar in biological terms we are," Sykes said. "But we all know the little physical differences - the Nordic or Celtic characteristics, such as red hair or green eyes - which suggest the invaders played a small role in our genetic make-up. This was probably transmitted down the male line."