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ESP Across Cultures is a refereed international journal published once a year, with theoretical, descriptive and applied studies on English language used in specialized fields of knowledge. The aim of the journal is to bring together scholars, practitioners, and young researchers working in different specialized language domains and in different disciplines with a view to developing an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to the study of ESP.

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ESP Across Cultures

Chief Editors
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Denise Milizia, University of Bari, Italy (denesmi@alice.it)
Christopher Williams, University of Bari, Italy (c.williams@scienzepolitiche.uniba.it)

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ESP Across Cultures is a refereed international journal that publishes theoretical, descriptive and applied studies on varieties of English pertaining to a wide range of specialized fields of knowledge, such as agriculture, art and humanities, commerce, economics, education and vocational training, environmental studies, finance, information technology, law, media studies, medicine, politics, religion, science, the social sciences, sports, technology and engineering, tourism, and transport. The journal addresses a readership composed of academics, professionals, and students interested in English for special purposes particularly from a cross-cultural perspective. The aim of the journal is to bring together scholars, practitioners, and young researchers working in different specialized language domains and in different disciplines with a view to developing an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to the study of ESP.

ESP Across Cultures is covered in International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (including IBSS Online and IBSS-Extra), Linguistics & Language Behaviour Abstracts, MLA International Bibliography, Translation Studies Abstracts and Bibliography of Translation Studies.
When we first decided, not so long ago, to set up our journal *ESP Across Cultures* from the small, young and relatively unknown University of Foggia in the south of Italy we were aware of the challenge and the difficulties involved in this enterprise. But we had expectations too. And it would be true to say that the positive reception among readers to our inaugural issue far surpassed our wildest dreams. So we would like to begin by thanking all those who have given us words of encouragement over the last year.

In particular, however, we wish to thank those who have given us valuable advice as to how to improve our fledgling journal. One immediately visible result of that advice can be seen in inclusion of some highly prestigious names among the members of the editorial board, with the consequent push towards greater internationalization.

We would also like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have acted as referees for the various papers being submitted to our journal, thus making it possible to maintain a high standard of the papers accepted for publication. Such has been the interest in our journal that the next two issues for 2006 and 2007 are already almost fully booked.

We are also pleased to announce that our website has recently been updated and can be found at http://www.unifg.it/esp/

As always, we welcome any suggestions and comments that you may wish to make, and we hope you will enjoy the selection of papers to be found in issue 2.

**The Editors**

Sara Laviosa  
Denise Milizia  
Christopher Williams
In this paper I will describe some recent developments of a much wider ongoing research project which sets out to explore the linguistic resources of the quintessential site for political discussions – Parliament (Bayley 2004a, Wodak & van Dijk 2000) – by combining the methodologies of discourse analysis and corpus linguistics. More specifically, I shall deal with one aspect of domain-specific discourse: the role and function of attribution, in particular direct quotations, in parliamentary discourse. The reporting of speech or thought – or what in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) terms has been defined "projection" (Halliday 1994) – is one of the linguistic areas which has most attracted the attention of discourse analysts. However, with the exception of a small number of contributions (Slembrouck 1992), research has predominantly focused on other domains, especially prose (Volosinov 1973; Leech & Short 1981; Sternberg 1982; Clark & Gerrig 1990; Short, Semino & Wynne 2002), academic discourse (Swales 1990; Tadros 1993; Thompson 1996; Hyland 1999; Hunsdon 2000) and, quite extensively, news discourse (Bell 1991; Caldas-Coulthard 1994; Fairclough 1992, 1995; Fowler 1991; van Dijk 1988). Yet the phenomenon of attribution plays a distinctive role in parliamentary discourse. In this privileged institutional setting, in fact, MPs can (and constantly do) make use of several authoritative sources, among which is the official verbatim report of the proceedings, Hansard (Antaki & Leudar 2001). The perspective adopted here stems from the assumption that attribution is loaded with evaluation, or Appraisal (Martin 2000; Martin & Rose 2003; White 2002, 2003; Miller 2005; Martin & White 2005) and occurs against a heteroglossic backdrop of other opinions (Volosinov 1973; Bakhtin 1981, 1986). The data used in this study are based on a corpus of all the sittings of the House of Commons of 2003 (about 1,200 hours of talk) and a subcorpus representing all discussions held in the House on Iraq (about 120 hours of talk).
1. Introduction

In this article I shall attempt to combine the approaches of discourse analysis and corpus linguistics, using a relatively small specialized corpus, with the aim of exploring one peculiar aspect of domain-specific discourse: the role and function of attribution in parliamentary discourse. More specifically, I shall be dealing with the written transcripts as reported in *Hansard* – not the speech events in their original spoken form¹ – in order to investigate what kind of rhetorical strategies are employed by Members of Parliament (MPs) when they report others’ words on the floor of the House.

Literal quotation from authoritative sources, such as the official report of previous sittings, may be seen in fact as a distinctive feature of parliamentary argumentation. In an article analysing how MPs make use of the public record of *Hansard*, Antaki & Leudar (2001) advance the hypothesis that political opponents’ exact words are rhetorically cited or “recruited” in order to support their own arguments: a way of formulating one’s own position while providing an unchallengeable tool for counter-argumentation. While this is certainly true, it does not tell the whole story. In their analysis, in fact, the two scholars quite explicitly avoid any analysis of content-specific features:

> we do not want to claim to be making any political analysis in the article; nor does it matter to our argument that the speakers are members of the British House of Commons as opposed to any other parliamentary body. We aim to perform a discursive analysis of a technique of rhetoric open to any member of an institution that publishes authoritative records of its verbal proceedings (Antaki & Leudar 2001: 469).

In this paper I shall argue that contextual factors are vital to an understanding of any discursive domain and thus need to be recognized in this milieu as well. As I will attempt to demonstrate later in the analysis, the kind of quotations Antaki & Leudar take into consideration are not used by all MPs but seem to be particularly used by the Opposition in order to attack members of the Government and, I would suggest, the Government’s credibility itself. Moreover, their analysis is qualitative and therefore restricted to a very limited number of examples; while they strongly criticize quantitative methods, early in the paper they notice that quoting is rather frequent and can thus be “treated as a fairly routine activity” (2001: 468) and indeed it is. However, I believe that it is the interaction of both quantitative and qualitative methods in the analysis of parliamentary discourse that can shed light on this phenomenon.

¹ On the question of faithfulness and accuracy with reference to transcripts as reported in *Hansard*, see Slembrouck 1992; Baynam & Slembrouck 1999. See also Short, Semino & Wynne 2002 for a corpus-based approach to the study of reported speech in a number of text types, arguing in favour of a context-sensitive approach to this notion.
2. Aims and Methods

This study advances the issue of the relevance, applicability and compatibility of two major research approaches – discourse analysis and corpus linguistics – to the study of direct quotations, or what Fairclough (1992) has termed “manifest intertextuality”, within this specific institutional setting. This can be a somewhat challenging task as the two approaches have both very different and at times opposed aims and procedures. First of all, although computer-assisted analysis seems to prioritize lexical investigation, I will attempt to apply this methodology to features of discourse such as quotations. Secondly, as stance or attitude depends crucially on context, a methodology which involves investigation beyond the clause level is needed. This is where small, or relatively small, corpora come in. The very strength of small corpora is that they can be more representative in a specific language domain than reference corpora. Besides, they have the advantage of recovering the potential loss of textual dimension that discourse analysis requires. The methodology advocated here, therefore, privileges a constant shifting back and forth between quantitative data and a close and contextualized reading of selected parts of texts.

As far as the data are concerned, the principal corpus comprises all the 152 full sittings of the Commons in 2003, which amounts to about 10,000,000 tokens. The data of this study, however, are based on a subcorpus representing all discussions held on Iraq, which includes 73 “parliamentary events” (around 120 hours of talk) amounting to about 984,000 running words. The main method of examining the corpus is by concordance program. In this phase, WordSmith Tools 4.0 (Scott 2004) has been used, although this paper is a by-product of an ongoing research programme which will entail the tagging, validation and standardization of the corpora in XML.

2 Following Bakhtin and Voloshinov, Fairclough (1992) suggests developing discourse representation within the broader notion of intertextuality (which was first introduced by Kristeva 1984). According to Fairclough, intertextuality may occur in two ways, as “manifest” or “constitutive”. As he puts it: “in manifest intertextuality, other texts are explicitly present in the text under analysis; they are manifestly marked or cued by features on the surface of text, such as quotation marks. [...] The constitutive intertextuality of a text, however, is the configuration of discourse conventions that go into production” (1992: 104). This same point is further elaborated by Baynham & Slembouck (1999). See also Foucault (1972), on which Fairclough relies, and Lemke (1992, 1995).

3 The national research programme “Corpora and Discourse: A quantitative and qualitative linguistic analysis of political and media discourse on the conflict in Iraq in 2003 (CorDis)”, co-financed by the Italian Ministero dell’Università e della Ricerca, is being conducted by the University of Siena, the University of Bologna, the University of Bologna at Forlì, and the LUISS of Rome. The corpus will be made publicly available.

4 XML (Extensible Markup Language) is a programming language, or metalanguage, containing a set of rules for constructing other markup languages.
3. Methodological framework

My theoretical orientation is a functional one: it is grounded in SFL which sees language as a form of social practice (Halliday 1978, 1994; Halliday & Hasan 1985; Halliday & Matthiesen 2004). Working within this theoretical framework, the heteroglossic nature of discourse is explored through the investigation of projection, which has been often interpreted as an ideational resource. This contrasts with the perspective adopted here which posits projection as a powerful tool within the interpersonal system of the meaning-making potential of language. By referencing and explicitly quoting other sources, the authorial voice enters into a dialogic relationship of ‘alignment/disalignment’ with those words. Here I draw on the notion of Engagement within the framework of APPRAISAL (Martin 2000; Martin & Rose 2003; White 2002, 2003; Miller 2005; Martin & White 2005), which, broadly speaking, provides a network for mapping the linguistic resources of intersubjective stance with respect to the value positions being referenced by the text. This approach develops the very influential concept of heteroglossia and dialogism introduced by Bakhtin’s (1981, 1986) and Volonisov’s (1973) seminal works, whose basic assumption is that all forms of communication exist in a network of references which are seen as a response to previous statements, opinions and judgments and are available for further statements and opinions by others. Heteroglossia, therefore, implies the conception of texts not as homogenous entities but as retaining traces of many “voices”, or as Bakhtin puts it: “speech constitutes a special type of double-voiced discourse” (1981: 324).

Within APPRAISAL theory, Engagement includes basic options for both eliding and referencing dialogism: monogloss and heterogloss respectively. Heterogloss resources can be divided into two broad categories according to whether they act to dialogically contract (to challenge, reject) or expand positions (to entertain, acknowledge, open) in their intersubjective functionality. My main concern here is to investigate how MPs use these strategies to position themselves dialogistically with respect to the other members in the House. Among the factors which contribute to determine this positioning, as Martin & White (2005: 93) point out, are the degree to which the speaker endorses or disendorses the attributed material, or to put it another way, if responsibility is shared, unshared or neutral.

Attribution involves two more sub-categories: ‘acknowledge’ which includes those locutions where there is no explicit signal, at least via the reporting verbs or

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5 Fairclough (1995), for example, in his discussion of reported representation in media discourse suggests that what is represented is, to a great extent, the ideational meaning of the verb used. However, he admits that there are differences in this respect, depending on registers.

6 The system is quite complex and includes some of the resources which have been analysed in the literature under such headings as “modality”, “evidentiality”, “hedging/boosting”, “intensification” and, what I am concerned with in this paper, “attribution”. For a more detailed description of the system and the literature it references, see White (2002, 2003).
framer, of the authorial standpoint with respect to the propositions. This is the territory of verbs such as say, report, tell, state, declare, announce etc. However, as Martin & White again suggest, in identifying certain attribution as instances of ‘acknowledge’ what is attended to is basically the “semantics of the framing device” (2005: 112) or the reporting verbs. It may well be (as is our case) that there are other indicators in the text that the speaker supports or rejects the value position being advanced.

The second sub-category is ‘distance’. It involves formulations in which, via the framing choice, there is an explicit distancing of the authorial voice from the attributed material. This is most typically realized by means of verbs such as admit, allege, claim – which in our corpus occur in some instances of indirect quotations but they are not used at all in direct quotations. The point I wish to make is that, unlike more traditional perspectives, in the system of Engagement resources of ‘acknowledge’ (e.g. say) can also be used for distancing, as I shall try to demonstrate in the analysis.

4. Sources of attribution

Figure 1 illustrates a classification of the sources quoted in the corpus and their proportions. Official documents, reports and resolutions are the most frequent source (36%) directly quoted by MPs. The taxonomy, moreover, shows quite a high number of quotations from experts and authorities (16%) and from the media (newspaper, television, websites) (14%). Words from the Prime Minister's

![Figure 1. Taxonomy of sources in the corpus](image)

7 See, for example, Caldas-Coulthard (1994: 295) who observes that the use of claim detaches the author from responsibility for what is being reported.
extra-parliamentary speeches (4%), letters (including e-mails) and literary sources are also present in the record. However, I shall focus on the *Hansard* segment (23%), which represents quotations from the official verbatim transcriptions of the proceedings in the House of Commons. Quoting other Members’ words, as we have already noted above, is fairly frequent. But why is the record so often invoked by MPs?

5. Quoting the record as a rhetorical form of argumentation

There are several reasons which contribute to the high frequency of quotations from *Hansard*. To begin with, since *Hansard* is the official verbatim record of the proceedings, its wordings are set down in stone permanently and authoritatively. Quoting the record seems to be crucial to the (socio-political) context of parliamentary persuasion as it may provide authoritative evidence and strong justification for argumentation; it may, for example, be difficult to rebut and may create a strong bond between addresser and addressee.

Figure 2 shows whose words are most frequently directly quoted or attributed. As parliamentary discourse in the Commons is typically “adversarial” (Harris 2001; Bayley 2004b), it is not surprising that it is the Government, representing around 70% of all attribution, which is most frequently quoted.

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8 As opposed, for example, to the US Congress which can be bipartisan or the Italian parliament that can be or was consociational. For a comparison of parliaments in western democracies, from a linguistic and cross-cultural perspective, see Bayley 2004b.
The analysis shows that out of the Government portion, the Prime Minister represents 28% of instances and Other Members of Government (in this case – dealing with Iraq – the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary of State for Defence, the Secretary of State for International Development etc.) represent 43%. It could be that the high number of quotations attributed to the Prime Minister is a consequence of the kind of corpus we are investigating: the fact that we are dealing with issues related to foreign policy and, more specifically, the war on Iraq in 2003, which was authorized by a resolution presented by the Prime Minister himself, makes the PM’s assertions and statements a privileged target.

For the purpose of this study, I have distinguished quotations from the record according to two main criteria: quotations from others (86%) and self-quotations which, although on the whole less frequent (14%), play an important part in argumentation in this specific domain. Martin & White’s model does not take into consideration self-quotations as attribution, or “extra-vocalization” (White 2002). However, I would argue that in this context they should be included, because they are instances of self-intrusion of the official record through an external source.

5.1. Quoting the other

Within this first set, two main rhetorical strategies seem to be at work: firstly, attacking or criticizing the antagonist/opponent, and secondly, upholding allegiances, or praising. The examples below will be given as a sample of what is most typical in the corpus.

5.1.1. Quoting the other: attacking the opponent

Attacking through quotation is the most frequent strategy in our data (almost 80% of instances) and it may thus be seen as an outstanding property of parliamentary argumentation. British political culture, in fact, favours staunchness and consistency. MPs, especially members of Government, are liable to be attacked if they change their point of view or do not keep their promises; in other words, if they are shown to be inconsistent. Moreover, one of the main tasks of Government is to respond appropriately to problems and circumstances.

Attacking seems to focus on two most typical features, through which the speaker performs a criticism of the opponent(s): the first might be defined as “unsatisfactory answer” – which includes options of inaccuracy or inadequacy – and the second could be described as “inconsistency”. It is worth noting that each feature is typically projected through processes of saying, by which the MP seems not to take an overt and clear attitudinal stance or position as regards the projected content. However, a closer analysis of the linguistic resources employed by the speaker reveals quite a different picture:

(1) Gregory Barker (Con): [..] Last week, on 22 January, the Secretary of State simply stonewalled in response to a parliamentary question from my hon. Friend the
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Member for East Devon (Mr. Swire), who was seeking a statement on what specific assessment she had made of the humanitarian consequences of a war in Iraq. **She said:** “My Department is considering a wide range of contingencies, which take into account the current humanitarian situation in Iraq.” – [Official Report, 22 January 2003; Vol. 398, c. 307W.] That was a pathetic answer. With the drums of war beating ever louder and the prospects of a peaceful resolution of the Iraqi problem receding by the day, it would appear profoundly irresponsible and deeply reprehensible so woefully to ignore what the rest of the world can see so plainly (House of Commons 30.1.2003).

As noted, the quotation is framed by the neutral verbal process *said*; however, at the same time, the MP employs a wide range of attitudinal resources to attack the Minister forcefully and convey his point. For example, before the quotation the minister’s answer was negatively construed: the Minister “simply stonewalled”. After the quotation the answer was labelled “pathetic”, and in the clause complex which follows, introduced by the metaphor “the drums of war” which beat louder, the highly graded elements “profoundly irresponsible and deeply reprehensible” put a further negative slant on the Minister’s behaviour.

The following example shows a different feature expressing criticism: “inconsistency”. In example (2), by assembling a multiplicity of quotations, and attributing them to more than one government member – the PM and the Foreign Minister – the speaker attempts to add credibility to his own assertions. The effect is also heightened by two repetitions, firstly of time (“in 1999”, “three years ago” etc.) – which is crucial to this kind of argumentative rhetoric – and secondly of the question “When did he change his mind?”, which highlights the inconsistency of the PM and the Government alike:

(2) Mr. Michael Howard (Con): [...] In 1999, the then Foreign Secretary **told the House:** “For the record, we are not proposing a constitution of Europe.” – [Official Report, 25 May 1999; Vol. 332, c. 184.]

When did the Prime Minister change his mind about that? Three years ago, he said that there was “no proposal, no desire or decision for a separate European military planning capability”. Now, there will be. When did he change his mind? Three years ago, the Prime Minister told the House: “Our case is that” the charter of fundamental human rights “should not have legal status, and we do not intend it to. We will have to fight that case.” – [Official Report, 11 December 2000; Vol. 359, c. 354.] When did he change his mind about that? When did he stop fighting that case? (House of Commons 15.12.2003).

As I have already anticipated, the projecting verbal process *said* is by far the most frequent one, which, together with *told*, frames 70% of instances of direct quotations in the corpus, although it must be pointed out that *said* is one of the most frequent words in British parliamentary language as well as in general English. 9

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9 The word *said*, in our corpus, has a relative frequency of 0.018 per 100 tokens; the BNC data give us a relative frequency of 0.20 per 100 tokens.
Other processes of saying present in the corpus are: added, asserted, concluded, made the point, stated, which together amount to only 10% of all instances. Hence MPs tend to select, in APPRAISAL terms, non-endorsing or neutral projecting verbs. Although the analysis of indirect quotations is not the aim of this study, a cursory comparison with the verbs used to report indirect speech can provide insights into the kind of choices MPs make. A difference emerges: along with the verbs described above, there are also verbs, such as the tentative suggested, the typically ‘distancing’ verbs claimed and admitted, which are totally absent in the reporting of direct quotations.

One of the possible reasons which might be adduced to explain the absence of a typically ‘distancing’ verb such as claim is the fact that whereas claim seems to carry evaluation vis-à-vis the facts in the projecting clause, said can carry evaluation in the wider discourse context. In other words, I shall advance the hypothesis that said, in its apparent neutrality, seems to play a fundamentally meta-discursive function within this domain: politics being judged more on what is said, or words being uttered, than on action. Words can ultimately act as weapons, especially in a domain such as parliamentary discourse, and perhaps more broadly in political language, in which talk has a primary function and, more specifically, a meta-discursive function.

5.1.2. Quoting the other: upholding the ally

Through this second strategy, albeit much less frequent in our material, the MPs endorse or align with the source reported by enrolling some authoritative second party to their current rhetorical cause. The projecting verb said acts, therefore, to endorse the proposition advanced by the speaker and thereby minimize space for alternative points of view:

(3) Mr. Ernie Ross (Lab): As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary said in his statement yesterday, the coalition forces are now feeding 26 million people. He said: “Preliminary figures for June show that food rations were distributed to about 26 million Iraqis in a target population of 27 million. Food distribution is being extended to the Marsh Arabs, a people who I understand received no food at all under Saddam Hussein.” – [Official Report, 15 July 2003; Vol. 409, c. 153.]

The no-fly zones allowed people to survive, and we are now feeding those people. The Iraqi Kurds had been fighting among themselves, having been turned against each other by Saddam Hussein. Once they had resolved their issues, the northern no-fly zone allowed them to develop a society and infrastructure, one result of which was an improvement in the child mortality rate (House of Commons 16.7.2003).

Unlike the previous examples, by appropriating the Secretary of State’s words, the MP aligns himself with the Government’s position and sheds a positive light on its conduct, which seems to be composed of actions performed on behalf of the Iraqi people, e.g. “allowed people to survive”, “we are now feeding those people”,

“allowed them to develop”, “an improvement in the child mortality rate”. By framing the quotation with said, the speaker again alters the semantic neutrality of the verb in order to uphold a colleague. Said has, in this context, a contractive endorsing function.

Before moving on to the analysis of the following section, I shall very briefly consider the following example through which an MP, a Labour Backbencher, quotes the words of an ex-leader of the party, Michael Foot, in order to disalign with the Government’s position, by comparing it to a debate on the support of the American war in Vietnam:

(4) Llew Smith (Lab): [...] So concerned was my predecessor, Michael Foot, that he managed to obtain an urgent parliamentary debate on the issue, and I think that all hon. Members would benefit if they took the time to read his speech. It is worth quoting a few of the comments that Michael made that day. He warned: "The events . . . can have the gravest consequences for us all. In my opinion, it is sheer despair for people to say that nothing that we can do or say can have much influence on such distant occurrences, and that, therefore, we should keep our mouths shut, and possibly keep our eyes closed as well. I believe that we should debate these matters". [...] Michael also warned in that speech that the United States could create “a wilderness and desolation”, but it could never win a victory. He said that "the best friends of the Americans are those who join the growing host of brave Americans who themselves are telling the truth about this war." – [Official Report, 5 May 1970; Vol. 801, c. 208, 214] (House of Commons 22.1.2003).

Interestingly, by making a shift from the current situation to an analogous event in the past, the MP raises the possibility of a strong and credible (because it is grounded in history) opposition to the war. The words quoted from Mr. Foot are first framed by the reporting verb warned, which, albeit infrequent in our material, occurs in a number of instances in indirect quotations both as verbal and nominalized processes. The framer warned, in this case, allows the Labour speaker to interact dialogistically with the past leader’s positioning by acknowledging, or endorsing, his point of view; at the same time, however, the words serve to attack the Government and, in particular, the Prime Minister, by making the point that a (desirable) refusal to support America’s military aspirations will not necessarily make the British people anti-American, as seems to be implied by Blair’s standpoint.

5.2. Quoting oneself

On the basis of our material, within this second set, three features may be identified: firstly, defending oneself; secondly, stressing a point made previously; and thirdly, reiterating an eluded answer. Broadly speaking, “quoting oneself” has different implications from “quoting the other”. In general, this rhetorical strategy is
employed by MPs to present themselves as authoritative and reliable sources. What is more, they act to contract space for alternative points of views.

The following example illustrates how self-defence is a typical way of rebutting an accusation of being inconsistent:

(5) Mr. Campbell (LD): On 24 September 2002, I said: "It may well be true that, legally, no new Security Council resolutions are required for the resumption of inspections. It may well be true that, legally, no new resolution is required for the use of force to implement resolution 687. Indeed, the existence of that authority was the only possible legal foundation for the actions taken in December 1998. However, I have no doubt that, from a political and a diplomatic point of view, a new United Nations resolution is essential."-[Official Report, 24 September 2002; Vol. 390, c. 43-44]. If the right hon. Gentleman had listened to the analysis that I gave a moment or two ago, he would know that I said that any military action must be a last resort. United Nations Security Council resolutions are not the only fountain of international law and action taken must be proportionate. It did not seem to me that regime change was proportionate action (House of Commons 4.6.2003).

By resorting to the officiality of Hansard and announcing that he has a copy of the record at hand, Mr Campbell – the Liberal Democrat spokesman – interrupts Mr. Ancram, the Shadow Foreign Secretary and Shadow Secretary of State for International Development who, in his speech, had accused him of inconsistency. Mr. Ancram, in fact, recalls a previous debate which was held in the House on 22 September 2002, in which the Liberal Democrat had allegedly said that a resolution was not a legal requirement to take military action. In the example, Mr. Ancram’s allegation is taken up by Mr. Campbell, who, by resorting to Hansard itself, endeavours to demonstrate that his current position is consistent with that expressed in the House in 2002.

The following two examples show two more features typical of self-quotations: stressing a point made previously and reiterating an eluded answer, respectively. In example (6), the MP makes use of his own words uttered in the House some time in the past in order to illustrate how his analysis has been shown to be true and his argument(s) could, accordingly, be considered even more valuable in the present situation:

(6) Mr. Jonathan Sayeed (Con): Some 17 years ago, on 6 June 1985, I warned the House of the dangers of Iraq and similar states. I said that “if nuclear war ever broke out it would be initiated not by the superpowers but by a nation without any sense of responsibility, where power is concentrated in the hands of the evil, the insane, or the bigoted dictator”-[Official Report, 6 June 1985; Vol. 80, c. 537].

There are various means, both linguistic and paralinguistic, through which the MPs in the House of Commons may interrupt and attempt to enter the debate. I have investigated this phenomenon, from a comparative perspective, in Bevitori 2004.
I mention that not as a matter of self-appreciation, but because when I argue that although a war against Iraq may become a necessary continuation of political means but that [sic] I am not convinced that it has yet been proved necessary, I do so in the clear appreciation that Saddam Hussein constitutes a malevolent threat that cannot be ignored (House of Commons 22.6.2003).

Example (7) illustrates a slightly different feature, which is rhetorically similar to quoting an “unsatisfactory answer” as explained above. Here the speaker quotes himself in order to attack the Government for evading the question of what turned out to be the most fundamental issue in justifying the UK’s support for the war in Iraq: the threat of weapons of mass destruction:

(7) Mr. Jonathan Sayeed (Con): […] I asked the Prime Minister on 12 February “what new threat, proven threat or imminent threat is there to justify war?”- [Official Report, 12 February 2003; Vol. 399, c. 860.] The question remains unanswered (House of Commons 18.3.2003).

Clearly, the quotation is a (reiterated) question, framed by the reporting verb asked, which rhetorically functions as a statement through which the MP advances his own opinion or judgement; moreover, it is through the speaker’s voice that the actual (in the House) or potential (everyone who has access to Hansard) audience are encouraged to align with the speaker’s voice and values. By quoting himself, the MP emphasizes the fact that one key issue on which the Government is called to provide an answer is, according to the MP, still left without a proper response, and by so doing he acts to endow his own position with a more ethical and credible dimension.

6. Concluding remarks

The aim of this paper was to investigate the phenomenon of attribution in one institutional domain: parliamentary discourse in the British House of Commons. In particular, I have focused on the use of quotations as a crucial rhetorical device in the interpersonal system of meaning-making potential of language; introducing another voice, in fact, proves to have a specific rhetorical purpose in the reporting context. What clearly emerges from the analysis is that quotations are rhetorical strategies which employ distinct meta-discursive features; this is done through the selection of apparently ‘neutral’, non-endorsing verbal structures by MPs. However, the apparent neutrality of the framers seems to be overturned by various attitudinal assessments of the attributed material, which run through the (often complex) argumentative thread of discourse. This aspect has been brought about by the dynamic interaction of discourse analysis, which typically involves qualitative research methodologies and corpus-based techniques, which are typically quantitative and statistically-based. And I believe that it is from the very interaction of these two procedures that we can gain a deeper insight into the rhetorical functionality of discursive features, such as attribution, in specialized discourse.
References


20 – Attribution as evaluation

Abstract

The language of sport in general and Football English in particular is still a rather neglected field of study within ESP. This paper deals with 'rhetorical' language in Football English by focusing on metaphors used in football match reports. We use a corpus made up of reports extracted from *The Times* over the second half of the 20th century and (a) analyse the most common metaphors employed in football match reports and (b) study whether changes in the rhetorical structure of football match reports occurred over the period in question. We show that two major metaphor types (or models) stand out: FOOTBALL IS FIGHTING and FOOTBALL IS ART. We observe that the former is by far the most frequently instantiated and can be related to the cognitively basic model known as the “billiard-ball model” (see Langacker 1991). These two types interact with other types (e.g. the reification model) thus producing a complex ontological network for the conceptualization of football matches. That is, specific metaphors may rely on the activation of various metaphor types, which testifies to the complexity and richness of Football English. Further, we show that reporters resort to an apparently unchanging stock of metaphors over the period in question.

1. Introduction

Little research has been done on the language of sport in general and on the language of football in particular. In the latter case, exceptions include Sabatier (1997) and Broccias (2001). Sabatier’s (1997) study is a lexical-semantic one in that it aims to list

* We would like to thank the editors and two anonymous reviewers for their comments and suggestions. All remaining errors are our own, of course.
the most frequently used collocations in French football match reports. By contrast, Broccias’s (2001) analysis focuses on the grammar of Football English (defined as the variety of English employed in football match reports). The present paper intends to explore another dimension, that of metaphorical language in Football English. Our aim is to provide a first characterization of the major metaphor types commonly used in written match reports. Our discussion is based on Canepa (2005), who investigates metaphorical language in a national quality newspaper, *The Times*, and in a regional newspaper, *The Western Mail*, a Welsh newspaper published in Cardiff. For our present purposes, we have relied exclusively on the former. Our corpus is made up of 51 articles (usually) reporting on World Cup matches played by England from 1949 to 2002 (i.e. covering the whole of the second half of the 20th century). When England failed to qualify for the World Cup finals, i.e. the final stage of the World Cup tournament, in 1974, 1978 and 1994, we used reports of friendlies played at roughly the same time as the relevant World Cup finals and/or matches played in the relevant World Cup preliminaries, i.e. the qualifying stages of the World Cup finals. A similar strategy was adopted when England were knocked out relatively early on in the World Cup finals (e.g. in 1950). We thus obtained about 12 articles every ten years (with the exception of the last time bracket, which is five years long, from 1997 to 2002, and includes 4 articles).

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 briefly reviews the two main approaches to metaphorical language, i.e. the Lakovian approach and the blending approach. Further, it argues that the latter is to be preferred in the analysis of Football English. Finally, it points out that metaphors can have different levels of activation in the language user’s mind, i.e. some of them are hardly perceived synchronically as instances of figurative language. Section 3 explores the main metaphor types used in Football English, in particular those involving the fighting model and the exhibition model. It also stresses that other metaphors and cognitive processes, like reification, can be linked to them. Section 4 draws the main conclusions and shows that the use of metaphorical language seems to have largely remained constant over the second half of the last century. It also points to some topics for future investigations.

2.1. *Blending and rhetoric*

Over the last twenty years, metaphor and metonymy research has been a major concern of non-formal linguistics (see e.g. Taylor 2002: part 6 for a useful overview). It is generally agreed that metaphor, in particular, is not confined to rhetoric but is es-

1 The dates of the 51 articles are as follows (day/month/year): 17.10.49, 3.7.50, 16.11.50, 10.5.51, 18.6.54, 21.6.54, 28.6.54, 11.11.54, 9.6.58, 12.6.58, 18.6.58, 1.6.62, 8.6.62, 11.6.62, 22.11.62, 12.7.66, 21.7.66, 25.7.66, 27.7.66, 15.1.70, 3.6.70, 8.6.70, 15.6.70, 24.5.72, 12.10.72, 25.1.73, 16.5.73, 13.5.74, 10.2.77, 1.6.77, 10.6.77, 13.6.77, 17.6.82, 21.8.82, 30.6.82, 6.7.82, 5.6.86, 9.6.86, 19.6.86, 23.6.86, 12.6.90, 18.6.90, 27.6.90, 10.6.96, 16.6.96, 19.6.96, 27.6.96, 3.6.2002, 8.6.2002, 13.6.2002, 22.6.2002.
sential to human life (see Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 1999). Within the Lakovian approach, for example, it is claimed that we think and make sense of the world by constantly engaging in mapping two domains onto each other. For example, we can map the source domain 'travelling' onto the target domain 'rational thought' so that travellers correspond to thinkers (A THINKER IS A TRAVELLER), departure points to premises (A PREMISE IS A STARTING POINT), arrival points to conclusions (A CONCLUSION IS A DESTINATION) and motion to reasoning (A LINE OF THOUGHT IS A PATH). Fauconnier and Turner (see especially Fauconnier & Turner 2002) have elaborated a more comprehensive mapping model between inputs (i.e., roughly, Lakovian domains) which is not necessarily limited to metaphor. They contend that the operation of “conceptual blending” is ubiquitous in human life, from mathematics to everyday speech. As a matter of illustration of how metaphorical expressions are treated within the blending model, consider the (conventionalized) metaphor A MARRIAGE IS A PRISON, as instantiated by (1) (see Taylor 2002: 530-533):

(1) She's imprisoned in her marriage.

Alongside the two input spaces 'prison' (input 1) and 'marriage' (input 2), blending theory contends that a generic space and a blend are activated. The generic space specifies what is common between the input spaces (e.g. 'unpleasant situation'). The blend merges the two input spaces into a single space by selecting specific elements from both inputs and thus creates a new space which cannot be identified with either input 1 or input 2. For example, the woman could escape from her marriage (in the same way as one escapes from prison) but, if she did so, she would not incur the same consequences as a prison escapee.

2.2. A football illustration: The Welsh dragon

We believe that for our present purposes blending theory is a more satisfying approach to the description of metaphors employed in football match reports. Blending theory stresses the fact that more than two domains can be merged and that this operation results in the emergence of a domain (the blend) where fusion rather than substitution of elements occurs. Consider the following example:

(2) [...] the powerful Charles kept the tail of the Welsh dragon lashing furiously with a second thundering shot that left Wood helpless (11.11.54).

(2) activates numerous mapping operations between various input domains. The Welsh dragon would traditionally be regarded as an example of metonymy (the dragon, which appears on the Welsh flag, is used to refer to the Welsh team). But this is clearly not enough since the use of the phrase the Welsh dragon is conducive to the activation of a more complex network of interpretations. The Welsh dragon can be analysed as resulting from the blending of Charles’s team (Wales), input 2, with the mythical animal "dragon", input 1, because both are related to Wales (generic space).
Importantly, within Fauconnier & Turner’s approach, we do not need to decide whether to call such a blending operation a metonymy or a metaphor. The crucial point here is that a blended space is created where the Welsh team inherits properties associated with dragons, for example the fact that dragons (are believed to) lash their tails. Since input 2 involves a football match, we interpret the dragon’s lashing its tail as a sign of determination (see also the adjective powerful earlier on in the sentence) rather than, say, desperate resistance or irritation, as would be the case with animals like cats, for example. Further, we may interpret the tail of the dragon as referring more specifically to a subpart of the Welsh team, namely its (centre) forwards. We thus obtain the interpretation that the Welsh team are continuing to attack. Also, observe that Charles is at the same time, paradoxically, both ‘internal’ and ‘external’ to the dragon. As a member of the Welsh team, he is the dragon lashing furiously but, at the same time, he is the person capable of directing its actions, as evidenced by the use of the verb keep. This is so because both input 1 and input 2, the dragon and the Welsh team respectively, are blended with another input, which we can identify with ‘physical objects’, by virtue of the fact that both teams and dragons, like objects, are, to some extent, controllable (or manipulable) entities. Crucially, the type of control Charles can exercise upon the Welsh dragon is implemented not by physical manipulation (as would be the case when riding a horse, for example) but by shooting the ball, i.e. performing a football-related action. In other words, the instrumental prepositional phrase (PP) with a second thundering shot refers back to the football input, rather than the dragon input. Finally, notice that the PP itself relies on a metaphorical mapping: the shot is described as thunderous, i.e. football actions are blended with atmospheric phenomena thanks to their (possibly) above-the-norm intensity.

In conclusion, (2) shows how complex blending operations can be found even within a single example. Although in the rest of our discussion we will focus on specific metaphorical mappings, it should not be forgotten that metaphorical expressions often involve the simultaneous activation of mappings belonging to different input domains.

2.3. “Dead” (or almost so) metaphors

We can also use example (2) to make another important point about the level of activation of metaphorical expressions. Croft & Cruse (2004: 205-206) point out that the hearer is often faced with expressions which may have lost their metaphorical nature (at least to some degree). Whereas in a sentence like They had to prune the workforce, prune is interpreted metaphorically by most speakers in that it strongly evokes the domain of arboriculture, this is probably not so in There is a flourishing black market in software there. Historically, flourish derives from the Old French arboricultural verb florir but the use of flourish in connection with businesses has become so conventional that the average language user fails to make the metaphorical connection at all. In Football English, a similar situation probably obtains with the noun shot (see (2)), and the related verb shoot. Although the verb originated from the sense
of “to make a bullet or arrow come from a weapon” (LDCE), it is interesting to observe that dictionaries include for this verb the meaning “to kick or throw a ball in a sport such as football or basketball towards the place where you can get a point” (LDCE). This can be taken as evidence that the metaphorical link has undergone ‘bleaching’. Consequently, in a sentence like (3):

(3) In the feet of men like Pelé, Jairzinho and Rivelino, shooting from long range, there is packed dynamite (8.6.70)

the metaphorical mapping is probably only activated when readers come across packed dynamite at the end of the sentence rather than when they process shooting (but see also the discussion of (14) below).

Other lexemes which may have undergone bleaching include attack, beat, defeat and defend (together with their derivatives). They all originally involved the metaphor FOOTBALL IS FIGHTING (see next section) but are now clearly part and parcel of any football match report. Once again, note that dictionaries may include sport-related meanings for such cases. For example, attack is glossed as “an attempt by a player or group of players to score goals or win points” in the LDCE.

Although Croft & Cruse would claim that such expressions do not activate metaphorical mappings, Lakoff would contend that they reveal the pervasiveness or entrenchment of the FOOTBALL IS FIGHTING metaphor, a view which might seem to contradict the former position. How can this be the case? In order to solve this paradox, it may be useful to consider an apparently unrelated phenomenon, that of plural formation. Cognitive linguistics (see for example Taylor 2002: 298-309) claims that frequently occurring plural lexemes like cats, dogs, etc. – which are analysed as being derived from the corresponding singular nouns by way of -s suffixation in traditional analyses – are actually stored as units in the language user’s mind. No constructive effort is required when we want to refer to more than one cat or dog. Still, the fact that the majority of plural nouns have a final -s in English strengthens the plural schema NOUN-s, which captures the commonality among them. In other words, tokens (i.e. specific instantiations of the plural schema) may be stored as units (which are therefore analysable into smaller chunks only a posteriori) but the overall plural NOUN-s schema, i.e. the type, is deeply entrenched and thus very productive. Similarly, in the case of metaphor, the token shoot is possibly accessed as a non-metaphorical expression. Nevertheless, it may have contributed to the productivity and entrenchment of the FOOTBALL IS FIGHTING metaphor (i.e. the type).^2

To sum up, the discussion so far has revealed the complexity underlying the use of blending operations in football match reports. Although the importance of

\(^2\) As is argued below, it should be noticed that the pervasiveness of the FOOTBALL IS FIGHTING metaphor is also due its being linked to a basic cognitive model, i.e. the “billiard-ball model” (see section 3.1. on this notion). The high frequency of specific lexical items is therefore only one factor contributing to the entrenchment of a given metaphor type.
metaphor and blending as conceptual operations, i.e. as operations that are constitutive to our way of thinking, cannot be denied (see also below), it is apparent that cases like (2) and (3) above are clearly used for rhetorical purposes, i.e. to get the reader interested in the description of a match by using figuratively charged language. In what follows we focus on some general football metaphor types.

3. Input spaces

3.1. The body, the mind and the arts

It lies outside the scope of this paper to provide a very detailed list of metaphor types found in football match reports. Rather, we aim to discuss some of the more common types as they emerge from the texts considered for this paper. Further, since the exact formulation of metaphorical mappings is often a bone of contention (see for example Clausner & Croft 1997), we prefer to identify input 1 (the “source domain”) rather succinctly by referring to nouns (possibly deverbal nouns) which activate certain models of reality (‘idealized cognitive models’ in cognitive linguistics parlance). For example, football events are sometimes described by way of the ‘sea model’ as a source domain:

(4) a. Banks, who kept the English ship just afloat (12.6.58)  
   b. A solid wave of attacks (12.10.72)

Teams can be metaphorical ships which players struggle to prevent from sinking, as in (4a), and offensive actions on the pitch can be equated with waves, as in (4b) – incidentally, note that solid activates another metaphor, namely WAVES ARE BUILDINGS. The exact details of what instantiations the FOOTBALL IS LIFE AT SEA (or similar formulations) metaphor has is, in our view, of secondary importance with respect to the elucidation of the motivation behind the use of such metaphors (i.e. the activation of specific idealized models and their relation to how we conceptualize the world surrounding us). Strictly speaking, therefore, we are not offering a description of metaphorical mappings but rather a ‘schematic’ description of possible types of blending that involve the football domain (input 2) and some other domain (input 1), like the ‘sea domain’ (or ‘sea model’).

Our data show that the most frequently used source domain is, perhaps rather unsurprisingly, the ‘fighting model’, followed by the ‘exhibition model’ (see next section for some quantitative data). Illustrative examples are offered below:

The fighting model

(5) But they departed [...] with all their guns firing (28.6.54)  
(6) Wales might count themselves unlucky not to have gained a material share of the spoil (11.11.54)  
(7) They surrendered (9.6.58)  
(8) They will win the war in the end (12.7.66)  
(9) In the fevered game of football, they are the No. 1 target for destruction (3.6.70)
Their precarious survival was achieved (10.6.77)
Fighting for the ball Evans moved his pass on (25.1.73)
Wilkins’s blistering volley cannoned off Seaman’s body (21.6.82)
The speed of Lineker and Beardsley would be a far more dangerous weapon (9.6.86)
Instead of attacking the apparent weakness of the Irish full backs, the wingers were forced on the retreat to assist a defence which was almost constantly under siege (12.6.90)
England finally did aim correctly (13.6.2002)

These examples indicate that a football match can be conceptualized as an instance of fighting where, for example, firearms are used, losing is surrendering and not losing is just a matter of survival. Of course, the degree of activation of the metaphorical mappings under discussion may be a matter of degree. In other words, it may be the case that defence in (14) may be felt to be more metaphorical than in other cases since fighting-specific phrases occur both before and after it, i.e. retreat and under siege. Be that as it may, it is clear that the fighting model is very well entrenched in Football English.

It is important to observe at this juncture that Langacker (1991) has stressed the importance of the so-called billiard-ball model for the structuring of human experience. He introduces the billiard-ball model as follows:

We think of our world as being populated by discrete physical objects. These objects are capable of moving about through space and making contact with one another. Motion is driven by energy, which some objects draw from internal resources and others receive from the exterior. When motion results in forceful physical contact, energy is transmitted from the mover to the impacted object, which may thereby be set in motion to participate in further interactions.

Let us refer to this way of thinking about the world as the billiard-ball model (Langacker 1991: 13).

The fact that many metaphors in Football English involve the fighting domain can therefore be related to the primacy of the billiard-ball model in our minds. Fighting obviously involves the transmission of energy and further structures the events unfolding on the pitch in an easy-to-grasp way. The fighting model contains well-defined elements (arms, armies, enemies, sieges, etc.) and also conjures up the world of epic poems. As in epic poems, players are often referred to as heroes, and actions on the pitch may be due to supernatural forces, like fate, rather than the actual players (observe that fate itself undergoes metaphorical construal in (17) since it is personified, as the use of the motion verb stalk indicates):

Those three truly were Ireland’s heroes (24.5.72)
Fate all the time was stalking [...] with a hatchet (18.6.58).

Not only does football involve fighting, but football can also be a stage (which is quite natural since football matches unfold before our eyes in the same way as
plays or films). Players can show their performing talents as artists, jugglers, magicians, and poets, for example. Accordingly, events on the pitch can be construed as exhibitions possibly based on a script:

(18) Dumitrache [...] became intoxicated with his own artistry (3.6.70)
(19) The juggler and accuracy [...] is done at a slow tempo (28.6.54)
(20) Matthews was the entertainer supreme [...] the magician (18.6.54)
(21) Broadbent with a poetry in every syllable of his jinking dash (18.6.58)
(22) Eusebio, a dark blur, accelerating with all his lyrical, lithe movement (27.7.66)
(23) Towards the end of this exhibition England were offered a bigger part (10.2.77)
(24) Yesterday afternoon’s script, for once, followed a more usual course (19.6.86).

We refer to the model instantiated by the examples above, which is blended with the football input, as the ‘exhibition model’. Both the fighting model and the exhibition model point to the extraordinary qualities players should possess in order to survive and impress. Consequently, players, like all human beings, can do so by using their extraordinary wit and ingenuity:

(25) England did not have the wit to spare themselves from defeat (22.6.2002)
(26) The genius was England (16.11.50).

We therefore conclude that very basic models are employed in Football English reports. Playing football is fighting (i.e. the domain of the body), using one’s skills and intelligence (i.e. the domain of the mind) and performing (i.e. the domain of the arts or aesthetics, which relates the performers on the pitch to the spectators off the pitch).

3.2. Reification

The billiard-ball model does not simply account for the pervasiveness of fighting metaphors but also probably motivates the frequent use of reification in Football English. The fact that we conceptualize reality in terms of energetic interactions also means that we tend to conceptualize the entities involved in such energetic exchanges as physical objects. Indeed, teams (or parts of them, like defences) are sometimes described as buildings (which can be smashed, for example) or any other relatively solid structure (which can be penetrated/affected in some negative way. Incidentally, observe that example (35) also activates the fighting model since it names a war implement, i.e. shield):

(27) The English defence sagged (10.5.51)
(28) The Uruguayan defence began to shudder (28.6.54)
(29) Broadbent [...] split the defence (18.6.58)
(30) Allowing a tight England defence to seal itself and screw in any bolts that might have been loosened by the clever approach play of Graca, Coluna, Augusto and Simoes (27.7.66)
(31) England’s wall was about to collapse (8.6.70)
(32) They probed England’s defence (10.6.77)
(33) To avoid the central strength England merely tried the side doors (21.6.82)
(34) Martin, whose selection had prompted fears about the solidity of the centre of
England’s defence (19.6.86)
(35) Those who formed a secure protective shield in front of him (18.6.90)

Further, matches (or subparts of them, like goals) can be reified into objects which
tams can own, lose and come to possess:

(36) The match could have slipped from our hands (12.6.58)
(37) The second half belonged to England (12.6.58)
(38) Russia snatched the match (18.6.58)
(39) There was Müller to grab his ace goal (15.6.70)

It is also worth pointing out that these examples show that metaphorical motion
(or lack of it, as in (37)) is another important feature in the conceptualization of
football matches. More specifically, football actions are often equated with ‘fluid
motion’, i.e. a kind of motion comparable to that of (liquid or air) streams, which
is conceptualized as being (relatively) unimpeded:

(40) The ball was kept flowing (16.11.50)
(41) Wilson and Cohen [...] streamed down the wings (12.7.66)
(42) The Dutch poured out 16 consecutive passes (10.2.77)
(43) Whenever he was on the run [...] gliding smoothly into position (23.6.86)

Observe that visual perception is not only involved in the categorization of cer-
tain actions as being fluid but is also responsible for the equation between increas-
es/decreases in ‘luminosity’ and the quality of the game unfolding on the pitch:

(44) He faded almost to become anonymous (22.11.62)
(45) He could lead England out of their three hours of darkness (9.6.86)
(46) Jones [...] provided new flashes of hope (15.1.70)

Ultimately, the richness in metaphor types observable in Football English reports
involves the identity established between life and football so that all aspects of life
can be employed as source domains. For example, source domains can be ‘food’,
‘non-human living creatures’ (e.g. plants and animals), ‘machines’, ‘money’ and
even other sports:

source domain = food
(47) Dzajic, who for most of the night roasted Mills beating him inside and outside
(12.10.72)

source domain = plants/trees
(48) The England rose was beginning to flower (17.10.49)
(49) Keegan’s supporting industry withered away (10.6.77)
(50) Chaloupka was eventually booked for the ugly felling of Francis (21.6.82)
source domain = animals
(51) Yashin [...] with his octopus reach (9.6.58)
(52) Apart from the tireless bristling terrier efforts of Mahoney and Hockey (16.5.73)

source domain = machines
(53) Yugoslavia recharged their batteries (12.10.72)
(54) Having run out of gas against the Swiss [...] England [...] were pacing themselves in an undistinguished first half (16.6.96)

source domain = money
(55) These Brazilians are a currency that no foreign exchange can control (8.6.70)

source domain = other sports (e.g. chess, boxing)
(56) It was a fine move that broke the ragged stalemate (13.5.74)
(57) Up came Charlton again pressing for the decisive blow (12.7.66)

4. Conclusion

We have shown that recurrent metaphors used to report on football matches rest on the activation of basic cognitive models like the billiard-ball model. This model explains the pervasiveness of reification and the description of football actions as involving forces being exerted onto objects. The billiard-ball model is activated by the fighting model, which is the most commonly used input space in football-related metaphors. Indeed, the fighting model can be taken as an instantiation of the billiard-ball model and can be linked to an epic construal of the world we live in. Further, the fighting model is the realm of the body and is obviously connected to the mind and the arts: fighting, and hence winning, requires skills and talent, wit and ingenuity. At the same time, fighting is also a spectacle, which should entertain the audience. We have also pointed out that perception not only involves the apprehension of artistic ‘brilliance’ but also ‘visual’ brilliance: playing badly is being invisible/in the dark and, conversely, playing well is being in the light, see (44)–(46). In fact, vision is also involved in the conceptualization of football actions as fluids, since they are described as such when they are perceived as being unimpeded, like a free-flowing stream.

We would like to conclude our paper by mentioning two areas of research that deserve further attention in future investigations. One involves the study of whether changes in the use of metaphors can be observed over time. We tried to establish if this is the case in the texts considered here by concentrating on the two more frequent metaphor types, i.e. fighting and exhibition metaphors. In the former case, we excluded words like defence, attack, tactic and flank since, although metaphorical in origin, they are the obvious choices to be used to refer to the concepts they evoke (i.e. they are unmarked options). In the latter case, we excluded performance, because this noun can simply refer to “how well or badly a person, company etc. does a particular job or activity” (LDCE), without necessarily activating the exhibition model. The results are summarized in Table 1.
### Table 1. Fighting and exhibition metaphors in *The Times*

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Table 1 offers a breakdown of the 51 texts into (roughly) 10-year-brackets (with the exception of the last two so as not to have only 2002 texts in the last bracket). This is shown, in a hopefully self-explanatory fashion, in the subtotal rows. If we assume that the figures per 10,000 words can also be taken as statistically valid in the last two time brackets, then a statistical measure of independence like the chi-square test can be conducted (since frequencies per 10,000 words are greater than 5). We thus obtain that the decrease in the use of the two metaphor types under investigation which can be observed in Table 1 is in both cases highly significant ($\chi^2=23.96$, $p<0.01$ for war metaphors and $\chi^2=17.60$, $p<0.01$ for exhibition metaphors). This may be evidence of the fact that football reports have perhaps become more factual in the last few decades.

The second issue we would like to postpone to future research involves whether different cultures (e.g. Italy vs. Britain) handle football metaphors differently. We conducted a preliminary analysis using three dailies, two qualities (La Repubblica and the Corriere della Sera) and a sports newspaper, Gazzetta dello Sport. We collected 30 articles for a total of 15,020 words. We counted 46 war metaphors and 22 ex-

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3 Observe that the word total in both cases is less than 10,000 contrary to what is the case for the other time brackets. The figures per 10,000 words provided for the last two brackets are therefore based on the assumption that the ratio of metaphors to words in a text does not change as the number of words increases. This has also been assumed in the analysis of the Italian data below.

4 The details of the selected articles are as follows (date, newspaper, match; C=Corriere della Sera, G=Gazzetta dello Sport, R=La Repubblica): 30.10.05, R, Milan-Juventus; 30.10.05, R, Sampdoria-Inter Milan; 31.10.05, R, Roma-Ascoli; 31.10.05, R, Fiorentina-Cagliari; 31.10.05, C, Fiorentina-

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hibitation metaphors; in other words, the frequency of the former is 3.1 per 1,000 words (i.e. 31 per 10,000 words) and the frequency for the latter is 1.5 per 1,000 words (i.e. 15 per 10,000 words). Although these data seem to point to a greater use of both metaphor types in Italian texts compared to English ones (especially if we take the last time bracket in Table 1 for comparison), the difference (with the last time bracket in Table 1) is not significant (p>0.05 in both cases). Hence, we may speak of a tendency in Italian texts to use figurative language more frequently but its actual statistical relevance should be studied more carefully using larger corpora.

To be sure, these observations on diachrony and cross-cultural variation demonstrate that much remains to be done in the field of metaphor as applied to Football (English). Not only, for example, should studies be carried out as to whether differences in the use of metaphor types obtain across different cultures, but also as to whether, even within a given culture, variation obtains across different modes (e.g. written reports vs. spoken commentaries). All these are, of course, topics for future research.

References

The present study sets out to investigate the effects that different modes of audiovisual translation might have on the way the same audiovisual text is perceived by viewers. In order to do this, the author analysed the dubbed and subtitled versions of one episode of the American TV series *Six Feet Under*, which depicts the lives of a family of undertakers with a peculiar mixture of dramatic elements, black humour, and surreal events. This study hypothesizes that, partly due to the different audiences targeted by the two versions, the dubbed version of the same episode results in a different product, with noticeably reduced use of swearwords and efficacy of the humorous elements, which are however present in the subtitled version. It is hypothesized that these differences between the dubbed and the subtitled versions are reflected in the way viewers perceive the show according to which version they watch. In order to support this hypothesis, excerpts from a dubbed episode of *Six Feet Under* were shown to a sample of Italian viewers, while a second sample watched the subtitled versions of the same excerpts. Viewers from both samples were then asked to fill out a purpose-built questionnaire aimed at assessing their appreciation of the scenes they watched. The study helped collect empirical evidence on the possible differences perceived in the two versions, with particular attention to cases in which these differences seem to be brought about by translational choices.

1. Introduction

TV programmes and films have accustomed the public to strong visual impact scenes, in which violence, death, and mutilation seem to have become a relatively common sight. In addition, a recent trend in several TV shows seems to be that of
not only subjecting viewers to death, mutilation, etc. but also of doing so in a relatively lighthearted, if not humorous, way, treating them as nothing more than a part of life. This, in particular, is the approach adopted by the American TV series \textit{Six Feet Under}, in which further cultural and linguistic issues might then emerge if we consider that many viewers outside the USA have to rely on some form of translation to enjoy this subtle humour to the full. This is, for example, the case with Italian viewers, who rely on dubbing or subtitles to come to terms with a subject matter that is already quite unfamiliar to them, something that perhaps they find blasphemous or ‘sick’.

Given the relatively recent showing in Italy of such an original TV series as \textit{Six Feet Under} (SFU from now on), a mixture of dramatic elements, black humour, and surreal circumstances, the issue arises of how this unusual product might be perceived in a country like Italy where, mainly due to cultural and religious reasons, death is generally considered a taboo in the best of cases. In this scenario, one of the issues which seems worth investigating is the effect that the nonchalant way in which death and death-related matters are sometimes dealt with in the series might have on viewers, especially in terms of the most disturbing, potentially shocking scenes. Also, in more general terms, one might wonder if audiences find it appropriate to mix such a serious topic with the secondary, but ever present, element of humour which pervades the episodes.

Furthermore, the two versions of SFU available in Italian (dubbed and subtitled) are significantly different in terms of their rendering of the general tone of the series and of specific humorous elements within single scenes. In particular, in some cases, the choice between translating a humorous comment in a certain way or not translating it at all results in a diminished humorous effect. In other words, it is legitimate to wonder whether the Italian viewers who choose to watch the dubbed version of SFU are actually presented with a different audiovisual text from those who choose the subtitled version available on DVD. Therefore, another point worth investigating is the likelihood that the discrepancies between the two versions are reflected in the viewers’ appreciation of the series as a whole.

On the basis of these observations, the aim of this study is twofold. On the one hand, it is meant to analyse the perception of the very peculiar kind of black/surreal humour present in the series and to measure Italian audiences’ appreciation of specific scenes within one episode. On the other hand, audience perception will also be tested by comparing whether and how the dubbed and subtitled versions manage to convey the humorous elements in the same scenes successfully.

As far as the first point is concerned, the hypothesis is that, due to the unfamiliarity with the subject matter, the series will generally produce low levels of appreciation in the audience. The second hypothesis is that the differences in the translation of specific scenes within one episode of the series would be reflected in the way audience samples perceive the show. More precisely, the expectation is that the more successful the rendering of the scene in Italian, the higher the levels of appreciation of the scene will be as far as amusement goes.
In order to investigate these issues, a small-scale survey was devised in which two samples of Italian viewers were asked to watch either the dubbed or the subtitled version of 10 clips from the pilot episode of SFU and, subsequently, to fill out a purpose-built questionnaire in which they were asked to express their opinion on the single scenes.

Thus, after a brief review of the literature, we will move on to describe the series that is the object of the study, the details of the methodology employed in the collection of data, and, finally, the results of the empirical study.

1.1. Audiovisual translation, humour, black humour

The study of audiovisual translation (AVT), namely, the processes involved when an audiovisual text is translated interlingually from L1 into L2 or intralingually for the hard of hearing has started to attract the attention of the academia only relatively recently. Partly as a consequence of the ongoing changes in the ways audiovisual texts are now enjoyed by audiences, the need has arisen for scientific studies investigating not only how the translation of these texts is carried out, but also how the product is perceived by end users, i.e. viewers. In a situation in which Italian terrestrial channels alone broadcast roughly 560 hours of dubbed programmes per week\(^1\) and in which other types of AVT in the form of subtitles, voice over, live interpreting, etc. are also readily available, it seems reasonable to suggest that issues such as viewers’ appreciation of what they are exposed to on a daily basis be taken into consideration.

Although the need for studies on the perception of audiovisual texts has been recently stressed, among others by Gambier (2003), research in the field remains scant (Karamitroglou 2000; Fuentes Luque 2001; Antonini et al. 2003; Antonini & Chiaro 2004; Chiaro 2004). Most of these studies concentrate on the perception of humour but much still remains to be explored. In particular, to the best of my knowledge, not much has been published in the field of humour perception on the specific subject of black humour\(^2\), particularly as far as audiovisual texts are concerned.

Indeed, if compared to other cultures, black humour does not seem to be a very widespread genre in Italy. It is probably not a coincidence that the only black comedies shown on Italian screens are either British or American, or that Roald Dahl and his books, both for children and adults, are still relatively unknown in this country. One has the impression that in Italy there is a different sensibility, one in which laughing about death or sickness, for example, is not particularly

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\(^1\) These figures are rough calculations based on information from the weekly *Film TV* and refer to the three state-owned channels *Radio Televisione Italiana* (*RAI*), the three privately-owned Mediaset channels *RETE 4, CANALE 5* and *ITALIA 1*, and *LA7*. Needless to say, this figure increases significantly if all the satellite channels are also brought into the calculation.

\(^2\) For an introduction to the subject of black humour in literature see, among others, Breton (1940); Schulz (1978); Pratt (1993); Brugnolo (1994).
appreciated. The hypothesis is that these topics might be perceived as blasphemous and sick, and might therefore be carefully avoided.

Given such observations, the question arises of whether or not such a TV series as SFU can be successful, or even remotely appreciated, in a country where this genre is almost non-existent. In addition, the situation might be further complicated in the event that the linguistic rendering of humour in the Italian version of the series is, for whatever reason, not always as successful as in the source text.

1.2. Six Feet Under

A much appreciated TV series by both audience and critics in the USA, SFU was first broadcast in June 2001 on the cable channel HBO. The series, which offers a delicate and quite unusual balance between drama and comedy, tells the story of the Fishers, a family of undertakers who run a funeral home and who, in the pilot episode, are dealing with the loss of the head of the family and business, Nathaniel. The series, of which the fifth and apparently last season, was shown in the USA in the summer of 2005, portrays the way Nathaniel’s wife, Ruth, and their children Nate, David, and Claire come to terms with his sudden death, and with death in general as such a central element in their lives. Although SFU could hardly be labelled as a comedy series, anyone who has watched at least one episode will have noticed that humorous elements are indeed present, and that, in fact, they contribute to the show’s unmistakable style.

Although the protagonists’ lives revolve around the funeral business, death is not the only controversial subject approached in the series. Homosexuality, extreme sexual behaviour, drug abuse, and incest are also recurring themes which are bound to be potentially disturbing for audiences. However, the author has chosen to focus not on the potentially offensive or shocking elements as a whole but only on examples of black humour intended as humour referred to situations in which death is involved.

SFU was first broadcast in its dubbed version (EDIT) in March 2004 on the Italian terrestrial channel ITALIA 1, where the first two seasons were shown late at night, two episodes at a time, once a week. Soon after (April 2004), the series was also shown on the Italian version of the FOX channel, where viewers were given the option of watching it in the dubbed or the original version. The subtitled version (SDI Media Group), on the other hand, was made available to Italian viewers only slightly later, when the DVD of the series was issued.

2. The survey

In order to investigate the research questions outlined in paragraph 1 above, a small-scale survey was devised, aimed at collecting data on the viewers’ perception of SFU, with particular attention to their enjoyment and/or dislike of certain scenes in the pilot. The dubbed and subtitled versions of the same episode (The
pilot – Fisher e Figli / Fisher and Sons) were analysed and 10 clips were chosen to be shown to two separate sample groups of viewers. A questionnaire was also designed with the purpose of collecting quantitative data. Due to technical reasons, the questionnaire on the subtitled clips was administered in a face-to-face modality, while for the dubbed clips a website was created in which respondents were asked to view the scenes and answer the relative questions.

2.1. Video material

As already mentioned, the episode chosen for analysis is the pilot for the whole series, which was broadcast in the USA on 3rd June 2001. The pilot episode was chosen because it provides a good introduction to the general themes of the series and to the tensions among the characters that will be developed as the series progresses. On a linguistic and cultural level, it also provides good examples of that kind of black humour that the study aims to investigate, and of discrepancies in the translation of humour between the Italian dubbed and subtitled versions. In particular, unlike the rest of the series, the pilot episode contains four commercials for products related to the funeral business (a luxury hearse, an embalming fluid, a wound filler putty, and an earth dispenser), which are representative of the sometimes irreverent attitude of the show towards death and death-related matters.

When comparing the dubbed and the subtitled versions, both available on the DVD of the first season, one cannot help but notice a few differences in the translation of the same English audiovisual text. Although it could be argued that these modes of AVT are inherently dissimilar and that, given the very different constraints that they impose (Luyken 1991; Dries 1995) any comparison between the two is not legitimate, it is undeniable that in some cases the dubbed and subtitled versions of the same text result in two significantly different target texts. Some of the main differences between the dubbed and the subtitled versions are elements which tend to compromise the humorous effect of the dialogues, and, as a consequence, the impact of the series on the target audience. Some of these changes involve the use of swearwords, which are almost completely deleted in the dubbed version.

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3 The creation of clips for the online version of the questionnaire involved a considerable reduction in the image quality, which in turn would have resulted in the compression of the subtitles and made them unreadable for the viewer. For this reason, the questionnaire on the subtitled version had to be administered only in the paper-based format.

4 Incidentally, it should be noted that these kinds of commercials, which are probably the strongest examples of death-related humour in the pilot, do not appear in the following episodes of the series. Although we have no information as to whether the choice to eliminate any other such commercials was imposed by some form of network censorship or not, we are left to wonder whether even progressive HBO viewers might have found them a little too disturbing.

5 For common patterns in the rendering of swearwords from English into Italian in AVT see Pavesi & Malinverno (2000).
version and the softening of some humorous scenes which are more explicit in English, because of either their sexual content or the attitude they reflect toward death.

In order to find examples of this kind, the pilot episode was shown to a focus group of native speakers of English who were asked to watch the episode carefully and then comment on which scenes they thought were most entertaining and/or unpleasant, and why. Among the clips suggested by the members of the focus group, 10 were chosen in which the discrepancies between dubbed and subtitled versions were most evident. It is worth repeating that, although it is true that in some cases the Italian dubbed version is objectively less close to the spirit of the English text than the subtitled version, it is not suggested here that the former is necessarily inferior in quality to the latter. In fact, what we would like to point out is that the two versions are respectively more or less successful than the other in rendering some of the humorous elements in the series, and that, consequently, the viewers’ perception of the different versions is likely to reflect these discrepancies. A closer look at the specific aspects present in each of the 10 clips will clarify this point.

Clip 1, the first commercial for funerary products, advertises a shiny black luxury hearse as if it were any other luxury car, with a female model in an evening gown showing the car to the audience and a soft-spoken female voice delivering the message. The main difference is the choice to render the phrase *funeral coach* as *carro funebre* (subtitles) or *auto funebre* (dubbing), where the first would be the most common phrase used by Italian speakers to refer to a hearse, while the second is slightly higher in register and probably more common in the funeral business than in everyday talk.

Clip 2 was chosen as another example of translation choices that might feasibly influence audience perception. In the scene, Ruth, Nathaniel Fisher’s wife, attributes her husband’s desire to buy a “fancy new hearse” to his midlife crisis. In the Italian version the object of Nathaniel’s desire is turned into a much more generic *auto* (car), thus eliminating the possibility for a humorous parallel between a regular car and a hearse. Another major omission in the dubbed version is the reference to husbands cheating on their wives with other men. Both the reference to the hearse and to homosexuality are kept in the subtitled version.

Clip 3 takes place during the viewing for an elderly lady. The scene contains an odd comment by one of the participants, presumably the lady’s husband, in which he says “if there’s any justice in the universe she’ll be shoveling shit in hell.” While the subtitled version chooses to keep the swearword *merda* (shit) and, consequently, the potentially shocking effect of the scene, the dubbed version tones it down by using the more refined *sterco* (excrement).

Clip 4 is an example of the sometimes surreal quality of SFU humour. It was chosen not because of discrepancies in the two Italian translations but merely as a possible indicator of how this kind of humour is perceived by an Italian audience. David is talking to a woman attending a viewing, and while she keeps going on about boring topics, he imagines what the real meaning of her words is, i.e. the
fact that he will be stuck with dead bodies and their relatives for the rest of his life. David is so upset that he screams out loud, thus causing shocked reactions in the other participants.

In clip 5, the second commercial, we are presented with a close-up of a reclining, very fit male body, while the speaker praises the qualities of *Living Splendor Embalming Fluid*. In this case, both the dubbed and subtitled versions chose to omit the clear reference to the embalming fluid, thus leaving the viewer to wonder exactly what kind of product we are talking about (cream, body lotion?). Although it is clear even from the translated versions that the body we are seeing on the screen is actually a dead one and not that of a model, the Italian versions leave out a detail that adds considerably to the macabre quality of the fake commercial.

Clip 6 contains a monologue by Federico, the Fisher’s body-restructuring expert, who boasts about his latest “works” to a befuddled Nate. His swearwords, which are symptomatic of his very relaxed attitude towards disfigured dead bodies, are completely absent in the dubbed version. The subtitled version keeps the swearwords only in the final punch line, when Federico exclaims “what a fucking waste” talking about the decision to cremate his best restructuring work, but fails to convey the mortician’s nonchalance thoroughly.

Clip 7 advertises Wound Filler, a cosmetic molding putty. We see a woman being made up by another woman while the speaker talks about mortal wounds inflicted by a “tragic, disfiguring accident.” A closer look reveals that the first woman is actually dead. The clip was included in the study for similar reasons to the *Living Splendor* commercial. Although the Italian dubbed version keeps the general tone of the English source text, it chooses to mitigate it, for example by avoiding direct mention of “wounds”, which become *cicatrici* (scars), or by referring to the more explicit “molding putty” as *maschera di bellezza* (beauty mask). Again, the meaning of the commercial is clear but the effect a little less macabre.

Clip 8 is a ‘dialogue’ between David and his father. David is restructuring Nathaniel’s body after his deadly accident when he starts imagining his father standing next to him and criticizing his work, as he had always done when he was alive. David is talking to his father out loud, so when Federico appears at the door he catches David’s last sentence in which he calls Nathaniel “ungrateful son of a bitch.” This scene was chosen because it incorporates three elements that well represent SFU and its Italian translation. First of all, a close-up of a body being restructured after a disfiguring accident, which represents the sometimes macabre and slightly disturbing character of some scenes; secondly, a surreal kind of humour that the Italian audience might not be so familiar with; and thirdly, the omission in the dubbed version of the swearword ‘son of a bitch’, which contributes to a reduced impact on viewers.

In clip 9 Ruth is confessing to her two sons that she has been unfaithful to their father for years. The scene takes place during Nathaniel’s viewing and Ruth keeps crying and offering all the details of the affair to an indignant David and to a more understanding Nate. The scene is a mixture of humour and sadness which culminates in Nate’s exclaiming “fuck propriety!” and in Ruth’s immediate reproach “we
don’t say that word!” The hilarity resides in the fact that, much to David and Nate’s bemusement, even when crying and being upset about something completely unrelated, Ruth still retains her motherly instinct, which leads her to reproach her children when they use the four-letter word. Even the sentence she uses to do so sounds as if it were addressed to children instead of adults. Both in the dubbed and the subtitled versions Ruth’s reaction is slightly less effective (Dubbed: Non pronunciare quella parola! – “Don’t pronounce that word!”/Subtitled: Noi non usiamo quella parola! – “We don’t use that word”). A more childish reprimand such as Non si dice quella parola! (very roughly “that word is not proper”) would perhaps have stressed the contrast between the seriousness of the situation and her motherly behaviour.

Clip 10 was included partly for its potentially disturbing humour, and partly because it contains one of the few examples of puns in the episode. It advertises an earth dispenser, to be used at funerals when the time comes for the participants to throw a fistful of soil onto the coffin before it is lowered into the ground. A group of dancers look like they are having fun shaking the earth dispenser and dancing to the sound of “(Shake, Shake, Shake) Shake Your Booty” by KC & The Sunshine Band, while the speaker announces: “Only from Franklin’s Funeral Supplies. We put the fun back in funeral.” The dubbed version offers a successful attempt to keep if not the pun, at least a semantically appropriate wordplay with the sentence perché d’ora in poi non avrai più quella faccia da funerale! (“from now on you will not have that sad expression anymore”). On the other hand, the subtitled version offers a less successful per un funerale in allegria (“for a cheerful/fun funeral”), which contains a recognizable phrase in Italian albeit not a pun.

2.2. The questionnaire

The survey was conducted by means of a digital support containing the 10 clips described above and a purpose-built questionnaire based on the research questions highlighted in paragraph 1. The questionnaire, which was composed of 53 questions, was slightly diversified depending on the dubbed and subtitled versions and was administered both in a paper-based and a web-based format. This was done in order both to speed up the data collecting process and to reach as large a sample as possible. The online survey was advertised through posts on Internet forums related both to SFU and to more general topics, newsletters, and personal communications, while respondents for the paper-based survey were contacted on the basis of personal networking.

Based in part on instruments already used in previous studies on the perception of audiovisual products (Antonini et al. 20036), the questionnaire was com-

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6 The web-based questionnaire, in particular, is based on the format used in the project “Dubbing Quality” of the University of Bologna at Forli, which was devised by Rachele Antonini and Delia Chiaro.
posed of three separate sections. The first section was aimed at assessing the view-

ers’ enjoyment of each of the 10 clips in question. After a brief introduction to the series in general and to the episode in particular, each clip was contextualized by means of a picture and a short explanation of the scene, which the respondents were asked to read before watching the clip. After watching each clip, the respondents were asked to indicate whether they had found the scene divertente (funny, enjoyable) or sgradevole (annoying, unpleasant) on two separate scales going from 0 (not funny at all/not unpleasant at all) to 6 (very funny/very unpleasant). Depending on their rating on the funniness/annoyance scales respondents were then asked to state the main reason why they found the scene funny or annoying.

The second section of the questionnaire, to be compiled after watching all of the clips, contained more general questions on the appreciation of the scenes, on the viewers’ impressions on the themes present in the series, etc. A key question in this section was whether the respondents thought that mixing humour with serious topics such as death was appropriate. Finally, the last part of the questionnaire was aimed at gathering the respondents’ personal information.

3. Results and discussion

The total sample consisted of 63 respondents, of whom 32 watched the subtitled clips and 31 the dubbed clips. 33 respondents were male, while 30 were female. Figures 1 and 2 below show the composition of the sample in terms of age groups (Figure 1) and level of education (Figure 2).

In terms of religion, 43% of respondents declared themselves to be religious, while 38% gave a negative answer and 19% were not sure.

From a general standpoint, it can be said that the funniness/annoyance of the 10 clips in question turned out to be quite a clear-cut issue, with respondents expressing either very high levels of funniness and very low levels of annoyance or the complete opposite. However, for statistical purposes, it will be useful to look at the mean values of funniness and annoyance found for individual clips summarized below.

As Table 1 shows, although both funniness and annoyance were marked on a 0 to 6 scale, the mean reported values are not extremely high. Generally speaking, appreciation levels were low, but so also were annoyance levels. Clip 4, the surreal dialogue between David and a woman at a funeral wake, was found to be the funniest of the 10, with a 4.5 average on the funniness scale and only 0.7 average on the annoyance scale. This datum is hardly surprising if we consider that clip 4 is probably the most ‘innocuous’ in this set of clips, with humour based not so much on disturbing or macabre elements but more on the physical comedy of the character screaming at the top of his lungs and shocking the old ladies present at the funeral. In fact, this particular element, together with the meaning of the woman’s talk, was indicated by 32.8% of the respondents as the funniest element in the scene. What is more surprising is the fact that clip 10, the ‘inappropriately’
cheerful commercial for an earth dispenser, has, together with clip 3, the next highest funniness level, with ‘the commercial as a whole’ being the most common answer (71.4%) for the reason why the respondents found it funny. As far as annoyance is concerned, Table 1 shows that the highest value, a 2.0 average, was found for clips 5 and 7, two of the four commercials for funeral products. Again, this is hardly a surprising result if we consider these scenes’ macabre, potentially disturbing nature.

It is also worth noting that although in some specific cases the perception of the clips was influenced by factors such as age, declared religiousness, and sex, previous knowledge of the series proved to influence enjoyment of all the scenes in question,
with clip 10 presenting the biggest discrepancy. This datum could be interpreted as an indicator of the fact that the kind of humour present in the series is some sort of ‘acquired taste’, and that its enjoyment might increase with familiarity.

As far as the second research question is concerned, i.e. whether the translation differences in the subtitled and dubbed versions would be reflected in the respondents’ funniness/annoyance, an overall look at mean values (Table 2) seems to confirm this hypothesis.

In general, it can be noted how the clips that were found to be the funniest ones according to the overall sample (clips 4, 3 and 10) are confirmed as the most popular ones according to the two separate sets of respondents. However, the funniness of the dubbed clips appears to be consistently higher than that of their subtitled equivalents, while the opposite trend is present as far as annoyance is concerned. Although in some cases the difference is minimal, in others it appears to be significant. In particular, the discrepancy is evident between levels of audience appreciation for clips 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10, in terms of both funniness and annoyance. As the reader might remember from 2.1 above, these clips were among those signalled because of discrepancies created by the absence, in the dubbed version, of either swearwords (clips 6 and 8) or some potentially disturbing elements (clips 5 and 7), which were however kept in the subtitled version. Therefore, the data clearly show that the respondents found the dubbed versions, where swearwords were deleted and the most macabre elements left out, funnier on average than the subtitled versions, which, in that respect, were closer to the spirit of the source text. A comparison between the levels of annoyance for these clips is also significant, since it shows that some of the charac-

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<th>Clip</th>
<th>Funniness</th>
<th>Annoyance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Woman at funeral</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Husband and wife</td>
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<td>1 Funeral coach</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<td>6 Body restructuring</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Living Splendor</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 David and father</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Confession</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Wound Filler</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Midlife crisis</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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Table 1. Funniness and annoyance values for individual clips
characteristics of the source text, which were censored in the dubbed version, did have a disturbing effect on the viewers who watched the subtitled version.

As far as clip 10 is concerned, the attempt to recreate the pun “we put the fun back in funeral” (d’ora in poi non avrai più quella faccia da funerale) seems to have paid off, since, on average, it was perceived as considerably funnier (4.5) than its non-pun solution in the subtitled version (3.3). Evidence for this hypothesis can be found in the fact that, when asked to indicate the funniest element in this clip, 7 respondents from the dubbed sample marked the ‘verbal message’ option, against only 2 in the subtitled sample.

As a final note, it might be interesting to report that, despite the relatively low appreciation levels found for these clips, 77.5% of the respondents defined as appropriate the use of humour in the circumstances portrayed in the series, with the most common reasons given being ‘to defuse or exorcize death’ and ‘because death is a part of life’.

### 4. Conclusions

The results of this empirical study aimed at assessing the audience perception of one episode of the TV series *Six Feet Under* through its subtitled and dubbed versions both supported and contrasted the preliminary research hypotheses. On the one hand, the hypothesis according to which low funniness levels were expected for the

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<th>Annoyance</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtitled</td>
<td>Dubbed</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Funeral coach</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Midlife crisis</td>
<td>2.2</td>
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<td>3 Husband and wife</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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*Table 2. Means of appreciation and annoyance for dubbed and subtitled clips*
10 clips was confirmed, with the highest mean value for appreciation being 4.5. Apart from the more or less disturbing nature of the clips themselves, another important influencing factor was found to be previous knowledge of the series. As far as the second hypothesis is concerned, in which a correlation was hypothesized between translation strategies and audience perception, the results show that this was actually the case. However, except for clip 10, the scenes that were perceived as the funniest and the least disturbing by the audience were not the subtitled ones, where the translational choices more closely reflected the humour in the source text, but the dubbed ones, which flattened and censored some scenes, but also, apparently, made them less disturbing and more enjoyable for the viewers.

Although the present study is small in scale and more similar ones are needed in order to understand whether these trends are more widespread, it seems plausible to hypothesize that Six Feet Under is not the only case in which this kind of intervention (a real marketing strategy, after all) was performed. What remains to be seen is whether or not this strategy, albeit successful, offers Italian viewers an ethically correct alternative.

References

Abstract

This paper aims to discuss Latin words and phrases in Scots legal lexis, in an attempt to outline their range of uses in different branches of the law (commerce, property, family, court proceedings, etc.) and see to what extent such uses are now becoming obsolete, or indeed preserve their semantic transparency and validity. Law reform is in fact a powerful cause of language change: for instance, the Abolition of Feudal Tenure (S) Act 2000 has also 'abolished' various lexical items, as the concepts they express have also been abolished (e.g. 'superior', 'feuar', but also 'dominium utile' etc.: see Dossena forthcoming). Starting from the list of items provided in the Scots Thesaurus, and the definitions and quotations available in the online Scots dictionaries (DOST and SND, see www.dsl.ac.uk/dsl – henceforth SD)\(^1\), it will also be possible to present an overview of the ways in which these items have preserved their original (i.e. etymological) meaning, or have been reinterpreted over time, in order to meet new specialized or culturally-determined needs. It may be especially interesting to note that only 20% of such items are actually marked as 'obsolete' in the reference works taken into consideration – an indication perhaps of the 'conservative' quality of legal usage on the one hand, and of the persistent validity of Latin phraseology in this specialized register on the other: a distinctive stylistic trait which practitioners still seem to find useful, despite a supposed tendency towards global standardization in other areas of specialized discourse.

\(^{1}\) I am grateful to Dr. Iseabail Macleod and Dr. Peter MacNeill for their comments on an earlier version of this paper.
1. Latin phrases in Scots legal discourse: obsolete or in current usage? The answer of reference works

One of the best-known features of legal discourse is its supposed conservatism, often identified with the persistence of archaic vocabulary, (redundant) binomial expressions, and complex syntax. In particular, the persistence of Latin phrases in the usage of practitioners is supposed to mark the antiquity of such a register and, at the same time, to be a marker of its prestige. On the other hand, the semantic opacity of most Latin phrases for the general public makes them an ideal starting point for the simplification of legal discourse advocated by so many ‘plain language’ movements (Eagleson 1997; van der Staak 1997; Williams 2005). My survey intends to discuss the extent to which such phrases are explained in reference works so that they are made more accessible to lay-people. I will concentrate on Scots legal vocabulary, on account of the specificity of the Scottish legal system itself, to which the contribution of Roman law is more significant than in the system applicable in England and Wales.

From a methodological point of view, the first step was to identify the Latin expressions mentioned in the Scots Thesaurus (Macleod et al. 1999), under section 11 (Law). In the different subsections the following items are recorded (those preceded by the † sign are deemed as ‘obsolete’):

† cessio bonorum, † contumaxit, † ex capite lecti, † inhabile, † jure, † jus mariti, † quoniam attachiamenta, † sine quo non, † supersedere, † universitas, † vidimus, absolvitur, apud acta, commodatum, communio bonorum, curator bonis, damnum fatale, de fidelis, delectus personae, dominium, dominus litis, grassum, hinc inde, in litem, in retentis, induciae, judicatum solvi, judicio sisti, jus relictae, jus tertii, jus quaestio tertio, locus poenitentiae, mora, mortis causa, mutuum, nobile officium, novodamus, partibus, plagium, praecipuum, praepositura, precarium, quadriennium utile, quoad ultra, regalia majora, regalia minora, rei interventus, sederunt, simpliciter, solatium, solum, surrogatum, ultimus haeres, vergens ad inopiam, and vis major.

As we can see, of these 55 items, only 11 are marked as obsolete. The next step was therefore to investigate if the same quality is attributed to such items in the Oxford English Dictionary (henceforth OED) and in the SD. However, it was immediately seen that not all the items are defined in both reference works; the OED does not offer any definitions for

ex capite lecti, jus mariti, quoniam attachiamenta, apud acta, communio bonorum, de fidelis, dominus litis, hinc inde, in litem, in retentis, judicatum solvi, judicio sisti, jus

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2 On the linguistic features characterizing legal discourse see, among others, Mellinkoff (1963); Bowers (1989); Trosborg (1997); Gotti (2003); and – most recently – Williams (2005).

3 This section excludes church law, found in subsection 14.1.7 of ‘Religion, Superstition, Education, Festivals’; and legal aspects of milling, found in subsection 7.8.3 of ‘Farming’.
relictae, jus tertii, jus quaestio tertio, locus poenitentiae, mortis causa, nobile officium, partibus, praecipuum, praepositura, regalia minora, rei interventus, ultimus haeres, and vergens ad inopiam.

The SD, instead, offer no definitions for sine quo non, jus tertii, jus quaestio tertio, regalia minora, and commodatum: in practice, neither the OED nor the SD define jus tertii, jus quaestio tertio, and regalia minora, although the latter is actually mentioned within the (SD) definition of regalia:

REGALIA, n. Sc. usages: [...] 2. Sc. Law: rights regarded by feudal law as being or having been originally held by the crown over the estates or persons of its subjects. The regalia majora are such as belong to the king alone and are exercised by his officials in his name, the regalia minora are such as may be communicated to subjects by royal grant (Sc. 1773 Erskine Institute II. vi. § 13, 1946 A. D. Gibb Legal Terms 73).

As regards usage, the legal meaning of the following items is described as obsolete in the OED: jure, inhabile, grassum, sederunt, and vidimus, whereas the SD, either in their definitions or quotations, observe the obsolescence of ex capite lecti, judicio sisti, and jus mariti. In practice, it is only the Thesaurus that, in addition to these, also marks cessio bonorum, contumaxit, quoniam attachiamenta, sine quo non, supersedere, and universitas as obsolete.

The various reference works thus appear to be somewhat inconsistent in their categorization of Latin lexical items as obsolete or in current usage; clearly, this may depend on the sources employed, from which comments on actual usage may be derived. For instance, it is interesting to observe metalinguistic comments on usage and distribution in the definitions of absolvitour, apud acta and locus:

Absolvitour, -ur, [...] 1. n. A decree absolving, or in favour of, a defendant. (Still in legal use in the form absolvitor.)

Apud acta, [L.: ‘during the proceedings’.] ‘Applied to judicial notices or intimations given in open court, the parties, or their counsel or agents, being present’ (Bell). [...] If the Assizers summon be not present, others may be summoned at the Bar, or apud acta, as we call it; MacKenzie Laws & C. 491.

Locus, n. A place, site or position, freq. in Sc. Law, “beloved of the police and certain lawyers in referring to the spot where an event of importance for the matter in hand has taken place” (Sc. 1946 A. D. Gibb Legal Terms 52).

While in absolvitour there is a remark on spelling variation in the legal register, in the case of apud acta and locus we find remarks on the use of Latin phrases as indicative of practitioners’ in-group language. For apud acta, the phrase is offered as the ‘technical’ translation of the English equivalent “summoned at the Bar” on the part of a ‘we’-subject with whom the encoder identifies. With locus, the commentator observes that the item is “beloved of the police and certain lawyers”: here the observer appears to be outside the immediate circle of practitioners, but also in this case a lexical choice is shown to be the marker of specialist usage.
On the other hand, the persisting currency of a certain item does not only depend on its users’ choices: indeed, it could be argued that commentators’ views and attitudes can only be recorded after an item has become obsolete or restricted to specialist usage. In fact, the most important factor affecting the viability of certain terms in legal discourse is probably the viability of the concepts conveyed by the terms themselves: if the law changes and concepts become obsolete, the vocabulary pertaining to those concepts is also bound to change and/or fall out of usage. Another factor affecting language change is the cultural value that such terms may have at a local or an international level where adaptations may be needed in order to meet the requirements of supranational agreements. The changing value of Latin expressions in the light of these two aspects (law reform and international requirements) will therefore be discussed in the next section.

2. Law reform and language change

As we saw above, among the items marked as ‘obsolete’, there is *jus maritī*, i.e. “the right of property orig. vested in the husband on marriage in all his wife’s moveables except her *paraphernalia*, i.e. clothes, jewelry and their receptacles (Sc. 1946 A. D. Gibb *Legal Terms* 47)”. In particular, the *SD* add that this item has been “Obs. since 1881”, though no further explanation is given. It is only in one of the quotations that further clarification is offered in relation to the law that reformed this matter:

> *Sc. 1927 Gloag and Henderson *Intro. Sc. Law* 521: By the Married Women’s Property (Scotland) Act, 1881, the *jus maritī* was abolished in the case of marriages contracted after the date of the passing of the Act.

In the case of *communio bonorum* (marked as obsolete by *SD*, though not by the *Thesaurus*), reference to the reform that separated the spouses’ estates is found already in the definition:

> **COMMUNIO BONORUM**, n. “The stock of moveable property of husband and wife, which under the common law of Scotland formed a joint fund under the administration of the husband. This principle endured till 1881, when the statute law separated the estates of husband and wife” (Abd.16).

A late-nineteenth-century reform in family law thus affected the viability of these two Latin expressions, in the same way as a much more recent reform affected the viability of others, like *dominium utile*, *dominium directum*, *debitum fundi*, or *novodamus*, which are not marked as obsolete in the reference works, but which were made so by the Abolition of Feudal Tenure (Scotland) Act 2000⁴ (see

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⁴ As a matter of fact, the feudal system existed in Scotland until 28th November 2004, which was the appointed day for commencement under the Abolition of Feudal Tenure (S) Act 2000. Until that day all land in Scotland (except Udal land in Orkney and Shetland and Allodial Land
Comparing the definitions in the *OED* and *SD*, we see that both refer to the feudal system in their quotations, while it is only the former that mentions the continuation of the Latin phrase in legal use:

**SD.** *DOMINIUM DIRECTUM, –UTILE, n.phr. Sc. law.* (see quot.).

*Sc. 1754* J. Erskine *Princ. Law Scot.* ii. iii. 10: The interest which a superior retains to himself in all feudal grants is called *dominium directum*, because it is the highest and most eminent right; and that which the vassal acquires goes under the name of *dominium utile*, as being subordinate to the other, and indeed the most profitable of the two, since the vassal enjoys the whole fruits which grow out of the subject.

Ib. ii. vi. 1: Under the *dominium utile* which the vassal acquires by the feudal right, is comprehended the property of whatever is considered as part of the lands disponed [sic], whether of buildings, woods, etc., above ground; or of coal, limestone, minerals, etc., under ground.

*Sc. 1891* J. Craigie *Conveyancing* 2: The right to the *dominium utile* carried with it the exclusive possession and enjoyment of the lands contained in the grant, so long as the conditions of it were fulfilled by the grantee.

[Lat. = simple (advantageous) right of ownership.]

**OED:** A Latin term of the Roman Law, variously rendered lordship, ownership, property, demesne, domain, dominion; but often retained in L. form in legal use.

1823 in *CRABB* Technol. Dict. 1861 W. BELL Dict. Law Scot. 300 The interest vested in the superior is called the *dominium directum*, or superiority [...] The vassal’s interest [...] is termed the *dominium utile*, or the property.

The abolition of feudal tenure has also marked the obsolescence of *grassum*, an item which – despite its apparently Latin form – is in fact of Old English or Scandinavian origin:

a sum of money paid or promised by a tenant to his landlord at the grant or renewal of his lease or by a feuar to his superior at the grant of the feu-right, in addition to the periodical rent or feu-duty stipulated for in the grant (Sc. 1808 Jam., 1890 Bell Dict. Law Scot. 492, 1946 A. D. Gibb Legal Terms 38). [O.Sc. has gressum, -om, -am, from 1288, gressum, 1473, met. variants of gersum, gersome, 1465, garsum, 1502, as in n. above: Mid.Eng. garsum, gersum(e), O.E. gersum(a), treasure, gift; O.N. gorsemi, gersemi, -semar (pl.), a costly thing, a jewel.]

In addition to law reforms bringing about the abolition of previous norms there may also be legal changes due to the introduction and application of new rules,
whether on a domestic or an international scale. For instance, another important case in which law reform has involved linguistic changes is the application of the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration. Although Scotland is not subject to the Arbitration Act 1996, which applies to the rest of the United Kingdom, this Model Law does apply in Scotland by virtue of Section 66 and Schedule 7 of the Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1990 (henceforth LR). In 1999 the Scottish Council for International Arbitration, the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Scottish Branch) and the Scottish Building Contract Committee launched a set of rules – the Scottish Arbitration Code (henceforth SAC) – aimed to be applicable in both domestic and international commercial arbitration (see Dossena 2003).

In this case the deep historical roots of Scottish arbitration procedure become apparent in the definitions of certain lexical items employed in the LR and in the SAC. While for article 2 of the Model Law “arbitral tribunal’ means a sole arbitrator or a panel of arbitrators”, in article 2 of the LR we find the specification that “arbitral tribunal’ means an arbitrator or a panel of arbitrators; [and] ‘arbitrator’ includes an arbiter”. The distinction between arbiter (the original Latin term) and ‘arbitrator’ was an older one: while the ‘arbiter’ was appointed for legalistic forms of arbitration, the ‘arbitrator’ was appointed for equitable forms (Hunter 2002: 14, 43). Although the latter forms had become increasingly less widespread in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – indeed, the distinction between ‘arbiter’ and ‘arbitrator’ appears to have declined since the eighteenth century (Hunter 2002: 43) – both the Model Law and the LR allow them if it is the parties’ choice:

28(3): “The arbitral tribunal shall decide *ex aequo et bono* or as *amicable compositur* only if the parties have expressly authorised it to do so”.

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5 The text of LR is online at www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1990/Ukpga_19900040_en_13.htm; the SAC is online at www.scottish-arbitrators.org/.

6 *Regiam Majestatem*, a treatise on Scots law probably compiled at the beginning of the fourteenth century and published for the first time in 1609, appears to be the first document in which arbitration is discussed systematically (see Skene 1609; Davidson 2000: 2; and Hunter 2002: 30, 32). Indeed, this text is mentioned by SD in a quotation pertaining to *Quoniam Attachiamenta*:

7 Interestingly, the SAC reverses this statement, prohibiting this form of arbitration, unless it is the parties’ choice: “14.3 The tribunal shall not decide as *amicable compositur* nor *ex bono et aequo* unless the parties have expressly authorised it to do so.”
A sign of changing times is also in the attempt, on the part of the SAC, to employ non-sexist language where it explicitly states: “3:1 [...] All references to an Arbitrator shall include the masculine and the feminine, and Arbitrator shall include Arbiter.”

The SAC text also rephrases two Latin expressions, de jure and de facto, which occur both in the Model Law and LR, but the semantic value of which may be opaque to non-expert readers:

Article 14. Failure or impossibility to act
(1) If an arbitrator becomes de jure or de facto unable to perform his functions or for other reasons fails to act without undue delay, his mandate terminates if he withdraws from his office or if the parties agree on the termination.

6:4 If in the view of a party an Arbitrator becomes incapacitated or unable to perform the duties of his office the procedure in respect of Challenge of Arbitrators set out in Article 5 shall apply.

Also ipso jure in 16(1) of LR and the Model Law is rephrased in 11.2. of the SAC text:

(1) The arbitral tribunal may rule on its own jurisdiction, including any objections with respect to the existence or validity of the arbitration agreement. For that purpose, an arbitration clause which forms part of a contract shall be treated as an agreement independent of the other terms of the contract. A decision by the arbitral tribunal that the contract is null and void shall not entail ipso jure the invalidity of the arbitration clause.

11.2. The Tribunal shall have the power to determine the existence, validity and scope of the contract of which an arbitration clause forms part. For the purposes of this Article an arbitration clause which forms part of a contract shall be treated as an agreement independent of the other terms of the contract. A decision by the tribunal that the arbitration clause is null and void shall not for that reason alone render the arbitration clause invalid.

On the other hand, the SAC does maintain the phrases ex bono et aequo and amiable compositeur despite their being Latin and French respectively, and though reversing the order of the constituents in the former. In this sense, then, the SAC text appears to present itself as closer to everyday language than the texts of both the Model Law and LR, while maintaining linguistic traits that characterize legal discourse and evoke the long historical tradition of alternative dispute resolution in Scotland.

The time-depth of changes should also be taken into consideration when discussing their impact on the juridical and linguistic dimension of legal texts. In addition to official law reforms, varying practice in the course of time could also make an item obsolete. We see this, for instance, in two quotations relating to judicio sisti: almost 70 years after the first one, the commentator observes that this
type of caution is no longer in use, though no explicit mention is made of the time when the practice was discontinued:

**JUDICIO SISTI**, adj.phr. Sc. Law, of security: involving an undertaking that a debtor will appear in court to answer a claim (Sc. 1946 A. D. Gibb Legal Terms 47).

*Sc. 1829* P. Halkerston *Tech. Terms* 18: Caution *judicio sisti* is an obligation undertaken by the cautioner to sist the party in court when required to do so, under the penalty of being obliged to answer for him.

*Sc. 1896* W. K. Morton *Manual* 301: Caution *judicio sisti*. – This was in use while imprisonment for debt was generally competent [...]. It is now practically obsolete.

The meaning attributed to *donatio mortis causa* and *mutuum* are also seen to have changed with time: in one case, the phrase is described “as formerly understood”, while in the other already at the end of the nineteenth century the practice was described as “not common in the present day”:

*Sc. 1896* W. K. Morton *Manual Law Scot.* 304: *Donatio mortis causa*. [...] As formerly understood, it was a gift *de presenti*, made by the granter in the expectation of death.

*Sc. 1896* W. K. Morton *Manual Law Scot.* 193: *Loan or Mutuum* – Such transactions are not common in the present day; but an example is seen in *steelbow goods*, such as dung or straw given to a farm tenant at the commencement of his lease, under obligation to leave the like quantity and quality at its expiry.

### 3. Language change and cultural adaptation

The case of the SAC discussed in the previous paragraph also indicates that – very frequently – linguistic forms change, in order to meet different cultural requirements, in addition to those dictated by reform. Concerning arbitration, for instance, the need is to have a code that could make the rules accessible to a more general public than the (relatively restricted) circle of practitioners, in an attempt to facilitate this type of alternative dispute resolution.

It is therefore possible to find legal terms that are gradually adopted and adapted to everyday language, sometimes even acquiring a jocular sense, as in the case of *sederunt* with the meaning of ‘social meeting / drinking bout’ or ‘scolding’, in which the original verb form is reanalysed as a noun.

**Sederunt**, n. [*L. sēdērunt* they were sitting, f. *sedēre* to sit. Also in the later dial.]

1. In minutes of various courts, used (in its Latin sense) to introduce the list of members of the court present.
2. As a vernacular noun: The members, collectively, present at a particular sitting of a court. The sederunt of this day meeting with theses that wer formerlie meat of the aughtene of Maj of that sederunt does all vnamouslie *[sic]* aggrie *[etc.*]; *1669* Edinb. Surgeons II p. 39.

A sitting of a court. Also *buik of sederunt*, the book of record of such a court.
3. A meeting or sitting of an informal or social nature, a sitting at work or talk, a drinking-bout, etc. (ne.Sc., Per., Fif., wm. Sc., Wgt. 1969).

*Inv. 1733 Trans. Gael. Soc. Inv. XI. 175:
The sederunt having continued from about eight o’ clock in the morning till six in the afternoon, the gentlemen were all very merry.


*Abd. 1956 People’s Jnl. (4 Feb.):
Gettin’ a gey sedarin fae’s wife.

As shown in the last quotation, in this case spelling may be adapted to reflect vernacular pronunciation: sederunt > sedarin. In other cases, the Latin phrase may be abbreviated and/or reanalysed; for instance, abbreviation and reanalysis are found in novodamus, which derives from (de) novo damus, while de fidelì is the abbreviated form of the phrase de fidelì administratione officii:

“an oath taken by persons on entering on the duties of professions or offices of public trust [and in Church and Trade Guild]. A breach of the oath de fidelì does not amount to the crime of perjury” (Sc. 1890 Bell Dict. Law Scot. 305).

Another instance of cultural adaptation may concern the meaning attributed to an item which is used differently outside Scotland; for instance, in the case of vidimus in SD we find:

Sc. usage of Eng. vidimus, an authenticated copy of a document: an examination or inspection, esp. of accounts or documents

in addition to the first meaning given by SD: “Authentication, verification”.

Similarly, damnunm fatale is interpreted in a culturally-marked, almost religious, sense the moment the definition says that it is the loss resulting from “any calamity falling within the legal description of an act of God”:

“a loss arising from inevitable accident, such as no human prudence can prevent; – such, for example, as the losses occasioned by [...] any calamity falling within the legal description of an act of God” (Sc. 1890 Bell Dict. Law Scot. 281).

In a similar sense, also in the case of vis major – the meaning of which is related to that of damnunm fatale – we see that the noun phrase ‘Act of God’ in the quotation is capitalized, as if to evoke Biblical usage:

VIS MAJOR, n.phr. Sc. Law: a circumstance, such as a natural disaster, which cannot be reasonably expected or prevented, an act of God, a DAMNUM FATALE, which excludes responsibility for loss, damage or the non-performance of a contract (Sc. 1896 W. K. Morton Manual 320).

*Sc. 1939 Gloag & Henderson Intro. Law Scot. 388:
The terms vis major, Act of God, damnunm fatale, are not definable beyond the general statement that they connote an occurrence which no reasonable man would foresee and guard against.
On the other hand, on the level of human guilt, in the case of *contumax* in one of the *OED* quotations the Latin phrase is translated into English, expanding it with a series of three adverbs (*sturdily*, *frowardly*, and *wilfully*) aimed at emphasizing the deliberate nature of the action:

*OED*: Contumax = CONTUMACIOUS. [...] 1563-87 *FOXE A. & M.* (1684) III. 555. In the end [...] was that worthy Martyr decreed Contumax, that is, sturdily, frowardly, and wilfully absent.

Finally, a term may be extended to non-legal contexts, without taking on additional overtones: for instance, this is the case of *solum*:

*SOLUM, n.* Soil or ground, esp. in more specif. usages, as the base area of a building, the ground on which a building actually stands (Sc. 1952 *Builder* (20 June) 943). Gen.Sc.; sand or top-soil at the seaside, the foreshore. [...] [Lat. *solum*, ground. Orig. a Sc. law term, and thence extended in usage.]

### 4. Concluding remarks

This overview of Latin phrases and lexical items in Scots legal usage has shown that semantic obsolescence may depend on a variety of factors, and (understandably!) reference works may not always reflect changes in real time for very practical reasons, such as the length of time required to issue dictionary updates, or because the new lexis required by law reforms may be recorded considerably later than the commencement of the reform itself. Scholars investigating such uses should therefore be aware of the need for a range of resources to be available, so that both reference works and actual documents may provide relevant information. In addition, the importance of cultural awareness cannot be overestimated; we should not forget that normally law reforms themselves are dictated by cultural changes. Indeed, the constant progress of social change may bring about the need for new linguistic tools, capable of reflecting the new situation, such as we saw in the case of present-day international arbitration rules. Nor is this just a modern phenomenon: when legal lexis finds its way into everyday, even jocular usage, we witness the appropriation of specialized discourse on the part of ordinary speakers. At the same time, specialists try to reconcile the need for specific terminology (a marker of professional identity, in some cases) with the need for general comprehensibility and accessibility on the part of the (non-specialist) recipient. The result is the very intriguing coexistence of tradition and adaptation to contemporary legal and cultural requirements, conservatism, and innovation.

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8 On this use of adverbial modality, especially in legal texts, see Dossena (2001a and 2001b).
References


Skene J. 1609. Regiam Majestatem. The auld lavves and constitutions of Scotland, [...] fra the dayes of King Malcolme the second, vntill the time of King James the first [...] translated out of Latine in Scottish language [...]. Edinburgh: Thomas Finlason.


Abstract

This paper reports on a ground-breaking project to produce a glossary of commonly-used English legal terms in an Australian Indigenous language. The project is a response to the statistically significant incarceration rates of Indigenous Australians, particularly in the language area considered, whose limited command or complete lack of English puts them at a severe disadvantage when they are confronted head-on by the Australian legal system.

Magistrates, police and legal aid services regularly find themselves hamstrung by the lack of a common language to communicate with defendants, detainees and clients alike. Indigenous interpreters, while fluent in the first language of their clients, often lack sufficient and specific English competency to be able to decipher the meanings of English legal terms.

Funded by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and The Law Society of the Northern Territory Public Purposes Trust, the project was undertaken by Ford, a linguist with eighteen years experience in languages of the area, several Murrinh-patha elders, John Sheldon, a legal aid lawyer based in Darwin, and McCormack, a lawyer fluent in Murrinh-patha.

Murrinh-patha was chosen because it, rather than English or Kriol, is the *lingua franca* of approximately 2,500 Indigenous Australians in the Wadeye region, 400km south-west of Darwin in the Daly River Aboriginal Land Trust area of the Northern Territory of Australia.

The project has had several successful outcomes: a legal glossary of the most commonly used English legal terms; increased understanding of the legal process by the Murrinh-patha elders who worked on the project; and increased understanding of the subtleties of Murrinh-patha by the non-Indigenous researchers.
The glossary has also proved a useful pedagogical tool in the training of Indigenous interpreters, because it consists largely of paraphrases which provide an Australian Indigenous context for each legal concept. The rigour with which it was conducted is evident in the plain English paraphrases and the morpheme by morpheme glosses provided for each Murrinh-patha translation.

1. Introduction

This paper discusses the first ever Murrinh-patha Legal Glossary of commonly-used English legal terms. The intended audience for the Glossary is primarily Murrinh-patha legal interpreters and the people of the Thamarrurr region (the main area being the township of Wadeye), for whom Murrinh-patha is the dominant language. The Glossary also aims to show non-Murrinh-patha-speaking persons, including judges, magistrates, lawyers, police and correctional services personnel, how commonly-used English legal terms are rendered in Murrinh-patha.

This has been a long-term project, involving a large team of elders fluent in Murrinh-patha, lawyers and linguists. We would have made little progress without the cooperation and enthusiasm of Murrinh-patha language group elders Laurence Kolumboort, Felix Bunduck, Elizabeth Cumaiyi, Lucy Tcherna, Phyllis Bandak and Agnes Nganbe. We relied heavily on the grammars and dictionary of Murrinh-patha produced in the last thirty years by Dr Michael Walsh (1976, 1989, 1996) and Dr Chester Street (1983, 1987); their work remains a marvel of accuracy and attention to detail.

The project began in late 2000 as a joint undertaking between the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service (NAALAS), Thamarrurr Regional Council (TRC) at Wadeye and the Wadeye Aboriginal Languages Centre (WALC). The TRC selected certain elders to work on the project along with John Sheldon, NAALAS lawyer, and Dr Lysbeth Ford, WALC linguist. Funding was obtained

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1 Earlier versions of this paper were delivered by Ford at the 7th Biennial Conference on Forensic Linguistics/Language and Law, held 1-4 July, 2005 at Cardiff University, UK, and at the International Colloquium: Clarity and Obscurity in Legal Language, held 5-9 July, 2005 at the Université du Littoral Côte d’Opale, Boulogne-sur-mer, France.

2 We would like to thank the members of the TRC and the former Kardu Numida for allowing us to carry out this project and for administering the initial grant. We would like to acknowledge the generosity of the AIATSIS in providing the initial funding for the project, and of the Northern Territory Law Society Public Purposes Trust (the Trust) in granting funds to enable us to complete this Legal Glossary in Murrinh-patha of commonly-used English legal terms. We are grateful to BIITE for administering the Trust’s grant. Many thanks to Peg Havnen, who drew Ford’s attention to Justice Kriewaldt’s speech; to Jo Wood and Nicholas Mastaglia, Specialised Publications and Academic Resource Centre (SPARC), BIITE for their editorial assistance and to Mark Crocombe, WALC Co-ordinator, for making the WALC premises available for our project sessions and for allowing us to use his original photographs. Needless to say, all errors remaining in the paper and glossary are the responsibility of the authors.
from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in July 2001 and work started later that year.

Initially, Ford and Sheldon worked on the Glossary in Darwin with Frank Dumoo and Claude Narjic, Wadeye elders who had experience working as Murrinh-patha interpreters in the Darwin Magistrates Court. Sheldon took the team to the Supreme Court Law Library and explained the importance of legal precedents in common law by tracing legal cases involving inadmissible evidence from a recent Wadeye case (Basil Dumoo v. Garner 1998) back to 1783. He was thus able to show that Australian law is based on English common law legal precedents dating back to before the annexation of Australia by the British, and as a result of this the interpreters acknowledged that Australian law too was _mundak_: ‘old; worthy of respect’, like the customary law of the Thamarrurr Region.

Sheldon left NAALAS and Darwin in 2002, to be succeeded on the team by Dominic McCormack, a lawyer who had worked in the criminal law courts and is fluent in Murrinh-patha. McCormack is a National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) qualified interpreter and now has several years experience training interpreters, including Murrinh-patha language speakers, for the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) of the Northern Territory.

In 2003, Ford and McCormack started work in Wadeye with Murrinh-patha language group elders. AIATSIS funding concluded at the end of 2003; however, further funding obtained from the Trust and administered by Ford’s current employer, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE), allowed the project to be completed.

2. An effective communication link

For us to create an effective communication link with another there must be a channel by which we can comprehend each other and which we can use competently so that a meeting of minds occurs. This channel is ‘language’, whether it be Indonesian, Afrikaans, Braille or even HTML.

In addition, there are languages within languages described as ‘specialty’ languages, or registers, for example, the language of medicine, engineering, and of law – often referred to as ‘legalese’. Even when such registers are discussed in your native tongue, they may be incomprehensible to the general public, allowing for the question:

Do you understand all that is discussed in medicine; in anthropological texts; or when an accountant explains a profit and loss or balance sheet, or just your tax? If not, why not? You speak the _same language_, don’t you? Or do you?

So then, what is ‘language’? Language is our means of communication, discovery of each other and participation within the world around us. It includes specialized registers. It is the basis for creating a link with others and understanding them and their world. Language is created by and contains within it history, social values
and a contextual background upon which the world is judged. Without language one cannot access the world in which we live or the world of another fully, nor make decisions based on properly understood knowledge or information obtained. Because of this, every effort must be made to ensure the correct transference, and subsequent understanding, of information. The arena of the legal system, with its court structure, specialized knowledge, obscure legalese and administrative burdens, poses its own particular difficulties.

The understandable inability of that system’s personnel, including court orderlies, field officers and administrative staff, to speak the multitude of differing languages of multi-cultural Australia, and the corresponding difficulties of multi-cultural Australia to speak English, means that unique solutions must be sought in order to provide assistance.

Justice Kriewaldt delivered the following remarks in a paper entitled ‘The application of the criminal law to the Aborigines of the Northern Territory’, which he read to the 15th Annual Conference of the Australian Universities Law Schools Association, held in Perth, Western Australia, in 1960.

The plain fact is that in the Northern Territory the trial of an Aborigine in most cases proceeds, and so far as I could gather, has always proceeded, as if the accused were not present. If he were physically absent no one would notice this fact. The accused, so far as I could judge, in most cases takes no interest in the proceedings. He certainly does not understand that portion of the evidence which is of the greatest importance in most cases, namely, the account a police constable gives of the confession made by the accused. No attempt is made to translate any of the evidence to him. If the rule requiring substantial comprehension of the proceedings were applied to the Northern Territory, many Aborigines could simply not be tried (Kriewaldt 1960: 23).

Justice Kriewaldt’s remarks are less apposite today than they were in 1960, but there are still situations when Aboriginal defendants do not know what is happening to them within the court system. This continues to form a most compelling justification for the construction of legal glossaries in at least a dozen Indigenous languages spoken in the Northern Territory.

3. Linguistic context

Between 240 and 250 Indigenous languages were spoken by about seven hundred groups in Australia at the time of annexation by Great Britain in 1788. These languages were structurally very different from English. Most Australian Indigenous...
languages spoken in Northern Australia consist of long words made up of ordered segments, many of which contain more than one piece of grammatical information. English relies on fixed word order to tell the speaker who does what to whom. Australian languages have no fixed word order. Who does what to whom, when, where, how and why is shown by nominal case-affixes; by verbs which inflect to mark person, number, gender, transitivity, tense, mood and aspect; and by independent or enclitic particles which may indicate direction, or the attitude of the speaker to the utterance.

Australian Indigenous languages reveal that the world of their speakers is ordered into culturally important categories which are then grammaticalized. So, for instance, noun classifiers distinguish males from females, humans from other animates, and these in turn from inanimates, edible vegetables, grasses and liquids, artefacts made of wood and threatening weapons.

The sound systems of Australian Indigenous languages are relatively straightforward, but differ from English in the distribution and functional load of certain sounds (velar, dental, retroflex). For instance, the velar nasal orthographically represented as ng occurs in almost all of these languages at the beginning, middle and end of words; in English the velar nasal never occurs at the beginning of a word, and monolingual English speakers have difficulty hearing or reproducing this sound at the beginning of words.

Although English has displaced many of the Indigenous languages that were spoken in Australia in 1788, its impact on Indigenous languages of the Northern Territory has been relatively recent and superficial. It was not until 1867 that the first English-speaking settlers arrived in Darwin, and not until 1935 that missionaries arrived in Wadeye.

Of those Australian Indigenous languages which are still learnt by children as their first language, approximately two-thirds (11 out of 16) are currently spoken in the Northern Territory. Most speakers of these languages speak Standard Australian English as a second, third or even fourth language. The 1999 Learning Lessons report on Indigenous Education produced by Bob Collins et al. states:

Within the Northern Territory, only around 30% of Aboriginal people used English as a first language. The corresponding figure for non-Aboriginal Territorians is close to 90%. It is noteworthy that the corresponding figure for Aboriginal people throughout the rest of Australia is around 80%. [Only] around 4% of Aboriginal people in the East Arnhem region use English as a first language, which effectively relegates English to the position of being a minor language for Aboriginal people in that region. It is probable that this situation is not duplicated outside the Territory (Collins 1999: 127) (emphasis added).

The 2001 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data confirmed these figures. Indigenous peoples comprise approximately 25% of the Territory’s population (ABS 2001: 25). Therefore, at least one in every four people that Northern Territory criminal lawyers are required to deal with will be Indigenous (in reality,
the figure is probably greater). Of these, only three in ten speak English as a first language. At a minimum then, 70% of Indigenous people that Northern Territory criminal lawyers are required to work with will not be able to converse in English as a first language.

How adequate an Indigenous person’s knowledge of English as a second, third or even further removed language may be is for legal counsel to attempt to ascertain. This has its difficulties (which are also applicable to members of wider, multi-cultural Australia):

- Some, knowing a little English, will be too embarrassed to admit that they don’t know English adequately, and will continue on in an attempt to save face.
- Others will be able to converse readily in a fluent, conversational style, while not comprehending the technical vagaries of legalese. It is important to recognize that fluency of speech does not equal adequate specialized knowledge, therefore mis-communication may occur in two ways:
  - the person may not know the legal term at all; or
  - while the person has heard the term being used and in fact uses it, s/he has only a vague idea of the concept behind the term.

It is perhaps surprising, then, that in the Northern Territory an Indigenous Interpreter Service was only funded for the very first time in 2001. In fact, prior to this, the only interpreter service in existence was the Northern Territory Interpreter & Translator Service which provided interpreters and translators for a broad range of multi-cultural languages other than Indigenous languages. As a result, it was far easier for a person in Darwin to secure by way of a phone-call an interpreter in Polish, Indonesian, French or Vietnamese than it was to gain assistance with respect to one of the 15 major Indigenous language groups present in the Northern Territory.

Thankfully, the Aboriginal Interpreter Service, as it is now known, has offices in both Darwin and Alice Springs operating on a 24-hour call-out basis. It remains difficult, however, to gain interpreters who have sufficient English language fluency and understanding of English legal terms and the manner in which the dominant Australian culture operates.

4. The language situation at Wadeye (Port Keats)

The township of Wadeye, previously known as Port Keats, is located some 400km south-west of Darwin and is now home to approximately 2500 Indigenous people. It is within an area known as the Thamarrurr Region, comprising 20 clan groups, the majority of whom now live at Wadeye. The dominant language is Murrinh-patha, the mother-tongue of the Murrinh-patha language group, whose Kardu Diminin (People of the Small Stone) clan are traditional owners of the land upon which the township of Wadeye is located.

The languages of this region are the last in Australia to be documented. There is one main, though unsealed, road into the area, and in the past the various local
language groups were justly feared by all other persons, including other Aboriginal groups, as fierce warriors and powerful sorcerers.

The Murrinh-patha language group have dominated the local political scene ever since 1935, when they welcomed onto their lands a handful of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OLSH) missionaries. These missionaries built a mission and began converting the local Aboriginal people to Christianity. From 1947 the missionaries financed their mission by acting as government administrators, providing rations and medical care. They drew into a sedentary life on the mission all outlying groups and established dormitories where children spent two weeks of every month away from their families, learning English and the Catholic liturgy, and speaking Murrinh-patha as their lingua franca (Goldman 2000). The dormitories and the mission are long gone, but the priest, lay workers and nuns are still there. For the past thirty years Murrinh-patha and Standard Australian English have been taught in the bilingual program in the only school at Wadeye, now known as the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart (OLSH) Thamarrurr Catholic School.

Today, all Indigenous people in Wadeye, from senior elders to toddlers, speak Murrinh-patha. Basic English is used to non-Murrinh-patha speaking persons in the shop, clinic, church, post office/Centrelink agency, and takeaway food outlet. Elsewhere, the language you hear around you is Murrinh-patha.

All other languages of the region are spoken by a handful of old people in their sixties and upwards. Each of these fluent speakers is ill and on medication. Their children and grandchildren no longer speak their ancestral languages but retain a
sense of separate identity which periodically flares into hostility towards their traditional enemies, the Murrinh-patha.

5. The need for greater knowledge of non-Indigenous law at Wadeye, Port Keats

The Northern Territory Department of Justice’s Annual Report for 2003-04 provides some illuminating statistics with respect to Indigenous incarceration rates as at 30 June 2004. At this time, the prisoner profile reflected that:

- 77.5% of persons in jail were Indigenous
- 75.5% were unemployed
- 72.2% of all prisoners were aged between 20-39 years
- The most common offence was assault.

Further:

- The daily average number of prisoners was 719, reflected as 90% of operational capacity.

Specifically, the Wadeye area and its surrounds have for some time attracted great attention from the Criminal Justice System. It is indeed well-known, although at times unfairly so, as a problematic community commonly termed ‘a war zone’. Table 10 of the Department of Justice Statistical Summary 2003-04 – a census of prisoners on 30 June 2004 according to prison, last known address and

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This language shift is unusual because it has happened in the lifetime of the fluent speakers, and because it is a shift not to Kriol as has happened elsewhere in Australia, but to another Australian Indigenous language. For details, see Ford & Klesch 2003; Ford forthcoming.
Indigenous status – reveals that 31 persons from the Wadeye area were held in prison at that time, compared to 29 in 2002-03 and 32 in 2001-02. This figure does not include juveniles (under 18) held at other institutions.

Using 30 persons as an average per year in conjunction with the daily average prisoner population in 2003-04 of 719, such a figure indicates that Wadeye, a community of 2,500 people (merely 0.95% of the total NT population), provides approximately 4% of the prison population on any given day or just over four times its expected statistical contribution per head of population.

While there has clearly been a high exposure to the Criminal Justice System, this exposure does not automatically transform into understanding of what has occurred, or is occurring, particularly at an intellectual level. One only has to look at the terms ‘bail’, and ‘suspended sentence’.

There remain people at Wadeye who, while they have been released on bail numerous times, continue to ‘flout the law’ and not answer their bail conditions because they do not understand bail is but conditional liberty. Consequently, they are often angered when a Warrant of Apprehension is issued for their arrest and they are detained by Police, later being brought before the court to answer a breach for a condition which they did not know existed.

Further, the concept of a ‘suspended’ sentence remains a mystery to many. They serve a period in jail, are released and go home. Unfortunately, many are unaware that they are now subject to a Good Behaviour Bond. Even if they have this level of understanding, they are often totally unaware it requires them to be of good behaviour for a particular period and, should this be breached, they must return to court and most likely serve the remainder of their suspended sentence in addition to receiving further punishment for the new offence.

The use of interpreters, endorsed by Judges Mildren, Muirhead, Deane and Kirby, and greater understanding generated by materials such as the Legal Glossary should, theoretically, decrease the incidence of such occurrences or at least the lack of understanding presently in existence.

6. Why a legal glossary is required

Such a document is required for two primary reasons:

1) First and foremost, its production will bring out from hiding the ‘secret language of the law’ belonging to the dominant other. By doing so, it has the capacity to assist in the greatest process which can occur between people, cultures and nations – that of education which generates real intellectual understanding of how the ‘other’ looks at the world.

As noted above, such work creates an effective communication link, allowing discovery of another and participation within their world. While merely a beginning, Indigenous people are then able to make decisions based on properly understood knowledge or information obtained. Suddenly, with an understanding of the overall system, a clear choice begins to manifest itself.
The word list generated by the Glossary also begins to paint a picture of the courtroom, the personnel involved, their roles and their place within it. It also illuminates the role of the Police Record of Interview. In doing so, it is hoped that this will aid and clarify the interaction between lawyer, interpreter and client. It may also serve to diminish to some small extent the fear of the client or accused (and often the interpreter also!) within a courtroom or Police interview scenario.

2) Secondly, through its production, police, lawyers, magistrates and Judges have become far more aware of how words and concepts are dealt with and discussed in another language and context. It will explain why a single word may be pronounced in English which requires a lengthy discussion in Murrinh-patha, the reason being that, simply, there is no direct interpretation, leading to the requirement for the initial construction of a layered intellectual base of knowledge, in order to eventually convey the concept required.

From this, it is hoped that all levels of the judicial system will become more aware of the ways in which to ask questions of Indigenous persons. They will appreciate the extra care required to be taken in laying a foundation of understanding from a conceptual viewpoint, having realized that the particular words and the contexts to which they relate are utterly foreign to Indigenous persons and are not capable of direct interpretation.

It will also reduce the possibility of gratuitous concurrence, the false admission of guilt made by a defendant in order to escape from intolerable pressure. This has been documented amongst Indigenous defendants in other parts of Australia (Liberman 1981; Eades 1992) and amongst defendants in the Wadeye region (Tudorstack v. J Chula et al. 2004), and is guarded against by the Anunga rules (ALR 1976). A much more pressing problem for the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service is to convince defendants of their right to silence (Dumoo v. Garner 1998).

7. Process

In order to translate the legal terminology for the Glossary, our process followed a simple template:

- We (McCormack and Ford) would ensure that together we understood the meaning of the legal term. We referred often to a legal dictionary and also a law handbook produced by the Darwin Community Legal Service to confirm our understanding.
- If McCormack was unable to provide an immediate interpretation for the legal term, we would consult with our Indigenous language experts:
  - We would confirm whether they understood the term.
  - If this was the case, was the term capable of direct interpretation? At times it was, e.g. nanthi darrarart ‘a stealing offence'; mungam+ngi+wil (‘he has done+me+force’): ‘he used duress on me.’
  - On other occasions there was no directly related term.
If the experts did not directly understand the term:

- McCormack and Ford would then produce a plain English version of the legal term.
- McCormack would then read the plain English version of the term to our colleagues, followed by his view of what the interpretation could be. This forced McCormack to confront the limits of his current understanding of Murrinh-patha.
- By doing this, our Murrinh-patha colleagues gained an understanding of the English concept behind the term concerned.
- We explored the translation via discussion and provision of examples – including role-playing by McCormack – for as long as was necessary.
- Once all were comfortable with our interpreted result, a translated version of the legal term would then be typed, checked for spelling and read back in total to the group. At this point the version would be accepted, or totally rejected by the elders, or have amendments made to it. Sometimes amendments were required when Ford had, throughout the myriad of discussion points, constructed a sentence incorrectly or added/deleted certain markers. This would provoke general laughter, and a discussion of the error amongst our colleagues. Progress would then be halted until this error was corrected.
- In working with our female Murrinh-patha colleagues, there were certain culture-specific protocols which had to be observed where the discussion of certain matters, for example those of a sexual nature, could not occur in a mixed group. McCormack was required to leave the room in order to allow
the women to discuss with Ford such topics. The youngest female in the group, the interpreter, wanted to create legal definitions in Murrinh-patha of indecent assault, rape and incest, because she had interpreted in court cases involving these offences. But the female elders were adamant in their refusal to discuss these matters even in an all-female group, nor would they countenance their inclusion in a public document such as the legal glossary.

It was very important that the project was long-term. It took place over a period of four years, thus allowing time for all members of the team to get to know and trust each other and build respect for each other’s expertise. It enabled the team to revise the draft glossary several times and to submit the final draft to the scrutiny of the TRC at Wadeye. The final version of the glossary has been sent to Batchelor Press for publication in hard copy to be distributed free to members of the Wadeye Community and all lawyers admitted to practise in the Northern Territory.

8. The Glossary

Although some direct Murrinh-patha equivalents of English terms exist, e.g. *dar-rarart* ‘steal’, most English terms require a Plain English paraphrase. The Murrinh-patha words are accompanied by a morpheme-by-morpheme gloss of each Murrinh-patha word and an English paraphrase. For example, we needed to par-
aphrase the English term ‘bail’. Many Indigenous people, trainee interpreters included, understand this word to mean: ‘you are free to go’, these being the final words that a Magistrate regularly pronounces before the person concerned leaves the courtroom. However, Indigenous people are most often unaware that it is, in fact, conditional liberty, requiring the defendant actually to return!

Our translation of the term ‘bail’ is as follows:

Bail

Ampa Ngay=ka ngungu+nhi+wuy=nu marra damatha
OK I=TOP I will (A32)+you+ set free=will today just
‘All right, I will just set you free today’

Mu, ngay=ka marda mangan+art
But I=TOP belly I have (A9)+desire
‘But what I want is that’

nhinhi=ka da+nga+yet=nu mange kanhi
you=TOP you will (A14)+to me+promise=will deed this
‘you are to promise me’

ngarra ngay ma+mpa=nu=ka thama=nu
that I I will tell (A8)+to you=will=TOP you will do (A34)=will
‘to just do these things that I will tell you’

5 Abbreviations: A Auxiliary verb; ERG Ergative (marks the agent of a transitive verb); FOC Focus marker; HITH Towards speaker; INSTR Instrumental; NC Noun Classifier; REDUP Reduplicated; REFL Reflexive; TOP Topic marker; THITH Away from speaker; + marks boundary between grammatical words; = marks boundary between host word and clitic particle.

6 The spelling system used in this glossary is the phonemic orthography developed by Chester and Lyn Street of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, and used at Wadeye since 1976 (Street 1987: 3-4, 8-9, 19, 30, 35-37). Murrinh-patha has twenty three phonemes. They are:
Vowels: i, e, a, u.
Consonants:
Stops: p, b, t, d, k, g, pronounced much as in English;
rt and rd are voiceless and voiced retroflex stops, made with the tongue tip curled back;
th is voiceless and laminal, made with the blade of the tongue. th is realized as a dental stop, made with the tongue touching or between the teeth, before a, u, and as a palatal stop, made with the tongue touching the roof of the mouth, before i, e.
dh is voiced and laminal. It lenites into an interdental fricative, made with the tongue between the teeth, before a, u, and is realized as a palatal stop, made with the tongue touching the roof of the mouth, before i, e.
Nasals: bilabial m; laminal nh (dental before a, u, and palatal before i, e); alveolar n; retroflex rn; dorso-velar ng.
Laterals: alveolar l, and retroflex rl.
Rhotics: retroflex continuant r, and alveolar flap between vowels or trill rr elsewhere.
damatha. Mange=ka kanhi=wa:
just deed=TOP this=THITH
‘These are the actions’

Nhinhi=ka thurdi+wurl=kathu=nu da ngarra ngay
you=TOP you will (A30)+ return=HITH=will TimeNC which I
‘You will come back here at a time that I’

ma+mpa=nu. Da+ngini=ka 4 July 2005, 1.00 pm.
I will tell+to you=will TimeNC+that=TOP 4 July 2005, 1.00 pm.
(A8)+
‘tell you to – that time is 4 July 2005, at 1 pm.’

Mu nuparl=nu ngatha murrinh+kanhi=ka
But you break=will suppose WordNC+this=TOP
‘But, suppose you break these conditions’

mere pirdith damatha
NEG long just

thurdi+wurl=nu ngarra murrinh+court
you will (A30)+ return=will to WordNC+court
‘you will soon just return to the court’

i kama=ka ngay=ka nga+mpa+dhap=nu deyida.
and maybe=TOP I=TOP I will (A19)+on you+close door=will again.
‘and I may lock you up again’

‘All right, I will just set you free today. I want you to promise me to just do these things that I will tell you. These things are:

1) ‘You will come back here at a time that I tell you to – that time is 4 July 2005, at 1 pm.’

2) ‘But, suppose you break these conditions, within a short time you will just return to the court and I may lock you up again.’

‘Suspended Sentence’. Again, most Indigenous persons that we have worked with are confused by this combination of words. While many will appreciate the significance of ‘sentence’ meaning ‘to receive punishment’, the addition of the word ‘suspended’ does not have any contextual background to it. For example, consider that when punishment is imposed in an Indigenous context, there would be no thought of not carrying out that punishment, or only carrying out part of it, having the remainder conditional upon an event yet to occur. Yet that is exactly how the legal term of ‘suspended sentence’ operates in practice. Our translation of the term ‘suspended sentence’ is as follows:
Suspended Sentence

Ngay=ka pule ngala i ngay=ka nga+mpa+mut=nu
I=TOP boss big and I=TOP I will (A19/20)+to you+give=will
‘I am the magistrate and I will give you’

merrk perrkenku +numi.
moon two+one
‘three months’

Mu ngay=ka nga+mpa+dhap=nu merrk perrkenku damatha.
But I=TOP I (19)+on you+shut door=will moon two just
‘But I will lock you up just for two months’

Merrk numi=ka dam+nhi+we+bath da ngatha kanam
moon one=TOP it does (A19)+you+head+bring TimeNC suppose it is (A4)
‘One month is continually hanging over your head’

Ne+wiye=nu ngatha ngarra thangku numi.
You will do (A10)+bad+will suppose for wet season one
‘Suppose you were to commit offences during that one year’

Bere, ngalarr=ka ma+nhi+rt=nu deyida
OK police=TOP he will do (A8)+you+grab=will again
‘OK, the police will arrest you again’

i murrinh+court thurdi+wurl=nu. Kama=ka ngay=ka
and WordNC+court you will (A30) return=will. Maybe=TOP I=TOP
‘and you will come back into court. I may’

nga+mpa+dhap=nu merrk numi ngini deyida
I will (A19/20)+on you+shut door=will moon one that again
‘lock you up again for that one month’

i merrk ngamere kama nga+mpa+dhap=nu
and month some maybe I will (A19)+on you+shut door=will
‘plus any extra time’

mange wiye marra thamam.
deed bad new you have done (A34)
‘for the new offence you have committed.’

“I am the magistrate and I will give you three months. But I will lock you up for just two months. One month is continually hanging over your head. If during that year you were to commit an offence, the police will arrest you again and you will
come back into court. I may lock you up again for that one month plus any extra time for the new offence you have committed”.

‘Indirect Force’. To convey the notion of Indirect Force we had to construct the following culturally plausible scenario:

Indirect force

Kanhi ngatha=ka:-

This suppose=TOP

‘What about this?’

Nanthi+thanangkuy ngatha men*+tharr pinthim kangkarl

ThingNC+ dugout suppose he has (A10) tied it up it is hanging (A5) on high

i kardu=ka pepe pirrim.

and PersonNC=TOP under he stands (A3)

‘Someone has tied up a canoe so it is suspended up high and there is a man standing underneath’

Kardu numi=de=ka marda mangan+art

PersonNC one-again=TOP belly he has (A9)+want

‘Another person wants’

pu+na+rtal=nu nanthi+pi

he will chop (A23)+on him+cut=will ThingNC+rope

‘to cut the rope’

i thanangkuy ngini=ka pani+na+yagal=nu

and dugout this=TOP it will be (A4)+on him+fall=will

‘so this canoe will fall down’

i pi yibi=nu kardu ngarra pirrim

and rope it will lie down (A2)=will PersonNC who he stands (A3)

‘and lie on the man standing underneath’

pepe i mam=dha thathippirr.

underneath and he has done it=PAST really

‘and he does it and it really happens.’

* By morphophonemic rule mem+tharr>menh+tharr, written mentharr (Street 1987: 106).
"What about this: someone has tied up a canoe so it is suspended up high and there is a man standing underneath. OK, then the other man decides to cut the rope on him, so that the canoe will fall down and lie on the man standing underneath and he does it and it really happens."

The glossary also reveals how specific Murrinh-patha is with respect to descriptors dealing with violent action. The language contains numerous specific terms for the location of bruises, and different terms for differing strikes to different parts of the body. In these instances the opposite would occur to the normal complaint levelled by lawyers and others; for a complete sentence in English, such as 'the bruise is on my upper arm' there would be but a single Murrinh-patha term *wurdanmalawi*.

9. Conclusion

The project has had several successful outcomes:

- a legal glossary of the most commonly used English legal terms
- an increased understanding of the legal process by the Murrinh-patha elders who worked on the project
- an increased understanding of the subtleties of Murrinh-patha by the non-Indigenous researchers.

The Glossary has also proved to be a useful pedagogical tool in the training of Indigenous interpreters, because it consists largely of paraphrases which provide an Australian Indigenous context for each legal concept. The rigour with which it was conducted is evident in the attention to detail of the rendering of legal terms and the morpheme-by-morpheme glosses provided for each Murrinh-patha translation. Agencies in other areas of the Northern Territory are now looking to incorporate the successful features of the project in their own attempts to construct legal glossaries in local Indigenous languages.

The Glossary is currently in publication stage, and will appear as a pocket-sized booklet entitled *Murrinh Tetemanthai ngarra Murrinh Court nukun* 'Those difficult words that belong to the court'.

The Law Society of the Northern Territory has acknowledged the importance of the Glossary by offering to distribute the published glossary to all 500 lawyers who annually qualify to practise in the Northern Territory. Funds are being sought to provide an audio version of the glossary, to reach the many non-literate Murrinh-patha speakers. Finally, plans are underway to hold a meeting with other similar projects, notably that undertaken by the Aboriginal Resource & Development Services Inc. (ARDS) at Yirrkala, to swap expertise and disseminate the insights learnt from the Murrinh-patha project.
References


A corpus-based study of the translation of IT terms

Sattar Izwaini

Abstract

The language of information technology (LIT) is characterized by its special vocabulary, which is transferred cross-linguistically when information technology is introduced to other language communities. The language community translates and creates the vocabulary needed for communication in that language. This paper presents the findings of a corpus-based study of the translation of IT terms from English into Swedish. Specialized electronic corpora of English texts and their Swedish translations are used to trace terms and their Swedish counterparts. The paper discusses IT terminology, how it is transferred into Swedish, and what factors play a role in shaping Swedish LIT. Four strategies were found to be adopted to translate IT terms into Swedish. A fifth strategy is a combination of two strategies.

1. Introduction

Information Technology (IT) has introduced a specialized variety of English specifically used in the field of IT. The language of information technology (LIT) is characterized by its special vocabulary which is transferred cross-linguistically when IT is introduced into another language community. The language community translates and creates the vocabulary needed for such a specialized communication. The linguistic and cultural aspects are the main issues that the translation of IT terms has to deal with.

There are two studies that have investigated the translation of IT terms into Swedish. The first was by Wedbjer Rambell (1995) who used hard-copy data to

1 I would like to thank Ylva Berglund and an anonymous reviewer for commenting on an earlier version of this paper. All drawbacks, however, are solely mine.
investigate the translation of computer users’ guides into Swedish. Her main focus was the influence of English on Swedish in this field and how close Swedish computer terms are to their English originals. Terms were grouped under three categories: identical, partially identical and non-identical. The study also investigated word class, length of terms, how English-influenced terms are adapted to Swedish, and which English terms lack Swedish equivalents.

The second was a corpus-based study of IT vocabulary and its translation into Arabic and Swedish (Izwaini 2004). An electronic corpus of about 8 million tokens in English was used to identify key words along with their lexical collocations and metaphoric use to trace the translation strategies used to render them. Nine translation strategies were identified. The methodology, however, was different from the one I used here. Here, linguistic term indicators (Pearson 1998) are used to identify terms (see 2 below).

Swedish has dealt with the linguistic aspect of IT ever since the technology started to be introduced into a Swedish context. This paper presents the findings of a corpus-based study of the cross-linguistic transference of IT terms and how they are shaped in Swedish.

2. Data and methodology

The data are taken from two electronic corpora of specialized texts (Izwaini 2004). The English corpus is 2.7 million words of running texts taken from computer systems and software online help, hardware and software manuals, IT specialized web sites, computer electronic magazines, and computer guides. The Swedish texts (about 2.72 million words) are the translations of the English texts.

Term signals such as e.g., i.e., the term, called, and known as (Pearson 1998) are used to look for terms in the English corpus on both left-hand and right-hand sides of the term signal. Terms are identified by producing concordances of the term signals using WordSmith Tools (Scott 1997). WordSmith is a software package which, among other tasks, generates word lists and word concordances (see Figure 1 below).

In the English corpus 159 terms were identified: e.g. (29 occurrences, 12 terms), i.e. (4 occurrences, 1 term), known as (98 occurrences, 14 terms), the term (17 occurrences, 10 terms), and called (521 occurrences, 123 terms). One term, web page, is cross-identified by two term signals. Appendix 1 presents the terms identified in the data.

Many terms found in the corpus are either related to mathematics because of its relation to computer science, or related to text processing because many online help files are from word processing software. In one online help file, the terms are introduced with a heading as typography glossary. The present study, however, focuses on IT-related terms only. The fact that only 159 IT terms were identified in a corpus of 2.7 million tokens indicates that term signals are not widely used in LIT.

2 My thanks to Adobe, Anfy, Apple, Epson, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, Novell, Quark, Samsung, and Siemens for granting me permission to use their texts in my study.
To have a systematic way of selecting the terms to be investigated, frequency of constituent elements of the terms identified is taken as a criterion. A word list was made of the terms identified to check the most frequent elements with a cut-off of three occurrences, thus limiting the investigation to the terms that include the most frequent tokens. In other words, the terms listed in Appendix 1 are processed by WordSmith to produce a list of the constituent elements according to their frequency to include the terms that incorporate the top frequent tokens (see Figure 2 and Table 1 in 3 below).

To identify the Swedish counterparts of the English terms, the ParaConc tool is used (Barlow 1995). ParaConc provides a search facility for up to four corpora. Its search window is divided into two (or more) panels where concordances of the search word are displayed in one window, and sentences in the target language (TL) where corresponding words can occur are given in another window (see Figure 3 below).

It is worth noting that translations of SL terms are not only checked in their occurrences next to term indicators, but also in all other occurrences in the corpus.

The terms that are identified in the English corpus are presented first so that the strategies that are used to translate those terms can be discussed subsequently.

3. Findings

First, it seems that called is the most frequently-used term signal in LIT with 123 terms making up about 77% of the total number. On the other hand, i.e. is the least-used term indicator with only one term (about 0.6%). Another important observation is that the terms that are singled out comprise a substantial number of phrasal terms. The number of phrasal terms is much higher than one-word terms, making up 61% of the term list. This can have an implication in the rendition process: the TL compounding rules play a role in the translated version. Third, many terms are metaphorically coined.
of meaning and metaphor are extensively used methods in creating terms, e.g. anchor, button, server, and virus. Also, and quite expectedly, acronyms and abbreviations are a key component of LIT. About 14% of the terms are either an abbreviated structure or include one, such as DML, USB, CD ROM, and OLE.
The list of 159 terms that are identified comprises 278 tokens. *Data* occurs seven times in the list, and *text* occurs six times. *Box* and *OLE* occur five times each, and *form* occurs four times. Eleven words (button, CD, custom, destination, drive, field, key, master, mode, object and server) have three occurrences (see Figure 2 above and Table 1 below). 27 words have two occurrences and 164 words occur only once in the list.

All in all, there are 52 terms whose translations are to be investigated. Eight terms have their constituent elements appearing in two categories, for example OLE and server. The term OLE server appears in the five-occurrence category and the three-occurrence category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seven occurrences</td>
<td>data</td>
<td>data consumer, data factory, data field, data markers, DML (data manipulation language), MAPI data stores, Remote Data Service (RDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six occurrences</td>
<td>text</td>
<td>bound text box, master text, scrolling text control, text box, text file, threading text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five occurrences</td>
<td>box</td>
<td>bound text box, check box, combo box, custom dialog box, text box</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OLE</td>
<td>OLE automation servers, OLE DB consumer, OLE object, OLE server, OLE servers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four occurrences</td>
<td>form</td>
<td>form, main form, modal pop-up form, primary form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three occurrences</td>
<td></td>
<td>home button, push button, radio button</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD ROM drive, CD Plus, enhanced CD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>custom, custom dialog box, custom toolbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>destination, destination document, URL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD ROM drive, IDE drive, temporary drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>data field, field, field template</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>alternate key, foreign key, primary key</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>digital master, master text, slide master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>design mode, LBA mode, run mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>component object model (COM), object applications, OLE object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>server, OLE server, server management agent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1.* Most frequent words in the term list and the terms in which they appear

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3 Eight terms appear in two different categories. These are bound text box, CD ROM drive, custom dialog box, data field, master text, OLE object, OLE server, and text box.
Some terms and constituent elements within the term list presented here such as data, box, file, object, server, computer, and software are identified as key words according to another methodology I followed elsewhere (Izwaini 2004). Also, some words identified here such as data, file, object, program, and system are among the top frequent types of the Computer Science Corpus (James et al. 1994). Whereas the key words that were produced in those studies are based on frequency, the results of the present study are terms based on linguistic term signals rather than frequency. Using terms indicators rather than frequency, the methodology of the present study has the merit of detecting terms in small numbers such as temporary drive and field template; both have one occurrence only. Moreover, and unlike the other two methodologies, this methodology can produce phrasal terms; the majority of terms presented here are phrasal terms.

As the data used here include more texts from Microsoft, many terms in Table 1 above are unique for texts of the Windows system and Office package. There are a few terms that are only found in texts that belong to one company, for example CD Plus and enhanced CD (Apple Mac), threading text (PageMaker and InDesign of Adobe), URL destination (PageMaker of Adobe), and IDE drive (Siemens). However, many terms, especially those of wide use in IT such as server, text box, and text file are found across texts and genres.

Having presented a general overview of the terms, now I will attempt to discuss some individual terms.

One frequent word is OLE. It stands for object linking and embedding. It is engaged in compounds where it is the non-head element, e.g. OLE automation servers and OLE DB consumer. As for DB, it stands for database. Hence, we have complex phrasal terms with one or more abbreviations which are themselves phrasal terms. This results in multi-compound terms of a particular character that might need special attention in the translation process.

Text also becomes part of phrasal terms, as either the head or the non-head element, for example master text and text box. The term threading text refers to the process where the word threading is figuratively used:

(1) The process of connecting text among frames is called threading text.

Also, toolbar clearly shows the metaphor used by LIT to create its own terminology. On the other hand, server has become an LIT term by semantic extension.

In the graphical user interface a button is usually used to give the user a pictorial metaphor of different kinds of buttons. A push button is the area with dialogue that should be clicked when the user is asked to make a choice:

(2) If your computer doesn’t understand push button names (such as OK or Cancel)

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4 Microsoft is a leading company in the field and its terminology dominates the IT industry. Its systems, software, and websites have more material, monolingual and multilingual, available than other IT companies.
As for radio button, it is of a graphical nature and does not refer to the same object to which it normally refers outside the computer screen. It is another designation of the term option button:

(3) option button
A control that can be selected or cleared. Option buttons are typically used as part of an option group in which the user can select one and only one option [...] This button is sometimes called a radio button in other applications.

As the definition shows, the term radio button is a confusing designation. Out of its constituent elements the shape and/or function of such a button is not clear. Another consideration is whether the adverb sometimes makes the term signal of less significance, and whether radio button should not be considered as a term.

Home button refers to the graphical button that takes the user back to the beginning of the document, first page of the website, or table of contents. The meaning of home in general is difficult to determine in the source language (SL) and it has cultural and social associations (Stubbs 1995: 386f), which can have an implication for the translation decision.

As for box, it is the head noun in all its occurrences where the function and role of the box are specified. In one term, combo box, the word combo is informal5. Informal coinage can also be seen in the term modal pop-up form.

An interesting term is CD-ROM which is a compound structure. It includes two abbreviated forms linked together (‘Compact Disc’-‘Read-only Memory’), as it is a combination of an initialism (CD) and an acronym (ROM).

Whereas key normally refers to the physical component of a keyboard, here it refers to a field in a database. Key is a software-specific term, i.e. it is used in the online help of one software product to refer to some entry. A key is primary when it is the entry in a database. Otherwise it is foreign if it is from another table:

(4) You use a unique tag, called a primary key, to identify each record in your table.
(5) A primary key is called a foreign key when it is referred to from another table.

As for alternate key, it is any key that is not a primary key:

(6) Any candidate key that is not the primary key is called an alternate key.

Having discussed the IT terms in English, I will move now to discuss how these terms are translated into Swedish.

5 Combo is some kind of clipping of combination. A combo box is a window, often within a dialog box, that has both a scrollable list and a field where text can be entered.
4. IT terminology in Swedish

This section provides a discussion of the way in which IT terms are translated into Swedish: how translators deal with these terms and what factors play a role in their renditions. First, the section gives a brief account of terminology work in Sweden.

4.1. Work with IT terminology in Sweden

There are specialized bodies that coordinate the efforts of standardizing IT terminology in Swedish and their translation such as Datatermgruppen (computer terminology group) and Standardiseringskommissionen i Sverige, SIS (Swedish Standards Institute). The members of Datatermgruppen are standardization and language-related bodies, local representatives of major IT companies, some Swedish translation companies, higher education institutions and national press organizations (Karlsson 1997: 171). Final recommendations that are made by Datatermgruppen are published on its website, which has a search facility for terms. Thus, the work of the Group is put quickly at the disposal of translators and localizers and easily comes to the notice of the public.

There are two principles upon which IT terminology is being created and standardized in Swedish (Karlsson 1997: 168). The first is the understanding of IT-related aspects whose terms have entered general language. The second is to provide a full set of native terminology for a specific field. IT terminology is translated into Swedish by using a native term first. Using Swedish vocabulary is the first choice and translators are encouraged to create Swedish words (Karlsson 1997: 173ff). If no Swedish word is available, foreign terms are dealt with by loan translation. The third method is borrowing, where foreign vocabulary is adopted after certain prerequisites have been fulfilled, such as determining spelling, pronunciation, gender, and the ability to conjugate and compound (ibid.). The native character and homogenous composition of the Swedish language is of great significance for language institutions as well as individuals, in the sense that terms are coined and modelled according to the language system.

4.2. Translation of IT terms into Swedish

The translation of LIT into Swedish has had to cater for the need for corresponding vocabulary that would qualify as Swedish IT terminology. Actually, the coinage of terms and the transference of LIT have gone hand in hand. For example, Swedish has used derivation to have a designation for computer where the tool/device suffix -or is added to data to produce dator. It is not clear, however, whether the Swedish term was triggered by the process of terminologization or was a product of the translation of LIT.

In this study, it has been found that translators opt for different strategies to render IT terms in Swedish. Terms that are made of one word are rendered by
direct translation, e.g. form and destination, or by borrowing as is the case with
server. The strategies that are used are loan translation, borrowing, explicitation,
and cultural adaptation. Below is a discussion of these strategies.

Many phrasal terms identified here are not included in the term list presented
by Datatermgruppen. However, many constituent elements of phrasal terms are
usually dealt with by providing a native word, which shows an adherence to the
first rule stated by Datatermgruppen.

4.2.1. Loan translation

To carry out the translation of IT terminology, translators extensively use loan trans-
lation. Out of 52 terms 19 are translated using this strategy making up 36.5%, bear-
ing in mind that 8 terms (about 15%) are translated by using a combination of bor-
rowing and loan translation (see 4.2.2 below). Examples of loan translation include
textruta for text box, datafält for data field, and körläge for run mode where the con-
stituent elements of these terms are one-to-one equivalents of the elements of the SL
term. The common roots of the two languages are a helpful factor in adopting this
strategy.

The culture-related term Home button is treated in the same way; it is trans-
lated into knappen Hem (the-button home). However, when the SL term refers to
a function in a website the translation startsida (start page) is used. Explaining the
term and describing what it refers to in the IT context makes the translation strat-
egy one of explicitation rather than of loan translation (see 4.2.3 below).

There is discrepancy in the translation of custom dialog box. There are three
Swedish counterparts: anpassad dialogruta (customized dialog-square) with 51%,
egen dialogruta (own dialog-square) with 39%, and egendefinierad dialogruta
(own-identified dialog-square) with 9% of occurrences. Whereas the most fre-
quently-used translation is the most appropriate one, there are still two different
renditions that comprise almost half of the number of translations. This goes
against a basic principle in terminology work – choosing one designation for one
concept – and thus compromises the goal of a standardized terminology. Here ter-
minology and standardization bodies have a role to play in trying to unify multi-
ple renditions.

The same situation can be found in the translation of design mode into form-
givningsläge as well as designläge. However, the latter is also used to translate design
view, resulting in a confusing situation for the reader/user. Although view is a
slightly different label from mode, the two SL terms can have the same reference
in the SL which might have led to a unifying translation. This is a good practice
that can facilitate the standardization of terminology.

Another case of discrepancy is found in translating object applications into
objektprogram, where program is also used to translate software as well as utility
(Izwaní 2004: 120). The border seems to be blurred in dealing with these terms.
An application is a software, but a software is not always an application.
Discrepancy can also be found in translating *data consumer* as *datakonsument* as well as *datakund* (data customer). Whereas loan translation is used in the first rendition, explicitation is used in the second (see 4.2.3 below). The important issue here is that all translations are from texts that belong to the same IT company with 50% of them dealt with by each strategy. No reason seems to have led to this situation. The SL term is used to describe an application in both examples:

(7) In OLE DB terms, when you access data from your application, your application is often defined as a data consumer.

*I* OLE DB-*sammanhang definieras ditt program som en datakonsument när du, via programmet, får tillgång till data.*

(8) In the OLE DB architecture, the application that accesses the data is called a data consumer...

*I* OLE DB-*arkitekturen kallas den tillämpning som kommer åt data för datakund.*

Other terms that are rendered by loan translation include *måldokumentet* for *destination document*, *fältmall* for *field template*, and *bunden textruta* for *bound text box*. As stated in the principles of translating IT terms in Swedish (see 4.1 above), this strategy is adopted due to the lack of native terms that can act as translations for the SL terms. Translations provide one-to-one renditions of the constituent elements of the SL terms. As a consequence, these renditions are new lexical combinations in the Swedish language introduced by the translation of LIT.

As is generally known, LIT is created in an English-speaking environment which has a close relation to its Swedish counterpart. The common roots and the history of linguistic interaction between the SL and the TL have contributed to some degree of correspondence between their vocabularies. This has made it possible and convenient to opt for loan translation as the main strategy used to render IT terms into Swedish.

### 4.2.2. Borrowing

Borrowing is the second widely-used translation strategy. About 19% of the terms in our list are borrowed into the TL. Also, about 19% of the terms are partly borrowed (see below and 4.2.3). The fact that Sweden is a technology-exporting society does not make the direction of terminology ‘traffic’ outwards. The direction is inwards, especially when it comes to IT terminology.

This strategy is used in particular with abbreviated structures such as acronyms and abbreviations, e.g. *OLE DB-konsument* for *OLE DB consumer*. The complex nature of such terms can be the main reason for borrowing them. Swedish has no corresponding abbreviated structures to translate them. Also, opting for expanding them by providing a TL counterpart for each element can produce unnecessarily long terms.

Borrowing includes even full versions of abbreviated structures:
The borrowing of the abbreviated structures seems to have led to the borrowing of their full versions, especially when they are next to each other in the original text. They are likely to be seen as foreign words of a specific terminological nature. Unavailability of established Swedish renditions can be a factor when opting for borrowing. Exact reference and conciseness of terms as well as tight deadlines might also have led the translator to choose the full transference of the term into the TL. Another probable reason is the assumption that an IT user or a reader of IT literature has some knowledge of English and/or computing that can help in understanding those terms.

Adopting this strategy in dealing with abbreviated structures would lead to a high number of terms not being localized; acronyms and abbreviations are frequently used in LIT. In a small-scale research like the present study they constitute 14% of the term list.

Borrowing is also used to deal with some term elements that have a special character such as *pop-up*, translating *pop-up form* as *pop up-formulär*. Swedish has attempted to ‘swedize’ *pop-up* into *poput* (Izwaini 2004: 176) or into *poppuppfönster* as a translation of *pop-up window* (Datatermgruppen website).

*Server* and *file* are also borrowed. *Server* is what is suggested by Datatermgruppen to be the Swedish counterpart of the English term. As for *file*, it is worth noting that the Swedish word used for the non-electronic form of file is different and can be *register* or *arkiv*. Thus a *textfil* (text-file) is a novel combination that has found its way into Swedish with the transference of a special language. However, *arkiv* is used as an equivalent for the File menu in the graphical user interface. Wedbjär Ramell notes that only *arkiv* is related to word processing (1995: 44). *Server*, on the other hand, has a very low frequency in Swedish with only 12 occurrences in the Parole Corpus of the Bank of Swedish, with 20 million running words (Bank of Swedish website), and no occurrences in SUC (Stockholm-Umeå Corpus) which holds one million words (Källgren 1994). *Server* is newly introduced into the language; it first appeared in 1998 in the 12th edition of the Swedish lexicon issued by the Swedish Academy.

The borrowed term *LBA mode* seems to be retained in the target text because it is originally one part of a phrasal term (with *control*) that was already kept for some reason, probably for precise reference. Another plausible reason is using it as a heading or when introducing it for the first time. This, however, cannot justify keeping it in the original form, because within the text it is translated into *LBA-läge*. As long as it has already been translated, the translation should have been adopted throughout.

Many terms are retained in the Swedish translations without any attempt to adapt them to the phonological, morphological systems or writing norms of the
TL. For example, the English plural form in *OLE automation servers* is not translated into the Swedish corresponding form *serverar*. The latter form is what Datatermgruppen advises using. In fact, it is what is normally used when translating LIT into Swedish.

Other terms that are kept in the TL include *CD Plus, enhanced CD, component object model (COM)*. This practice goes against a basic rule stated by Datatermgruppen in dealing with IT terms: to borrow terms if they cannot be rendered by loan translation.

Partial borrowing is also used to translate IT terms. A compound strategy of borrowing and either loan translation or explicitation is used to deal with about 19% of the terms. Loan translation, however, is the majority in this combination as it is used to render eight terms, whereas explicitation is used in dealing with two terms only (see 4.2.3 below). Terms that are translated by a combined strategy usually include either abbreviated structures such as *OLE-objekt* for *OLE object* and *URL-mål* for *URL destination*, or elements that are already borrowed as single words, for example translating *text file* as *textfil* and *server management agent* as *serverhanteringsagent* where one element is borrowed.

In some terms where elements are of a metaphorical character the translation uses the tool structure characteristic of Swedish. Hence the figurative aspect is no longer present in the translation. In the following example, which is a partial borrowing, *stores* are translated into *lagrare*, which is a nominalization of the verb *lagra* (to store), using the agent or tool form:

(11) ... items are stored in folders known as MAPI data stores, or containers...
   ...
   ...objekt lagras i mappar som brukar benämnas MAPI-lagrare eller behållare.

Here we have a case of deletion where *data* is not rendered into the TL version of the term. It seems that deletion is justified by the fact that the TL version does not affect the technical aspect of the term.

In addition to other reasons mentioned above that can lead to borrowing, it seems that the complex nature of these structures can be another reason for retaining them in the TL. Translators seem hesitant to venture Swedish translations. Another probable reason is that the translation policy of the IT company instructs to keep them for precise reference.

### 4.2.3. Explicitation

Opting for borrowing and loan translation is not always the case, however. Translators also choose to use other strategies to overcome different kinds of problems. One strategy is explicitation which is used to deal with 19% of our terms as well as in about 4% where it is used along with borrowing. For example, the term *combo box* has an informal profile and a figurative aspect that the TL is not able to take in. Therefore, a translation with the technical understanding is adopted by rendering it as *kombinationsruta* (combination square). This is some
type of cross-linguistic explanation of the technical concept. The same applies to the translation of master text as bakgrundstext (background text) and threading text as textram (text frame). The latter is based on the definition given to the term in the SL text (see example 1 in 3 above). However, the TL rendition is also used to translate text frame. This SL term is widely used; there are 202 occurrences of text frame whereas threading text has only 14 occurrences, all are from texts of one company. Texts of the same company also translate text frame with the same rendition, i.e.(textram). The translation catered for two SL terms with the same underlying concept. Such a practice is recommended to have a unified rendition that helps in the standardization process. A different rendition would result in having two TL terms for the same concept.

Using explicitation, master in slide master is translated as ‘background’ in bild-bakgrund (picture background). Here, the technical features rather than the linguistic elements of the term are the determining factor in the rendition. Also, digital master is translated into digital original (digital original). As master here is the head element of the term and the technical aspect dictates that it is not a background as such but rather the electronic original, a different rendition is chosen.

The context and logical relation among terms seem also to play a role in the translation of LIT. In some cases, the translation ignores the actual coinage and looks at other terms related to the term in hand. The overwhelming choice for the translation of foreign key is sekundärnyckel (secondary key) which accounts for about 84% of instances, while främmande nyckel (foreign key) constitutes about 16% of the translations. The first rendition is an explicitation of the SL term that takes into consideration the correspondence between this term and primärnyckel (primary key) which is the translation of primary key.

Explicitation is also used in translating data markers as dataserier (data series). However, this rendition makes up only 64.5% of the translations. Second in frequency with 26% is databrytpunkter (data break points) which is the majority of this percentage, and brytpunkter (without data). Nevertheless, the latter version is also used (in texts of a different company) to translate break points, which results in a discrepancy of TL terms, making the translation confusing. A third translation is datamarkörer (data markers) with only 9%. The word markör is ill-chosen; it is the term used for the blinking marker on the screen (cursor). All three translations are from texts of the same company. The reasons that can be thought of as to why the translator(s) used different renditions are tight time schedules and lack of coordination and terminology management in the translation and localization processes.

In terms that include drive, the figurative labelling of a mechanical component of the computer is based on the similarity of the process and function of both entities in real life and within the technical context of computers. The metaphorical aspect of the SL term can lead to the adoption of a technical description rather than the linguistic content. One example is translating drive into enhet (unit). The translation explicates the SL terms by making it clear, from a technical point of
view, what the components or devices are. Other examples include _datakund_ for _data consumer_, _tillfällig enhet_ for _temporary drive_, and _IDE-enhet_ for _IDE drive_. The latter is translated by a combination of borrowing and explicitation, which is also the case with _cdrom-enhet_ for _CD ROM drive_. It is worth mentioning that _tillfällig enhet_ is the TL term suggested by Datatermgruppen.

### 4.2.4. Cultural adaptation

In translation, and in the translation of LIT in particular, the cultural aspect is significant. This aspect can make the metaphor in translation sometimes sound strange or opaque. Translation filters metaphors due to collocational restrictions as well as cultural associations. One example is the word _bar_ in _toolbar_. In Swedish, _bar_ has different translations according to its collocates, for example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bar of chocolate</td>
<td>en chokladkaka (a chocolate cake)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bar of soap</td>
<td>en tvål (a soap)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bar graph</td>
<td>stapeldiagram (pile diagram)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bar iron</td>
<td>stängjärn (pole iron) (Lexin Dictionary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some cases, cultural adaptation is opted for to solve collocational and cultural problems. I am referring to the modification, adjustment and changes made to the SL words to have more appropriate words for the TL culture (Izwaini 2004: 231ff). Cultural adaptation is used to translate one term in our list making up about 2% of the terms. As Swedish has no 'bar' of 'tools', _toolbar_ is translated into _verktygsfält_ (tool field) based on its graphical nature in the user interface. It seems that the idea of a 'bar' is transformed into a 'field', which is a form of cultural adaptation. On the other hand, Swedish does have a 'box' of 'tools' which has made the translation of _toolbox_ into _verktygslåda_ (tool-box) straightforward. The existence of the same concept or item in the TL helps in producing translation equivalents. If the concept in the SL is the same in the TL, the metaphor used in the TL can be chosen as a translation for the SL metaphor.

It has to be emphasized that _verktygsfält_ is a novel combination in Swedish and that the translation of LIT has generated novel lexical collocations in Swedish, e.g. _datakund_, _fältmall_, and _dialogruta_ and many other word combinations.

### 5. Conclusion

The findings of a corpus-based investigation of IT terms and their translation into Swedish have been presented. The study identifies a number of terms and uses high frequency of words to single out the terms to be investigated.

Loan translation is found to be the main strategy opted for in translating IT terms into Swedish. IT terms are also borrowed when established Swedish translations are unavailable. In particular, borrowing takes place when dealing with
abbreviations or acronyms or when terms have a special linguistic form and meaning for which a Swedish counterpart is not likely to be found.

Other strategies such as explicitation and cultural adaptation are used as well to provide transparent Swedish terms. When the term is figuratively used and the metaphor is not available in Swedish, technically-oriented rendition is adopted. Technical description of the underlying concept of a term is usually resorted to when the English term cannot be dealt with by loan translation because of difficulty in producing a transparent term in the target language.

A combination of two strategies is also used to translate IT terms into Swedish. Borrowing is used either with loan translation or with explicitation, though the former is far more frequent.

One important outcome of the translation of IT terms is the multiple renditions of some SL terms, something which puts barriers in the way of establishing and standardizing IT terms in Swedish. Another outcome is the production of new lexical collocations in Swedish. Swedish LIT is in the process of establishing its special lexis and collocational patterns.

Finally, term signals are found to be translated into Swedish and thus can be a good tool to trace terminology in Swedish texts. Called and known as are usually translated into kallas, kallad, and kallat depending on the syntax and gender. Also, known as is translated as benämns (named). As for the signal the term, it is either translated into termen or deleted. Deletion takes place in about 41% of the occurrences. Also, e.g. is translated as t ex (an abbreviation for till exempel meaning for example), and the term indicator i.e. is translated as det vill säga (that is to say). Hence this expression and its abbreviated form d v s can also be of help in identifying terms in Swedish.
Appendix 1:
Term signals, number of terms, and identified terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e.g.</th>
<th>i.e.</th>
<th>known as</th>
<th>the term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 terms:</td>
<td>1 term:</td>
<td>14 terms:</td>
<td>10 terms:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD ROM drive</td>
<td>LBA mode</td>
<td>binding</td>
<td>Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>controller</td>
<td></td>
<td>byte</td>
<td>clipping path</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>firmware</td>
<td></td>
<td>digital ID</td>
<td>extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hardware</td>
<td></td>
<td>dingbat</td>
<td>leading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDE drive</td>
<td></td>
<td>DML (data manipulation</td>
<td>pivot area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masterslave settings</td>
<td></td>
<td>language)</td>
<td>point size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>memory modules</td>
<td></td>
<td>MAPI data stores</td>
<td>ragged left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operating system</td>
<td></td>
<td>object applications</td>
<td>ragged right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>server management agent</td>
<td></td>
<td>OLE automation servers</td>
<td>toolbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>software</td>
<td></td>
<td>OLE object</td>
<td>web page⁶</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>system board</td>
<td></td>
<td>OLE servers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>virus attack</td>
<td></td>
<td>pixel</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reflexive relationship</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>temporary drive</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>USB (universal serial bus)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

called

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e.g.</th>
<th>i.e.</th>
<th>known as</th>
<th>the term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>123 terms:</td>
<td>cookie</td>
<td>digital master</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>aliasing query</td>
<td>copy buffer</td>
<td>dimension</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>alternate key</td>
<td>cubes</td>
<td>document</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anchor</td>
<td>custom dialog box</td>
<td>domain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applet</td>
<td>custom method</td>
<td>drivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>applications</td>
<td>custom toolbar</td>
<td>dropbox</td>
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<td>attachment</td>
<td>data consumer</td>
<td>DSN files</td>
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<tr>
<td>bound text box</td>
<td>data factory</td>
<td>embedded style sheet</td>
<td></td>
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<td>browsing tool</td>
<td>data field</td>
<td>enhanced CD</td>
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<td>CD Plus</td>
<td>data markers</td>
<td>field</td>
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<td>check box</td>
<td>database provider</td>
<td>field template</td>
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<td>clip files</td>
<td>datasheet</td>
<td>file</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>combo box</td>
<td>delegate access</td>
<td>folder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>command</td>
<td>design mode</td>
<td>foreign key</td>
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<td>compact disc</td>
<td>design program</td>
<td>form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>component object model (COM)</td>
<td>destination</td>
<td>function</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computer</td>
<td>destination document</td>
<td>gateway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
<td>detail fields</td>
<td>global modules</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁶ ‘Web page’ is cross-identified by two term signals (‘the term’ and ‘called’).
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gutter
hanging punctuation
home button
hypertext markup language (html)
imposition
keyboard accelerator
label
LOAP databases
locale ID (LCID)
magic stretch
main form
marquee
master text
modal pop-up form
network domain
OLE DB consumer
OLE server
optical margin alignment
order date
order form
order report
parameter query
pirated software

pivot table
primary form
primary key
procedure
process
program
push button
radio button
readonly
regression analysis
Remote Data Service
(RDS)
replica
report
run mode
run time
screen frequency
screen ruling
scrolling text control
secure sites
security account password
select
server
slide master
slug
soft-proof
spike
standard
style
subfolder
subform
synchronization
table
text box
text file
threading text
toolbars
trapping
trapping order
Uniform Resource Locator
URL
URL destination
video mirroring
web folder
web page
wizard
worksheet

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Abstract

The sign language of the Italian Deaf can be considered a relatively new and challenging language of study and is especially interesting from a cross-cultural perspective. This paper presents a corpus approach for the multimodal analysis of discourse in the form of interpreted text in a multilingual setting: English, Italian and Italian Sign Language.

A corpus was selected representative of the genre most frequently encountered by professional sign language interpreters when working from English, to pinpoint linguistic and cultural features of interest that might emerge during this complex cross-cultural encounter.

The corpus is of a multimodal nature consisting in the video recordings of four academic speeches on sign language and interpretation, thus within the domain of linguistics, which were simultaneously interpreted from English into Italian and Italian Sign Language for a mixed Italian hearing and deaf audience. Problems related to the parallel transcription process, which was complicated by the three-dimensional nature of signs and the trilingual nature of the study, are discussed. Initial findings are reported on the microtextual analysis of linguistic and intercultural features revealing extensive textual recasting.

1. Introduction

Mediated linguistic and cultural contact between the English language and Italian Sign Language (Lingua Italiana dei Segni – LIS) is the subject of work-in-progress

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1 This paper is based on a presentation delivered at the 25th ICAME International Computer Archive of Modern and Medieval English Conference, Corpus linguistics: the state of the art twenty-five years on, University of Verona, Italy, 19-23 May 2004.
investigating a particular area of interpretation studies that is relatively new to Italy\textsuperscript{2}. Research is underway at the University of Trieste to discern if, how and to what extent English influences cultural and linguistic mediation when in contact with the gestural communication of a particular community of practice in Italian society: the profoundly Deaf who are also exposed to English like mainstream hearing people (Kellett Bidoli 2004, forthcoming b). Sign language as a language of study is especially interesting from a cross-cultural perspective and is very challenging when it comes to applying a parallel corpus approach to analyzing interpreted discourse in a trilingual setting: English the source language, Italian in relay from the English, and Italian Sign Language as the target discourse. A corpus approach has led to investigation in two directions. Firstly, the analysis of features of a linguistic and cultural nature that emerge during this complex cross-cultural encounter and, secondly, the development of teaching materials for interpreter trainees. Only the first direction is dealt with in this paper.

2. The corpus

A corpus was selected representative of the genre most frequently encountered by Italian Sign Language interpreters when working from English to LIS. A survey conducted in 2003 among professional interpreters revealed it to be the language of conferences within the domain of linguistics, or rather, the language of conferences, workshops and seminars on sign language and deaf issues organized by universities or deaf associations where guest speakers and signers from English-speaking countries are present (Kellett Bidoli 2005a). It must be emphasized that normally Italian Sign Language interpreters work between Italian and LIS in a ‘community interpreting’ or ‘public service interpreting’ context and ‘conference interpretation’ is not as common a genre for them as it is for spoken-language interpreters. In the daily community context, they assist deaf individuals by providing interpretation or mediation in community-related contexts such as at school and the local bank, in hospital and court and so on.

The initial corpus consists of four video recordings of academic speeches\textsuperscript{3} presented at the University of Trieste. A survey conducted in 2003 among professional interpreters revealed it to be the language of conferences within the domain of linguistics, or rather, the language of conferences, workshops and seminars on sign language and deaf issues organized by universities or deaf associations where guest speakers and signers from English-speaking countries are present (Kellett Bidoli 2005a). It must be emphasized that normally Italian Sign Language interpreters work between Italian and LIS in a ‘community interpreting’ or ‘public service interpreting’ context and ‘conference interpretation’ is not as common a genre for them as it is for spoken-language interpreters. In the daily community context, they assist deaf individuals by providing interpretation or mediation in community-related contexts such as at school and the local bank, in hospital and court and so on.

The initial corpus consists of four video recordings of academic speeches\textsuperscript{3} presented at the University of Trieste.

\textsuperscript{2} This investigation is part of research on \textit{Intercultural Practices and Strategies of Textual Recasting} conducted by the University of Turin unit within an Italian national research project (MIUR COFIN), \textit{Intercultural Discourse in Domain-specific English} coordinated by M. Gotti: http://www.unibg.it/cerlis/progetti.htm.

sented at two major Italian conference events by American-English native speakers, scholars of sign language and/or interpretation, which were simultaneously interpreted into Italian and LIS for a mixed hearing and deaf audience. The one hour 45 minutes of English discourse on video contains a total of 12,616 tokens. The corpus, which is at present tiny if compared to most written corpora collected elsewhere, is not a 'laboratory' product. It consists of authentic material, contains English for Specific Purposes, and is of a multimodal nature expressed in three semiotic channels: sound (the source discourse), images (the signed discourse) and written text (transcriptions).

The availability of such material in Italy for the purpose of this study, or any study on signed interpretation, is sporadic and difficult to obtain because LIS is a relatively new addition to the linguistics and interpreting forum (Gran & Kellett Bidoli 2001; Kellett Bidoli 2001), which needs time to evolve and assert itself. Thus, so far there have been relatively few national or international events in Italy where sign language has been discussed and an interpretation service provided. When it is, the organizers often refuse permission to record events because of complex privacy laws which have been enforced in Italy, or the interpreters themselves refuse to be filmed for personal reasons and/or rules established by their professional associations. The amount of material accessible for analysis was therefore limited and three of the speeches selected were interpreted from English into Italian first and then relayed simultaneously through headphones to be transformed into LIS. There were no audio recordings taken of the Italian interpretations at the conferences as they were held long before the conception of this study. Only one speech was interpreted directly from English to LIS (see Kellett Bidoli forthcoming a).

It was clear from the start that this type of specialized multimodal corpus required some form of electronic support system. Code-A-Text Integrated System for the Analysis of Interviews and Dialogues software was chosen (C-I-SAID: Scolari, Sage Publications), which is capable of handling multimodal source data in the form of both media files (sound and video) and plain written text. The original English versions of the video-taped films were transferred from VHS to DVD and then to MPEG-1 format for viewing on a computer. The sound production can be transcribed on screen as the images and associated sounds scroll. The sign language interpreters were highlighted on full screen while the English native-speakers appeared in a small inset to the bottom left or right.

A number of problems arose related to the parallel aligning of transcriptions in English, LIS and Italian directly on the computer screen. Firstly, voice recognition software for dictation can be used with C-I-SAID to speed up the transcription process by dictating what one hears on the sound file, but it was found that so much manual correction was needed that direct manual transcription of the four original English texts was simpler. Sound information was extracted which could be slowed down or automatically played back for set periods of time to permit easier tran-
scription on computer. Secondly, though C-I-SAID allows images, sound and written text to be combined on the screen and synchronized to run simultaneously, it was found that in order to transcribe the glosses from the film inset in the top lefthand quarter of the screen and then be able to read meaningful chunks of text underneath, the size of the videotape image inset was compromised: it was too small. In order to transcribe information while observing video-recorded sign language one needs as large a screen as possible to catch all the manual and non-manual information conveyed. Therefore, it was found preferable to use a wide screen TV for viewing both macro and micro non-verbal communication (minimal movements and facial expressions) during the most difficult stage of transcription: the transcription of the sign language glosses. DVD viewing permitted large, clear images, slow motion play and continual short rapid playback to check unclear segments or single signs, or to detect missed detail such as body gesture, minimal facial expression, eye or lip movements. With the aid of a professional sign language interpreter, the glosses were recorded orally on audiotape as they appeared on the video and then, subsequently, manually transcribed from those sound recordings to written text in a seemingly meaningless, unpunctuated string of Italian words in upper case letters. The glosses were broken down into meaningful punctuated segments according to the natural ‘intonation’ markers and pauses of the LIS interpreter using the customary ‘musical score’ format for the transcription of bilingual mediation, in order to create parallel corpora by aligning:

– a transcription of the original speech in English (in bold);
– the LIS glosses (in BOLD UPPER CASE);
– a written interpreted version of the LIS glosses in standard English to be able to compare the interpreted meaning with the original English discourse for non-Italian readers (in italics);
– a written interpreted version of the LIS glosses in standard Italian to enable a check by an Italian deaf person.

LIS glosses in this paper have been translated into English for the convenience of the reader. Signed languages are composed of manual signs together with gesture, body movement and facial expression which, accomplished simultaneously, convey meaning that is extremely difficult to represent graphically in ‘written’ form. The non-manual signals, which are part of the signed discourse, are inserted in lower case letters above the glosses on a line. Symbols for non-manuals have been avoided, in order to simplify understanding of the examples illustrated below, for a readership unacquainted with the conventions of sign language transcription. Two glosses joined by a hyphen means that two words are needed to gloss one sign, single letters joined by a hyphen indicate use of the manual alphabet (fingerspelling) and words between double quotation marks in italics represent lexical items that were mouthed. By mouthing the verbal equivalent of a sign without emitting sound, the interpreter can provide information to be lip-read by the Deaf. This is most useful when a sign is unclear or a concept is difficult to interpret; the mouthed equivalent can often clarify doubts.
3. Linguistic and cultural intrusions

The multilingual transcription took four months to complete despite the technological support available. Microtextual analysis was conducted on half of the corpus by comparing the alignments in the three languages and initial findings revealed extensive textual recasting, predominantly in the form of omissions, additions and substitutions (which are still under detailed analysis), which led to a fair amount of semantic and linguistic distortion and even communicative failure at times. The next stage in the investigation was to identify whether textual recasting in this specialized genre led to some degree of linguistic or cultural interference or intrusion in the LIS during the mediation process, and if so, whether this was sufficiently counteracted to comply with the linguistic and cultural norms of the Italian Deaf signing community. The transcriptions were checked together with a deaf person to identify any deviations from the general rules of LIS. Linguistic intrusions are here intended as those instances where the interpreted discourse morphology keeps too close to or shadows the original spoken English or the Italian relay, rendering it ungrammatical or ambiguous in LIS.

It is essential to point out that in the first half of the corpus it is extremely difficult to measure the amount of interference of the English on the LIS because, as mentioned above, apart from one conference presentation there was a constant double filter mechanism at play. The English discourse was first filtered through an Italian interpreter before transformation into LIS. Analysis of intercultural disparities uncovered in the direct English-to-LIS presentation was reported at the ESSE (European Society for the Study of English) 7th Conference, in Zaragoza 8th-12th September, 2004 (see Kellett Bidoli forthcoming a). Microanalysis of the first half of the corpus has begun to reveal several interesting points for future in-depth study.

Firstly, an instance of phonological interference is exemplified by:

(1) Then they move on to a partially new schema

Then there is the theme. They pass on to a partially new schema

The Italian interpreter may have understood ‘theme’ [θiːm] instead of ‘schema’ [ˈskiːma] from the English, which was then shadowed by the LIS interpreter, but this seems unlikely, as the former is monosyllabic compared to the latter. Most likely the LIS interpreter misunderstood the Italian interpreter’s utterance as meaning ‘theme’ (tema [ˈtɛma]) instead of ‘schema’ (schema [ˈskɛma]), both bisyllabic, before correcting herself.

Linguistic adjustment to the norms of LIS morphology includes maintaining LIS word order. Frequent deviations (underlined below) were identified such as:

(2) MANY STUDENTS SECOND LANGUAGE SIGN-LANGUAGE

that should have been signed, STUDENTS SECOND LANGUAGE SIGN-LANGUAGE MANY;
The four examples above illustrate Italian intrusion in the target discourse, as the underlined lexis was not uttered in the original English conference presentation. However, in the following instances:

(6) **I DISCOURSE THIS AFTERNOON** DIVIDE 2 PARTS
that should have started with **THIS AFTERNOON** [...];
(7) **MUST UNDERSTAND CONCEPT**
that should have been **MUST CONCEPT UNDERSTAND**;
(8) **DIFFICULT UNDERSTAND**
that should have been inverted;
it is impossible to distinguish which language was the cause of the intrusion as these structures mirror the original English discourse word order which, in all three cases, is also acceptable in Italian and was presumably maintained by the Italian interpreter in relay.

Grammatical errors included an example of a double negative in LIS:

(9) **a medical conference about an organ that you've never worked on**
**CONFERENCE EXAMPLE MEDICAL CAN ORGANS NOT KNOW WELL NO**
At a conference for example, at a medical conference [the interpreter] might not know [the various] organs well enough, might not know.

In LIS the negation should have been signed only at the end of the segment. As *not know* was not in the original discourse, it can be assumed to be yet another intrusion of Italian from the relay or the subconscious emergence of Italian negation (*non conoscere bene*) in the mind of the interpreter.

An incorrectly structured interrogative (rhetorical question form) was:

(10) **I brought a sample with me of a journal that I ask students to keep.**
**I HERE BRING EXAMPLE. WHAT DO STUDENTS?**
I shall give you an example. What do the students do?

Here the signed wh-word should have been placed at the end (**STUDENTS DO WHAT?**). As there was no question form in the original English this is again a clear example of Italian intrusion (*cosa fanno gli studenti?*) or what the Italian Deaf call ‘Signed Italian’ (*Italiano Segnato*) which is signs used to shadow Italian syntax.

The deaf person who checked the transcriptions gained the overall impression that there was a restricted use of lexis, especially specialized lexis, by the interpreters which prevented mediation being achieved to its full capacity, for example:
(11) MATERIAL FOR TEACHING TRAINING INTERPRETERS INTERPRETERS MATERIAL MUST 3 LEVELS
Here it was not clear what the interpreters ‘must’ do; presumably ‘prepare teaching’ materials. In fact, the original was: I’m developing English source materials for interpreter training;

(12) INTERPRETER MUST REPEAT MAP
rather than ‘repeat’, the interpreter should have signed: MAP DESCRIBE;

(13) BUT TIME CLOSING
here the verbal forms ENDING or FINISHING would have been preferable.

The deaf person also found much unnecessary repetition:

(14) These tasks don’t have to appear in this order [...]

shoulder rotation shoulder rotation

COMPETENCES 3, THEIR-COMPETENCES, THEIR-COMPETENCES,

shoulder rotation

THEIR-COMPETENCES, PHASES BUT ORDER THUS NO, CAN CHANGE

[...]
You don’t have to keep to the order of these three levels of ability, beginners, intermediate and advanced, but you can change [...].

In a previous segment ‘beginners, intermediate and advanced students’ had been individually signed and simultaneously located in space by the direction of rotation of the interpreter’s shoulders which was sufficient for any anaphoric reference henceforth. The two signs COMPETENCES 3 also refer to these three levels of ability, thus the interpreter could have chosen one of the two solutions rather than both.

Also, according to the deaf expert there was an overuse of certain words or expressions such as: C’È – there is, which in the four interpreted presentations ranked first, second, fifth and sixth place in word counts at 113, 55, 28 and 19 occurrences respectively. Also PER – for, ranking second place in one interpretation with 27 occurrences and PROPRIO – itself, himself etc. (used as an intensifier) adopted by one interpreter 32 times, ranking fifth in the word count of that particular interpretation.

The equivalent of ‘mumbling’ in spoken discourse also exists in sign language when the four parameters of handshape, movement, location and palm orientation are not fully respected which led the deaf person watching the video to detect ambiguity and poor clarity of meaning. There were about six instances of totally incomprehensible signs where meaning had to be guessed from the context, and on occasion the interpreter mouthed an Italian word that was different from the simultaneous sign:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“confusion”</th>
<th>“modify”</th>
<th>“name”</th>
<th>“description”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMPLICATED</td>
<td>MODALITY</td>
<td>TOPIC</td>
<td>PICTURE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The term ‘cloze’ was unclear despite its being fingerspelt and explained as follows:
The deaf person, unacquainted with the cloze exercise, could not understand the meaning of ‘nothing’ in this context (intended to mean ‘blank’), so one can assume neither could most of the deaf audience at the time of the conference.

Signed Italian crept in as the interpreters began to tire:

(16) **MOLTE COSE DIVERSE** (*many different things*)
should have been signed using the compound sign MANY + DIFFERENT;

(17) **SFORZO GRANDE** (*a great effort*)
‘great’ as a sign should have been simply omitted and conveyed through facial expression while signing ‘effort’;

(18) **PER QUANTO RIGUARDA** (*concerning*) and **TUTTI ASSIEME** (*all together*)
should have been rendered by single LIS signs;

(19) **MOLTO PIù VICINO** (*much closer*)
in a comparative context should have been signed VICINO + MOLTO (CLOSE + VERY).

LIS contains very few technical terms as it is a language that has evolved principally in the home where non-technical everyday lexis is used during signed ‘conversation’. Standard signs do not exist for many technical items and interpreters often have to fingerspell or improvise by joining two or more separate existing signs to convey the intended meaning. Occasionally, they have to invent a new sign for a new referent or concept that may or may not catch on in the deaf community depending on its transparency and future frequency of use. This particular corpus, which belongs to the domain of linguistics, contains much specialized terminology unfamiliar to the average deaf person such as: *intralingual* signed as INSIDE + LANGUAGE (the joining of two existing signs) and *direct speech*/*reported speech* signed as SENTENCE + ‘direct’ (a sign + mouthed word). In this case, the interpretation was not transparent to the deaf expert, because the sign for ‘discourse’ and not ‘sentence’ should have been used to convey ‘dialogue/conversation/speech’.

Some uncommon terms were fingerspelt, or fingerspelt together with a new sign offered immediately before or afterwards. For example, one speaker, after discussing the term ‘shadowing’ and having fingerspelt it, explains ‘facial shadowing’ as a useful exercise for students which is subsequently conveyed as ‘to follow face’ with a simultaneous smile, as in the example below:

(20) **THIS LISTENING SPEAKING SAME TIME USEFUL SIGN-LANGUAGE**

USEFUL SIGNING YES BUT A-LITTLE DIFFERENT TO FOLLOW FACE

‘Shadowing’ is useful, it is useful in sign language while signing, but it is slightly different [as a technique]; [you have] to shadow facial expression.
An example of an uncommon term **work load management strategies** rendered by an equally obscure alternative was interpreted as:

(21) “Processamento”
STRATEGIE LAVORO PER

and glossed as **STRATEGIES WORK FOR** together with a simultaneously mouthed ‘processamento’, which is a clearly evident intrusion from English. The word ‘processamento’ means nothing in Italian but is probably an Italianized loan from the English term ‘processing’ coined on the spur of the moment. The interpreter thus conveyed **work processing strategies** which was erroneously interpreted because an essential pause in the source text indicating a change of topic was ignored for some reason and the interpreter latched on to the term **process** from the preceding segment: [...] in the process. The **work load management strategies; those are the ones you need to juggle** [...].

Interpreters must also be constantly aware of the cultural dimension during the translation process between any language combination; words with particular connotations or expressions that take on a different meaning. For example, to Italian hearers the expression ‘to put your hands in your pocket’ (**mettere le mani in tasca**) which refers either to the simple action of placing one’s hands in a particular repository of one’s attire or telling someone to stop gesticulating, means something quite different to the Italian Deaf. To them it conveys ‘the interruption of a conversation’, because hands are essential for them during communication (Corazza 2000: 19). To a British hearer the same expression would not be associated in any way with gesticulation because the British generally refrain from such an expressive manifestation, but rather, it could be associated with the informal comportment of an individual. Interpreters have to constantly adjust linguistically to these culturally-bound circumstances.

In the culture of hearing people, communication is automatically associated with speaking or hearing words, and never literally with ‘seeing meaning’, though the expression “let’s see” is common. Conversely, the Deaf associate communication with the hands and thus, **seeing** signs, **looking** and **observing**. Owing to the imposition of oralism by hearers in Deaf education, the repression of sign language over the past century and the difficulty of speech training, some deaf people may attribute negative connotations to the term ‘voice’ (Cokely 1992: 87). Furthermore, in place of the verb ‘to hear’ used in the hearing world, it is logical to assume a dominance of verbs referring to sight in signed languages. From a word count of the corpus it was possible to check the frequency of occurrences of terms associated with communication through speech, hearing, sight and gesture used by the interpreters. 278 items were found associated with sight and gesture compared to 232 associated with speech and hearing. Though it is evident that conferences on linguistics, and specifically sign language, should contain a greater than average number of lexical items in the source discourse referring to sight and gesture, there were many evident instances of intentional substitution or addition (underlined below) by the interpreters to conform to the cultural norms of LIS:
Negations are often missed when working from signed language into spoken language. You and I often miss seeing negation. In signed language negation seems to disappear; you don’t see it.

What their output sounds like

Looking at the quality of language production

More attention is being paid to how students produce language. Attention is paid to observing students’ language production.

In the following example, the American speaker was referring to hearing interpreter novices in the classroom working voice-to-voice, whereas the sign language interpreter adapted the situation referring to novices ‘observing’ the ‘speech’ (which for the deaf can mean signed or spoken speech according to context) implying, for the benefit of the deaf audience at the conference, that the interpreting exercise was from sign-to-voice:

We give them a speech. They interpret it simultaneously, but at the same time two students do it in consecutive

There is a speech. Some students observe [it] and then interpret simultaneously or consecutively.

Cultural adjustment to a metaphor was found, emphasizing the fact that interpreters are people who have a sound sense of hearing:

They don’t know a word; they’ll wait until they hit upon something they know

If they don’t know a word they’ll wait until their ear manages to link together the discourse.

In the following example, subconscious intrusion of the dominant hearing culture of the interpreter may explain why despite the term signs being contained in the original discourse it was unnecessarily omitted:

Moving then to paraphrasing, saying the same thing in different words or the same thing in different signs without distorting the meaning

Then I move on to another stage; paraphrasing by repeating sentences in different words with the same meaning without changing the meaning.

Similarly, an unrelated lexical substitution for ‘to sign rapidly’ became erroneously ‘to speak rapidly’.

Another example of cultural adjustment through the addition of information is given by:

Another thing that we do know is that sitting in an interpreting booth for a few hundred hours does not necessarily make you an expert, there is more to that

I also know, that having to interpret in a booth with headphones and a microphone doesn’t mean I’m an interpreter. It doesn’t mean I’m a real expert.
Here, the interpreter purposefully distinguishes between the ‘simultaneous interpreter’ perceived by the deaf who normally signs from Italian to LIS without earphones or microphone, and the ‘simultaneous interpreter’ perceived by mainstream hearing people.

The examples above are just a selection of the numerous linguistic and cultural features that have emerged during the microtextual analysis, which will continue in coming months. They illustrate subtle but evident linguistic and cultural intrusions across three different languages.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, a great deal of detailed microanalysis of the first half of the corpus still remains in order to identify intrusions of a linguistic or cultural nature more clearly. As illustrated in the examples above, it has been easier to pinpoint probable interference from the Italian ‘filter’ rather than from the English source discourse. More transparent evidence of English linguistic and cultural intrusion was gleaned on analysis of the second half of the corpus, which includes a lengthy direct English to Italian presentation (Kellett Bidoli forthcoming a). Fresh multimodal material needs to be added to the corpus in the light of insights gained.

On completion of the present analysis, attention will be focused on the second direction of this investigation which is the preparation of teaching materials for interpreter trainees of sign language, or more precisely, the preparation of a multimodal glossary on CD-ROM of terms and expressions representative of the specialized language of linguistics contained within the corpus. The glossary, still at an initial stage of preparation, is composed of hyperlinks that enable a user to click onto a specialized lexical item in English to obtain a translation in Italian and LIS, as well as a definition in both English and Italian with additional linguistic information. The images of the corresponding LIS are provided by a ‘native signer’ to enable observation of correctly coordinated manual and body movements, gestures and facial expressions. All entries in LIS are signed in context together with explanatory linguistic notes and advice. A pilot version of the glossary has been prepared for testing on students at the SSLMIT, University of Trieste (Kellett Bidoli 2005b).

Thus far, as illustrated above, several types of surface adjustments have been found to be the cause of cultural and linguistic distortion during the extremely complex multilingual and multimodal mediation process represented in the English, Italian and LIS parallel corpora. Generally, a good quantity of coherent discourse was identified in LIS which was, however, not always identical to the original English, but it is evident that there was awareness by the interpreters of respect for cultural and linguistic specificity, which was to a large extent maintained.
References


On the colloquialization of scientific British and American English

Elena Seoane & Lucía Loureiro-Porto

Abstract

Scientific British and American English is undergoing a major stylistic change as far as the use of voice is concerned, whereby passives are no longer the default choice but are being progressively replaced by actives. This significant change cannot be attributed to one factor alone but has been shown to derive from a complex interaction of intra-linguistic and socio-historical conditions (cf. Seoane forthcoming). One of the hypotheses formulated so far is that the decrease in the use of passives is a symptom of an ongoing stylistic change, namely a trend towards the oral and the colloquial in written English (Mair 1998). This paper is an attempt to verify such a hypothesis. For this purpose we will adopt Biber’s (1988) model of analysis and examine a number of British and American scientific texts from the early, mid and late 20th century with regard to their oral vs. written linguistic features. This analysis should provide a comprehensive picture of the evolution of scientific English in the 20th century along the parameter oral vs. written style. The results obtained will help to determine whether the decrease in passives must be framed within a general change towards a more colloquial type of scientific discourse or whether, on the contrary, other factors must be held responsible for this change.

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1. Introduction

It is well-known that the frequent use of the passive voice is one of the main characteristics of scientific English. In fact, several corpus studies have revealed that this is the text-type in which the passive is most frequent (Svartvik 1966; Biber et al. 1999). The association between scientific English and passive voice has often been accounted for in terms of impersonality: the passive, by eliding the agent of the action expressed by the verb, serves the purpose of making the scientific discourse more impersonal and, therefore, objective.

However, recent studies have shown that there is a dramatic decrease in the number of passives found in scientific British and American English in the 20th century (Van Emden 1998: 107). As will be shown in section 2, in American English in particular, most transitive clauses are now rendered in the active voice, so that, contrary to the 19th and early 20th century tradition, passives have become the stylistically and pragmatically marked linguistic option (cf. Rodman 1994; Seoane forthcoming). If we take into account that scientific English is a strongly conventionalized type of discourse, and therefore not open to change (an ‘uptight’ genre in Hundt and Mair’s 1999 terms), this new development stands out as a noteworthy linguistic process that calls for a deeper analysis as regards its causes.

Various reasons can intuitively be adduced for the decrease in passives, and these have been examined in some detail (cf. Seoane forthcoming). One of them is to interpret the decrease in the use of passives as one of the symptoms of an ongoing stylistic change, namely a trend towards the informal and the colloquial in written communication (Mair 1998). We will try to verify this hypothesis; for this purpose in section 3 we will follow Biber (1988) and Biber & Finegan (1992) and analyse the oral and written characteristics of a corpus of scientific British and American English from the early, mid and late 20th century. If the texts in our corpus prove to evolve towards a more oral style, the decrease in passives should be interpreted as a mere symptom of this trend, and not as responding to other conditioning factors.

2. The decay of the passive in scientific British and American English

The corpus selected for this study contains 220,000 words extracted from scientific research articles from the beginning, middle, and end of the 20th century, as shown in Table 1.

| Table 1. Number of words per subperiod. |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| British E.     | 30,000              | 40,000               | 40,000               |
| American E.    | 30,000              | 40,000               | 40,000               |
The texts in period I have been selected from a number of scientific journals, such as the Journal of Physical Chemistry or the Journal of the American Chemical Society. The texts in periods II and III have been taken from the matching corpora LOB and FLOB for British English, and Brown and Frown for American English (cf. Mair 1997 and 1998; Mair & Hundt 1997; Hundt & Mair 1999). In all three periods two-thirds of the articles deal with the Natural Sciences and the other third with Medicine.

The number of both actives and passives found are displayed in Table 2, since both members of the system of voice are relevant to know the actual frequency of use of the passive. The ratio of passives per number of words is not relevant for our purposes, since its use depends not so much on the length of a text as on its nature. Thus, a descriptive text consisting of existential sentences will contain a very low proportion of passives, not because the active is preferred, but because the verb used – mainly to be – cannot be turned into the passive. It would be methodologically wrong to compare a text like this to another where passives are also scarce but actives are consistently chosen. In the first text, selection of the passive is not possible, while in the second it is available but not opted for, which is a completely different scenario. For this reason, we will take into consideration the number of times a given author chooses the passive voice instead of the active only when such a choice is available.

The passives analysed in this paper are Quirk et al.’s (1985: § 3.75) “central” be-passives occurring in finite verb groups, as in the verb group in italics in (1).

(1) The obstruction was produced by ligaturing the duodenum just below the pylorus with tape, the operation being carried out and the abdominal wound closed with aseptic precautions under ether anesthesia.

The passive –ing form in (1) – being carried out – is not counted as a passive token, since only finite verb groups are considered in this study, on the grounds that often syntactic factors are responsible for the use of active or passive forms in non-finite contexts, irrespective of the stylistic factors which concern us here.

As for actives, our count is restricted to those standing in a relation of variation with the passive, that is, active transitive clauses with an overt object eligible to become a passive subject, actives for which a passive counterpart would be available, as is the case of can calculate in (2).

(2) Thus we can calculate the amplitude, defined as the height between trough and crest, as ‘complex formula’.

Table 2. Number of transitive active and passive verb phrases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I: early 20th c.</th>
<th>II: mid 20th c.</th>
<th>III: late 20th c.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actives Passives</td>
<td>Actives Passives</td>
<td>Actives Passives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Br E</td>
<td>405 801</td>
<td>548 1,084</td>
<td>554 788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>33.5% 66.4%</td>
<td>33.5% 66.4%</td>
<td>41.2% 58.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am E</td>
<td>517 930</td>
<td>614 1012</td>
<td>848 736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>35.7% 64.2%</td>
<td>37.7% 62.2%</td>
<td>53.5% 46.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 shows two basic findings. Firstly, the change is more dramatic in American English. Specifically, while in British English we observe a significant decrease in the number of passives, from 66.4% to 58.7% of all transitive clauses, in American English we observe a reversal in the proportion of actives vs. passives, since the decrease in passives is from 64.2% to 46.4%, so that actives become more frequent than passives in the 1990s.

Secondly, variation in the number of passives is only observed towards the end of the century. The proportions found in periods I and II are very similar, whereas from periods II to III the decrease is radical. This shift from active to passive style is even more striking if we consider that the timespan between the corpora in periods II and III is only 30 years. Moreover, the fact that the latest texts are not very recent (1985/1990) leads us to expect further changes in this direction to have occurred.

Example (3) below illustrates the consistent use of passives (in bold type) characteristic of early and mid-20th century scientific English, and (4), which dates back from 1992, shows a more natural combination of actives (in bold type) and passives (in italics), which brings recent scientific English closer to other types of discourse.

(3) It has been thoroughly shown by Hartwell and Hoguet (4) and most recently by Haden and Orr (5) that dogs, after high intestinal obstruction, may be kept alive for a much longer period (2 to 3 weeks) if given repeated injections of physiological salt solutions. The effect of administering NaCl solution to rabbits following pyloric obstruction was observed in animals nos. 10 and 11. In the case of no. 10 the first injection was not given until the morning following the day of operation.


(4) To compare measurements by investigators in different laboratories and apply their results to atmospheric or astrophysical measurements, we must also understand the corrections applied for the isotopic composition of the measured gas samples. Unfortunately, in many papers, the isotopic composition is not specified, and the interpretation of ‘natural abundance’ is left to the reader. Johns [8] discussed in detail the difference between the ‘natural abundance’ of 13C in atmospheric CO2 and that in commercially supplied CO2. In our conversion of reported intensities to a consistent set of units, we have attempted to rescale each intensity value to represent the band intensity for a 100% pure sample of a single isotope. Where no specific isotopic abundance information has been given in the original reference, we have used the 1986 HITRAN abundances.


In previous studies we have tried to explain the dramatic decrease in the use of the passive in terms of the primary function it has in scientific English, namely that of conveying a sense of impersonalization (Seoane forthcoming). We have considered
the hypothesis that the decrease in the use of passives is a sign that scientific discourse is becoming more personal and subjective, but the data derived from these studies are not conclusive and indicate that other factors must also be held responsible for this change. As already mentioned, one of these may be the alleged increase in colloquialization of written English, and this is explored in section 3 below.

3. Is scientific English becoming more colloquial?

This section examines the extent to which scientific English has evolved towards a more colloquial and oral style in the 20th century. If scientific English is found to be evolving towards a more oral style, then the decrease in passives would have to be accounted for in these terms.

The colloquialization or oralization of written English was first described by Christian Mair who in 1998 investigates a catalogue of lexical and grammatical variables on the basis of the four matching corpora used for the present study: LOB, FLOB, Brown and Frown. He interprets the changes observed as "symptoms of an overarching textlinguistic and stylistic change, namely a trend towards the informal and the colloquial in written communication" (1998: 153). Elsewhere, Mair and others (cf., for instance, Mair & Hundt 1995; see also Baron 1998; Smith 2003) have shown that many of the recent changes in the grammar of English can be attributed to such a trend.

One of the linguistic changes which has been signalled as indicative of colloquialization at work is the declining use of be-passives (Leech 2004). For this reason, the decrease in use of passives in our corpus sample could be interpreted as a sign that English is undergoing a process of colloquialization or oralization. In order to check this hypothesis we decided to analyse the degree of ‘orality’ of our corpus. Following Biber & Finegan (1989 and 1992), we studied all the linguistic features that interact directly with the contrast between ‘oral’ and ‘literate’ varieties of English. As is well known, Biber (1988) identifies five major dimensions of variation for English. Such dimensions represent the co-occurrence distributions of 67 linguistic features which have been associated with particular communicative functions. The relevant dimensions for the contrast between oral and literate are those in Table 3: Informational vs. Involved production, Elaborated vs. Situation-Dependent Reference, and Abstract vs. Non-abstract style, where the positive features are those closer to the oral variety, and the negative features are those indicating that a text is more literate. The actual features studied in each category are listed in the Appendix.

However, two major modifications have been made to Biber’s classification of features. One concerns the categories mentioned in Table 3. The original list in Biber (1988) contains additional categories which we have decided to exclude from our analysis because our corpus is not tagged and, therefore, their search would have proved too time-consuming. This is the case of, for example, ‘that-deletion’ or ‘present-tense verbs’.
The second alteration of Biber’s (1988) categorization involves the features included under each category which, as mentioned, are shown in the Appendix. We have refined his list of features to exclude some which did not really fit the oral vs. literate dichotomy. If we take private verbs as an example, we can easily observe that while it is true that the use of private verbs yields a more involved type of discourse, which will therefore be closer to the oral style, some of the verbs Biber includes in this category are actually fairly literate. This is the case of anticipate, conclude, demonstrate, estimate, indicate, infer or reveal, which have been excluded from this category. The Appendix contains the list of features after the exclusion of the literate ones.

Table 3. A selection of Biber’s (1988) Dimensions of Variation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension 1: “Informational vs. Involved production”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSITIVE FEATURES (+ORAL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person pronouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amplifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General emphatics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person pronouns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension 2: “Elaborated vs. Situation-Dependent Reference”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSITIVE FEATURES (+ORAL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time adverbials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place adverbials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension 3: “Abstract vs. Non-abstract style”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POSITIVE FEATURES (+ORAL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjuncts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agentless passives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adverbial subordinators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second alteration of Biber’s (1988) categorization involves the features included under each category which, as mentioned, are shown in the Appendix. We have refined his list of features to exclude some which did not really fit the oral vs. literate dichotomy. If we take private verbs as an example, we can easily observe that while it is true that the use of private verbs yields a more involved type of discourse, which will therefore be closer to the oral style, some of the verbs Biber includes in this category are actually fairly literate. This is the case of anticipate, conclude, demonstrate, estimate, indicate, infer or reveal, which have been excluded from this category. The Appendix contains the list of features after the exclusion of the literate ones.

---

2 We have excluded the following items because of their literate style: from the group of prepositions amid, amidst, amongst, minus, notwithstanding, per, versus and via; time adverbials formerly, initially, momentarily, originally, presently, simultaneously, and subsequently; place adverbials alongside, ashore, astern, downstream and overland. Finally, the adverbial subordinator so that has also been left out from the group of literate features because it is also common in colloquial types of discourse.
The results for British English are expounded in Tables 4 to 6, and the results for American English appear in Tables 7 to 9. We have highlighted the most relevant data, that is, the data which are statistically significant and indicate that there is a tendency towards colloquialization. Let us first consider the data obtained from British English.

**Table 4.** Results for Dimension 1 in British English: Informational vs. Involved production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Features (+oral)</th>
<th>Br E - I</th>
<th>Br E - II</th>
<th>Br E - III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private verbs</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person pronouns</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative pronouns</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>125.6</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General emphatics</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person pronouns</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causative subordination</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse particles</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite pronouns</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General hedges</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amplifiers</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-questions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility modals</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Features (-oral)</th>
<th>Br E - I</th>
<th>Br E - II</th>
<th>Br E - III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word length</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>4,533</td>
<td>1,511</td>
<td>5,632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type/token ratio</td>
<td>13.28</td>
<td>10.44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agentless passives</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>254.3</td>
<td>989</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.** Results for Dimension 2 in British English: Elaborated vs. Situation-Dependent Reference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Features (-oral)</th>
<th>Br E - I</th>
<th>Br E - II</th>
<th>Br E - III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time adverbials</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place adverbials</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wh-relatives on object position.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pied-piping constructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-relatives on subject position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominalizations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6. Results for Dimension 3 in British English: Abstract vs. Non-abstract style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Br E - I</th>
<th>Br E - II</th>
<th>Br E - III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>P&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjuncts</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agentless passives</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>254.3</td>
<td>247.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By-passives</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adverbial subordinators</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our initial hypothesis, namely that the decrease in the use of passives observed from period II to III may be a symptom of a general trend towards colloquialization, would be confirmed if other linguistic features typical of oral, colloquial varieties of English also increased in these periods. The results in Tables 4 to 6, however, do not confirm this hypothesis. In Table 4 only a minority of features show such a tendency, and, what is more relevant, these features start to change at the beginning of the 20th century already, and not in period II, as is the case with passives. The same is the case in Table 5, where oralization is shown to occur mainly from period I to period II, precisely when no change in the use of passives is observed. Finally, Table 6 is most revealing, since no significant change is observed in the use of the literate features analysed; only passives decrease to make the style non-abstract, as we have already noted.

Let us now examine the data for American English, Tables 7 to 9, where the decrease in passives from period II to III is much more pronounced.

Table 7. Results for Dimension 1 in American English: Informational vs. Involved production.

**Positive Features (+oral):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Am E - I</th>
<th>Am E - II</th>
<th>Am E - III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N.F.</td>
<td>P&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private verbs</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>105.6</td>
<td>78.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contractions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person pronouns</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative pronouns</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>126.6</td>
<td>110.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General emphatics</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person pronouns</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causative subordination</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse particles</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite pronouns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General hedges</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amplifiers</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-questions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibility modals</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>59.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Negative Features (-oral):**

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Word length</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>4,300</td>
<td>1,433.3</td>
<td>5,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type/token ratio</td>
<td>11.27</td>
<td>11.52</td>
<td>10.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agentless passives</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>295.3</td>
<td>936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. Results for Dimension 2 in American English: Elaborated vs. Situation-Dependent Reference.

**POSITIVE FEATURES (+ORAL):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Am E - I</th>
<th>Am E – II</th>
<th>Am E – III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time adverbials</td>
<td>No N.F.</td>
<td>94 31.3</td>
<td>85 21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place adverbials</td>
<td>No N.F.</td>
<td>77 25.6</td>
<td>117 29.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NEGATIVE FEATURES (-ORAL):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Am E - I</th>
<th>Am E – II</th>
<th>Am E – III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wh-relatives on object position</td>
<td>14 4.6</td>
<td>7 1.7</td>
<td>✓ 11 2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pied-piping constructions</td>
<td>62 20.6</td>
<td>43 10.7</td>
<td>✓ 58 14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wh-relatives on subj. position</td>
<td>93 31</td>
<td>220 55</td>
<td>✓ 246 61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominalizations</td>
<td>1,485 495</td>
<td>1,750 437.5</td>
<td>✓ 2,083 520.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**NEGATIVE FEATURES (-ORAL):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Am E - I</th>
<th>Am E – II</th>
<th>Am E – III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctions</td>
<td>143 47.6</td>
<td>193 48.2</td>
<td>213 53.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agentless passives</td>
<td>886 295.3</td>
<td>936 234</td>
<td>✓ 671 167.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By-passives</td>
<td>44 14.6</td>
<td>76 19</td>
<td>✓ 65 16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adverbial subordinators</td>
<td>154 51.3</td>
<td>136 34</td>
<td>✓ 121 30.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings in American English are in line with those in British English. Briefly, Tables 7 to 9 show that only a few features show a significant change towards oralization and these changes are concentrated basically in the first half of the 20th century. We would like to point out one difference between British and American scientific English which might prove relevant in our study. This is the increase in use of first person pronouns observed in American English, as can be seen in Table 7. As is well-known, first person pronouns rank highest in the semantic, animacy and syntactic hierarchies cross-linguistically, so that they tend to carry the semantic role of agent and occupy initial, topic position (Seoane 2006). In English in particular this involves the use of the active voice (as in I gave you the book instead of The book was given by me), and therefore this rise in the use of first person pronouns in American English can be interpreted as a reason for, or as a direct consequence of, the decrease in passives in such a text-type.

In general, however, the evidence obtained from our analysis can only lead us to conclude that there is no immediate correlation between the decay in the use of passives and the oralization or colloquialization of scientific English, since the
oralization tendencies observed in the corpus are scarce and occur basically in the first half of the 20th century, while the change in the use of passives is radical and takes place in the second half of the century.

It must be remarked that these results do not necessarily contradict Mair’s findings that English is undergoing a process of colloquialization. As he clearly points out in his (1998) work and elsewhere (as in Hundt & Mair 1999), some genres are “fast,” that is, they prove to be readily open to innovation, while others are “slow” and innovations take longer to penetrate them. He shows that the prototypically slow genre is the scientific genre, and our data can be seen to corroborate this, since oral features do not predominate in them as yet.

4. Conclusion

In this paper we have dealt with the decrease in *be*-passives in scientific British and American English, which comes to exemplify how genres, even those which are strongly conventionalized like the scientific genre, may evolve and change in response to the interaction of various internal and external factors.

We have attempted to provide an explanation for the recent changes observed in the proportion of passives vs. actives in scientific British and American English. We have shown that the dramatic decrease in the use of passives does not seem to be a symptom of the increasing colloquialization of scientific English, since other linguistic features typical of the oral varieties of English do not increase in frequency in similar proportions, nor do literate features seem to decrease to yield a more colloquial style. Therefore, if we want to find an explanation for the decay of passives in British and American English, other factors, of a socio-linguistic nature, must be the subject of future research.

References


Appendix

Linguistic features examined per dimension

Dimension 1: “Informational vs. Involved production”

Positive Features (+oral): Private verbs: Assume, believe, decide, determine, discover, doubt, fear, feel, find, forget, guess, hear, hope, imagine, imply, know, learn, mean, notice, prove, realize, recognize, remember, see, show, suppose, think, understand. Contraction: Verb+not; verb+is/has; pronoun+is/has; pronoun+have; pronoun+are; pronoun+would/had; pronoun+am; pronoun+will/shall. 2nd person pronouns: You, your. Demonstrative pronouns: This, these, those. General emphatics: A lot, for sure, just, more, most, real+adjective, really, so+adjective. 1st person pronouns: I, me, my, mine, we, us, our, ours. Causative subordination: Because, causative since. Discourse particles: Well, now, anyway, anyhow. Indefinite pronouns: Any (-one, -body, -thing), some (-one, -body, -thing), every (-one, -body, -thing). General hedges: Kind of, maybe, more or less, perhaps, possibly, something like, sort of. Amplifiers: Absolutely, completely, extremely, fully, highly, strongly, totally, very. Wh-questions: Interrogative Who, what, which, where, when, why, how. Possibility modals: Can, could, may, might.

Negative Features (-oral): Word length; Prepositions: Against, among, at, besides, between, by, despite, during, except, for, from, in, into, of, off, on, onto, opposite, out, plus, pro, re, than, through, throughout, thru, toward, towards, upon, with, within, without. Type/token ratio; Agentless passives: e.g. She was told off.

Dimension 2: “Elaborated vs. Situation-Dependent Reference”

Positive Features (+oral): Time adverbials: Afterwards, again, earlier, early, eventually, immediately, instantly, late, lately, later, now, nowadays, once, previously, recently, shortly, soon, today, tomorrow, tonight, yesterday. Place adverbials: Aboard, above, abroad, across, ahead, around, behind, below, beneath, beside, downhill, downstairs, east, far, here, hereabouts, indoors, inland, inshore, inside, locally, near, nearby, north, nowhere, outdoors, outside, overboard, overseas, south, underfoot, underground, underneath, uphill, upstairs, upstream, west.

Negative Features (-oral): Wh-relatives on object position: e.g. The woman who I love. Pied-piping constructions: e.g. The house in which I live. Wh-relatives on subject positions: e.g. The girl who said so. Nominalizations: Words ending in -ment, -ness, -tion, -ity (plus plural forms).
**Dimension 3: “Abstract vs. Non-abstract style”**

**Negative Features (-oral):** *Conjuncts:* Alternatively, altogether, consequently, conversely, e.g., e.g., else, furthermore, hence, however, i.e., instead, likewise, moreover, namely, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, otherwise, rather, similarly, therefore, thus, viz, in comparison, in contrast, in particular, in addition, in conclusion, in consequence, in sum, in summary, in any event, in any case, in other words, for example, for instance, by contrast, by comparison, as a result, as a consequence, on the contrary, on the other hand. **Agentless passives:** e.g. She was given some flowers. **By-passives:** e.g. The question was finally answered by the teacher himself. **Other adverbial subordinators:** If, unless, although, though, while, whilst, whereas, whereby, such that, inasmuch as, forasmuch as, insofar as, insomuch as, as long as, as much as.
A holistic approach to language: exo-textual sources of meaning and communication

Maria Tarantino

Abstract

This paper focuses on the ethno-pragmatic vocation of LSP studies and observes that epistemic and pragmatic presuppositions – tools whereby utterances achieve meaning beyond the given language forms – should be part of their research and descriptive models. It justifies the inclusion of this concept by highlighting the writings of scholars of language sciences who investigate the sources of speech and meaning and argue that knowledge and speech depend not just on syntax and the lexicon, but on modes of thoughts and procedures shared by individuals and communities of practice. The arguments proposed support the idea that discourse production and interpretation require skills for retrieving information by relating to previous utterances, events, stored knowledge and procedural frames linked to the concepts the producer intends to convey. Accordingly, meaning is defined as operational since it depends on the knowledge structures embedded in each term, on factual and theoretical grounds. Text processing is conceptualized as a joint construction between interactants who share concepts, interests and purposes of discourse spheres. The paper concludes with the suggestion that LSP and LT research and practice should broach aspects of text production and interpretation related to the conceptual, analytic and procedural strands or extra-textual elements which determine communication acts. The new insight achieved could finally enhance the diachronic and interdisciplinary nature of LSP research, strengthen its academic vocation and, possibly, lead to more fruitful exchanges with colleagues working in other language study areas.
It is not the result of scientific research that ennobles humans and enriches their nature, but the struggle to understand while performing creative and open-minded intellectual work. (The New Quotable Einstein, Princeton U.P.)

1. Prelude: the LSP model

The emergence of language for specific purpose (LSP) studies in the 1970s was concomitant with the debate, in the language sciences, about whether pure linguistic analysis was a reliable tool to investigate, describe and explain communication. The core issue was an ancient topic, namely, the source of meaning, how it is grasped and what its effects are on discursive practice. On both sides of the Atlantic, researchers explained that, more than on the articulation of grammar forms, meaning depends on a complex synergy between the users’ conceptual worlds, the exchange topic and purpose, the context of situation, culture and action of speech events (cf. Hymes 1974). More adequate models of speech would thus require widening the horizons of applied linguistics with insights from ethnolinguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, philosophy of language and pragmatics. The thrust was for a holistic approach which mapped discourse as a network of epistemic, semantic, pragmatic and syntactic strands related to the interactants’ mental spaces (cf. Fauconnier 1998).

The ethno-pragmatic path to language entailed that linguistic research should shift its focus from analyses of sentences contrived by ideal speakers to the exploration of the verbal and non-verbal patterns, whereby individuals who operate within a community of thought and practice effect communication. In this perspective, linguistic studies should account for both the ‘overt’ and ‘covert’ propositions interlacing discourse (cf. Widdowson 1979). The former category relates to the grammar-semantic strata of utterances. The latter involves strands of meaning which are external to the linguistic structures but bind the content of a text. Therefore, covert propositions encompass implicitly-expected background knowledge which interconnects the addressee, the external world, the text, and the addresser. Pragmatists have highlighted this complex dimension of discourse and termed the categories on which it thrives as epistemic and pragmatic presuppositions. The binary concept has then been defined as the bearer of “[...] implicit meaning that must be pre-supposed, understood, taken for granted for an utterance to make sense” (Verschueren 2003: 33).

The LSP model converged with the holistic approach to language study. It claimed to study the production and interpretation of discourse by interactants who share intellectual worlds and belong to communities of thought and practice having well-specified purposes. Thus, its research aimed at defining the verbal and non-verbal elements which contribute to the processing of cohesive texts (cf. Widdowson 1979). In this perspective, presuppositions should have been an essential component of LSP studies. Actually, the role of this category in text processing was recalled in seminal essays on the discourse of science and technology (cf. Selinker, Trimble & Vroman 1972; Widdowson 1979). However, the issue seems to have remained peripheral to subsequent studies with consequent loss.
both in the understanding of the features which distinguish discourse universes and in the claim for the disciplinary specificity of LSP research and teaching.

2. Premise

The present study explores the role of epistemic and pragmatic presuppositions (henceforth presuppositions) in engendering meaningful texts and in delineating distinctive speech genres. The paper first traces the foundation of the concept back to Aristotle’s discussions on the factors of discourse. Then it highlights the emergence of the category in the writing of modern scholars who inquire into the sources of speech and meaning and identify intra-linguistic cultural diversity as the fount of the multiplicity of genre types.

The discussion supports the analysis of presuppositions in organic texts following Stalnaker’s (1999) seminal argumentation on the subject and Bakhtin’s (1996) account of genre types. The working hypothesis is that presuppositions enable the participants in a speech event to draw on shared cognitive, pragmatic and linguistic patterns and work collaboratively towards ‘responsive understanding’. The integration of stored patterns with novel concepts appears vital to language operations. On the one hand, it can trigger frames of reference, which preclude or resolve ambiguities that may crop up in actual usage. On the other, it can guide the speakers to assign meaning to new utterances and to judge their validity according to contextual and cultural salience (cf. Lyons 1994).

The study concludes by suggesting that descriptions of discourse in action should include presuppositions on their agenda. The holistic approach would favour a better understanding of the relation between background knowledge and speech as well as bring about more adequate explanations of specialist argumentation. The new awareness would finally enhance the diachronic and interdisciplinary nature of LSP research, strengthen its academic vocation and, possibly, lead to more fruitful exchanges with colleagues working in other language study areas.

3. Inquiry into the sources of language and meaning

3.1. Aristotle

Presuppositions, “[...] or beliefs, assumptions and extra-linguistic knowledge shared by the participants in a speech event” (Stalnaker 1999: 38), have been implicit in discussions on the sources of meaning and speech since classical times. Aristotle (384-322 BC) indicates the pathway to solve the complex problem through his arguments against Plato’s theory of everlasting ‘forms’ as begetters of knowledge and meaning. The Stagirite expounds his theory of knowledge and discourse through his famous treaties on philosophy, ethics, rhetoric, pragmatics and science (cf. Aristotle 1924). He reasons that concepts cannot exist independently of human beings and that the immediate real world, as perceived by our senses, supplies samples of the
things we know and we can talk about. Aristotle does not deny innate mental power; he includes the effects of direct experience on human knowledge, conduct, activities and speech. He observes that abilities relevant to individual and social welfare as “[...] practical wisdom and philosophic wisdom are not god-sent, but come as a result of virtue – intellectual and moral disposition – and some process of learning or training” (Aristotle 1998: 18 1099b 15-18). Thus, he posits the participants’ prior knowledge about facts, procedures, contextual conditions and linguistic patterns as relevant in speech production and interpretation.

According to Aristotle, the human mind mediates the relationship between words, ideas, objects and processes of the real world. On the basis of his experience as a physician, he argues that the neurological and perceptive organs of human beings are the same independent of race and culture. He also reports that basic human needs and properties of the physical world are the same in different countries and hence not dependent on the codes used by their inhabitants. Thus, he postulates the universal nature of relevant concepts and introduces the notion of mental schemata:

Spoken sounds are symbols of impressions in the mind, and what are written are symbols of what is spoken. Speech, like writing, is not the same for all mankind, although the mental impressions directly expressed by these signs are the same for all, as are the things of which these mental impressions are likenesses (Aristotle 1924: De Interpretatione 1).

Aristotle interrelates phonic and graphic symbols, which can recall experience to the mind, and he defines names and words as important tools for communication and society. He reasons that verbal forms serve not only to identify people, concepts, animals and objects, but also to discuss about observable or inferable physical properties and events. He maintains that names as well as linguistic systems are products of conventions elaborated by individuals and multi-speech communities of practice which through the ages have contributed to the evolution of social systems (cf. Aristotle 1924: Topics 1).

The Stagirite challenges idealistic assumptions about speech through examples which prove that “[...] every knowledge and every method starts from previous knowledge” (Aristotle 1924: Posterior Analytics I). Then he corroborates his arguments by defining the topoi – knowledge structures – which allow human memory not only to store and retrieve information but also to associate words to entities and processes in the real world. He explains:

Each uncombined word or expression means one of the following things: – what (or Substance), how large (that is, Quantity), what sort of thing (that is, Quality), related to what (or Relation), where (that is, Place), when (or Time), in what attitude (Posture, Position), how circumstanced (State or Condition), how active, what doing (or Action), how passive, what suffering (Affection) (Aristotle 1924: Categories IV, original parentheses)

Aristotle’s epistemic model can be exemplified through the knowledge structures which identify the Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) molecule:
The categories which frame the DNA concept combine quantitative, qualitative, relational, spatial and temporal characteristics, thus they allow a topographic schema of the genetic material. Moreover, the DNA *topoi* confirm Aristotle’s assertion that language and meaning are in relation to knowledge, experience, actions and purposes of communities of thought and practice. English is the language used to describe the concept, yet only molecular biologists can evaluate whether the *topoi* reported above are adequate, the linguistic forms appropriate and the utterance true to facts.

Aristotle discusses the different functions of language and classes speech types into three macro-groups. He terms them ‘epideictic’, ‘forensic’ and ‘deliberative’ genres, in consideration of pragmatic strands such as: role of audience, aims of interaction, nature of proof supporting the argument, time of action and event (cf. Aristotle 1924: *Rhetoric* I). Then he divides systematic argumentation into four main parts: the ‘proem’, the ‘statements of facts’, the ‘proof’, the ‘epilogue’ and describes the semantic and epistemic role of each part in relation to topic and purpose. Aristotle suggests that the speaker/writer should endeavour to compose texts which, by enhancing the dialectic and cohesive strands of the discussion, aid the search for truth (cf. Aristotle 1924: *Rhetoric* III). To this purpose, he groups acts of speech into sentences (*semantikòs*) and propositions (*apophantikòs*), and defines as ‘apophantics’ the discourse drawing on facts. He explains: “While every sentence has meaning (*semantikòs*), not all can be called propositions (*apophantikòs*). We call propositions those only that have truth or falsity in them. A prayer is, for instance, a sentence but neither has truth nor has falsity” (Aristotle 1924: *De Interpretatione* IV).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Deoxyribonucleic acid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>3000 megabase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>double helix disposition of elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related to what</td>
<td>genetic material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where</td>
<td>cell nucleus and chromosomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what attitude</td>
<td>Two helical strands twisted around a central axis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State or condition</td>
<td>Complementary base-pair association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Replication, repair, recombination, separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>codes biological molecules, contributes to and is subject to genetic mutation (cf. Alberts 2003)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The philosopher/scientist is aware that in every field of knowledge and practice progress is achieved by degrees. Thus, he suggests a pragmatic conception of expectations and activities: “[...] we must not look for precision in all things alike, but in each class of things such precision as accords with the subject matter, as so much as appropriate to the inquiry” (Aristotle 1998: 1098a 25-27). In the same frame, he posits an operational concept of meaning to include interests, ends and purposes of individuals and communities of practice:

For a carpenter and a geometer investigate the right angle in different ways; the former does so in so far as the right angle is useful for his work, while the latter inquires what it is or what sort of thing it is; for he is a spectator of the truth (Aristotle 1998: 1098a 27-30).

Aristotle argues for a tolerant outlook to socio-political, ethical and scientific questions and concepts. He reasons that notions such as ‘truth’ and ‘justice’ depend on circumstances bound to context of culture and context of situation, thus they cannot be given absolute value. In the same perspective, he observes that even opposite terms such as ‘rational’ and ‘irrational’ “[...] are distinct by definition but by nature inseparable, like convex and concave in the circumference of a circle [...]” (Aristotle 1998: 1102a 35-38). Hence, both concepts should be considered as complementary and not be framed as if they were separable entities.

In brief, the Stagirite defines meaning and communication as depending on a dialectical process driven by individuals who share knowledge, skills, interests, goals and rules of discourse articulation and who operate within a similar physical and cultural space. He poses thought-provoking questions about the nature of knowledge, the coincidence of opposites, the relativity and complementarity of concepts, beliefs and rules. In every dispute or claim, he advises the middle way, or golden mean, to escape the excesses of Platonic idealism.

Aristotle’s discussions on the sources of knowledge and language have been seminal in the development of Western thought and discursive practices. His arguments have been analysed and extended by scholars through the different ages. Consequently, his original ideas have branched out into many fields of study whose voices and proposals would merit more attention than is possible in the overview which follows.

The Renaissance developed from the Stagirite’s teachings. Notably, one of the core issues between linguist/philosophers and the fathers of modern science was the role of words in mapping meaning and establishing facts. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) became a victim of the dispute. Nonetheless, his discoveries and ideas revolutionized science, thought and language. In times of linguistic relativism, Galileo’s witty challenge to the trust of his opponents in the opinions of authorities would merit some thought:

If their opinions and their voices have the power of calling into existence the things they name, then I beg them to do me the favour of naming a lot of old hardware I have about my house gold (Galilei 1623, 1957: 253).
The destiny of discussions on the sources of knowledge and meaning seems, in fact, to wax and wane according to Vico’s historic cycles. With the rise of Romanticism, Aristotle’s *Topics* and the rational approach to speech were excluded from the agenda of language studies (cf. Toulmin 1972). Then the issues they pose were slowly revived at the end of the 19th century.

3.2. G. Frege

G. Frege (1846-1925) questions the adequacy of comparative grammar studies, in fashion at the time, and suggests a line of research attentive to the semantics of speech and the components of propositions. In the process, he re-introduces the problem of meaning in language theories and highlights the role of presuppositions in discourse processing. The German mathematician defines the concept as “[...] the knowledge of certain conditions accompanying the utterance which are used as means of expressing the thought” (Frege 1977: 10-11). According to him, presuppositions establish the circumstances to advance from what he terms ‘sense’, meaning derived from grammar-logic structures, to ‘reference’: i.e. extra-textual and epistemico-pragmatic patterns which support the truth value of an assertion.

Frege distinguishes poetic and narrative genres from scientific discourse. He explains that literary pieces are works of art whose meaning can be grasped by mere evocation of the thought expressed by the sentences. Their ‘reference’ relates to the images and feelings aroused by the narrative without any concern for whether what is said is true or not (Frege 1977: 63). The mathematician states that empirical texts must instead strive for truth by investigating the properties of processes and things in the physical world. As a result, their argumentation evolves through propositions whose content is independent of the feelings associative with language forms. The ‘reference’ relates to disciplinary facts, procedures and non-verbal structures, which can be verified through direct observation, mathematical and/or experimental procedures. Therefore, the interpretation of scientific communication relies on presuppositions having multidisciplinary sources.

3.3. C.S. Peirce

C.S. Peirce (1838-1914) proposes an operational concept of meaning and speech consonant with Aristotle’s model. He states that words have no life of their own, thus their content depends on how people use them to refer to objects in the world and to discuss natural processes, theoretical and social issues. He describes communication as a dynamic process whose main components are *signs* (verbal and non-verbal symbols), *objects* (natural, man-made and abstract entities) and *interpretants* (addressee and addressee). Then he specifies that the meaning of speech depends on “[...] the intentions of the utterer, and that it can be apperceived only by [...] a mind
well qualified to comprehend it” (Peirce 1923: 287). Thus, he reasons, to describe communication adequately, researchers must not only investigate “[...] the general reference of symbols to their objects but also be obliged to make researches into the references to their interpretants” (Peirce 1923: 279).

The American logician states that the meaning of words depends on the effects that ‘might conceivably have practical bearing’. He supports this stance by relating to the concepts of force and motion in mechanics (Peirce 1967: 367-369). He exemplifies the geometric, mathematical, and reasoning patterns which underlie the ‘knowledge structures’ of ‘path’, ‘direction’ and ‘magnitude’ embedded in the concept of force. Then he explains that the concept of motion implies the notions of the former term, plus those of ‘reference frame’, ‘displacement’ and ‘time’. The logician points out that both concepts have meaning in so far as they serve to account for changes in the position and motion of bodies in real world circumstances; thus, he underlines the operational and evolutionary nature of scientific concepts. He observes that the concept of force originated in the 17th century from “[...] the rude idea of a cause, and, constantly improved upon since, has shown us how to explain all the changes in motion which bodies experience, and how to think about all physical phenomena” (Peirce 1967: 367). Peirce concludes that this analytical and procedural operation has contributed significantly to scientific and social advancement. He recommends that communication be investigated as a dialectic process between participants who share know-how and use verbal and non-verbal codes to represent networks of epistemic and pragmatic patterns linked to discourse universes.

3.4. I. A. Richards

I. A. Richards (1893-1979) discusses speech and meaning with the aim to establish the components of effective communication. He defines language as an instrument which enhances human abilities, but suggests that the practice of deriving the meaning of words from the ‘magic of names’ should be eradicated. He identifies “[...] three factors involved when any statement is made, or interpreted. 1. Mental processes. 2. The symbol. 3. A referent – something which is thought of” (Richards 1923: 243). The literary critic proposes the ‘reference triangle’ to visualize the causal chain linking ‘symbol’, ‘reference’ and ‘referent’, or words, thoughts and things, respectively. He cautions that the process whereby the interactants perform an act of ‘reference’, more or less similar, is complex and influenced by cultural, psychological and contextual circumstances (Richards 1923: 11). He observes that words serve to mediate our thoughts, feelings and needs; thus they contribute to establishing a common world among individuals. However, he remarks that each speaker will associate verbal forms with a ‘cluster of concepts, events or contexts’, a set of entities with which he/she is familiar. Therefore, unless drawing on the same ‘comparison field’, or cognitive context, people will rarely ever have identical meaning for words. Richards reasons that
speech production and interpretation depend on utterances which are relevant to
the cognitive context and which embed “[...] a recurrent set of mental events,
peculiarly related to one another, so as to recur, as regards their main features with
partial uniformity” (Richards 1923: 57). This recurrence allows the interactants to
recollect, associate and analogize previous information with present materials and
to extend comparison fields.

Richards classes speech into three genres: ‘referential’, ‘emotive’ and ‘representa-
tive’, according to the degree of factuality associable to the ‘reference’. He explains
that each genre type draws on historic, factual and literary backgrounds; thus the rel-
tive compositions should not be analysed as the fruit of “[...] mirages due to lin-
guistic refraction [...]” (Richards 1923: 57). The texts of each genre type build on
clusters of concepts and procedures which are familiar to the source and recipient,
thus they provide the strands for recognition, inference, empathy and other cogni-
tive mechanisms which sustain the encoding and decoding processes. Richards em-
phasizes that in interpreting a text “our ability to select meanings similar to those en-
visioned by the source is dependent on our past experience and choices of meaning
from those experiences; feedforward prepares us to attribute particular meaning
rather than others” (Richards 1976: 250). He then describes the epistemic activities
linked to ‘feedforward’ and ‘feedback’ procedures. The former allows the addressee
to access stored schemata, the latter confirms anticipations, integrates previous and
novel information and creates the ground for future use.

3.5. B. Malinowski

B. Malinowski (1884-1949) proposes an ethnographic approach to language study
to take into account the socio-cultural framework in which the speech event is
embedded. He acknowledges the importance of grammar studies in establishing
formal rules for the purpose of correctness and style. He also states that language
is “[...] an instrument of thought which grows with the advancement of thought
and culture” (Malinowski 1923: 297). However, he reports that concerns of formal
grammar have feeble links with the mental activities involved in the meaning-
making process. Drawing on direct field work and observations of how people
engaged in activities use utterances to accomplish tasks, the ethno-linguist con-
tends that speech “[...] becomes only intelligible when it is placed within its con-
text of situation” (Malinowski 1923: 307, original italics). Thus, he states that, for
effective descriptions, the bonds of mere linguistics must be ‘burst’ to conjoin the
study of language with the study of ‘the context of culture’ and ‘context of situa-
tion’ of actual communication. The ethnographer cautions that, without the
inclusion of such concerns, discussions about language and communication will
continue to frame meaning as if spun out of empty words. Hence, he emphasizes
the social function of language “[...] an indispensable element of concerted
human action” (Malinowski 1923: 316), and sustains a conceptualization of utter-
ances as partners of practical activities.
Malinowski classes speech genres as ‘phatic’, ‘emotive’ and ‘referential’ according to function, content and purpose of interaction and underlines “[...] the essentially pragmatic character of each type of linguistic use” (Malinowski 1923: 316). He observes that the dynamic and situational strands of each utterance can be appreciated only through research and descriptions of discourse in action. “The study of any form of speech used in connection with vital work would reveal [...] the dependence of the meaning of each word upon practical experience, and the structure of each utterance upon the momentary situation in which it is spoken” (Malinowski 1923: 312). Clearly, the fulfilment of this heuristic task would require that the researcher had direct contact with and adequate knowledge of the social and cultural world of the interactants.

In fact, Malinowski advises students of language to become ethnographers since “[...] language ought to be regarded and studied against the background of human activities and as a mode of human behaviour in practical matters” (Malinowski 1923: 312). The Russian ethno-linguist explains that direct experience would allow a better insight into the sources of signification and convince agnostics that

Meaning does not come from the contemplation of things, or analysis of occurrence, but in practical and active acquaintance with relevant situations. The real knowledge of a word comes through the practice of appropriately using it within a certain situation (Malinowski 1923: 325).

In brief, Malinowski proposes a dynamic approach to language which studies utterances in flux and in connection with the interactants’ physical, social and mental activities, and in consideration of the things being discussed, the setting and other circumstances attending the speech event.

3.6. M. Bakhtin

M. Bakhtin (1895-1975) expands Aristotle’s argument that meaning and language differ with the diverse areas of human activity. He appreciates the empirical study of grammar systems, but questions the habit of studying speech only from a general linguistic standpoint. He observes that such analyses “[...] fail to take into account the non-verbal strands of each utterance, the specific finalisation of the utterance, the completeness of thought, and the relation of each assertion to the addressee” (Bakhtin 1996: 61). The Russian philologist remarks that “Language is realised in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity” (Bakhtin 1996: 60, original parentheses). Then he defines utterances as pragmatic units, which reflect the conditions and goals of each area of activity with regard to content, theme, and style as well as lexical, phraseological and compositional structure. Bakhtin suggests that each utterance of a text should be considered as part of a whole since it is determined by the interests, purposes and procedures of the particular sphere of communication. Then he intro-
duces the concept of discourse sphere and explains that each sphere of activity con-
tains: “[...] an entire repertoire of speech genres that differentiate and grow as the par-
ticular sphere develops and becomes more complex” (Bakhtin 1996: 60). In con-
sideration of the diverse spheres of human activity and of the multiplicity and com-
plicity of the speech types populating each sphere, he proposes the grouping of “[...] rhetorical genres into primary (simple) and secondary (complex) speech genres” (cf. Bakhtin 1996: 61, original parentheses). In the first constellation or “repertoire of speech genres”, he groups everyday communication, informal transactions and serial novels. In the second, he includes the discourses of scientific, economic, legal, socio-political and other disciplinary realms. He adds that the genres within the lat-
ter constellation “[...] arise in more complex and comparatively highly developed and organised cultural communication, [...] conditions of speech, specific for each sphere, give rise to relatively stable thematic, compositional and stylistic types of ut-
terances” (Bakhtin 1996: 64).

Bakhtin delineates the components of a speech event when he states that the sphere of activity provides the pragmatic and epistemic background for the inter-
actions of the agents: addresser, topic and addressee or ‘partner of the speaker’. The philologist states that in this role, the interpreter must take an active respon-
sive attitude toward the meaning of the utterances from the speaker’s first word (Bakhtin 1996: 67). In planning a communicative act, the source must anticipate the interactive event and be aware that the recipient, “beside familiarity with the language system, is also familiar with previous utterances with which the new utterances enter into a kind of relation” (Bakhtin 1996: 69). According to the speech sphere, the addresser can expect responsive agreement, sympathy, objec-
tion or execution from the part of his/her audience.

Bakhtin argues that responsive interactions are not governed by grammar structures. They are correlated to other thoughts, to the extra-verbal context of reality, to cultural setting as well as to the utterances of other speakers. The philol-
ogist explains that each speaker is a ‘rejoinder’ in a dialogue oriented towards the response of the other and their active understanding, which can assume various forms according to the purpose of the interaction. In this perspective, meaning has operational strands since the cultural sphere and the ‘finalization’ of the com-
munication act can condition the speech content and its arrangement as well as guide the addressee’s expectations. The speaker finalizes his/her text by choosing what to say and how to say it at a particular moment and under particular cir-
cumstances. His/her intentions are guided by criteria determined by the current interests and arguments of the speech sphere. As a consequence, each utterance he/she uses in his/her discussion has links with previous utterances as well as with non-verbal patterns shared by the community of practice (cf. Bakhtin 1996). Bakhtin states that the process of coding and decoding communication relies on “intertextuality” – relevant sources or webs of representations shared by the source and recipient through experience with previous texts with similar themes. Thus, the speech interaction presupposes not only the knowledge of the language
system, but also familiarity with extra-linguistic frames of reference appropriate
to the specific discourse realm.

Bakhtin argues for a dynamic and interactive model of language study which,
besides grammar-semantic structures, accounts for knowledge patterns, and
rhetorical and procedural frames associated with the specific domain of discourse
and action. He portrays the communication act as a dialectical enterprise in which
the source chooses the argument, finalizes and evaluates his/her contribution
while articulating speech. The recipient then interacts with the text, and recreates
it through ‘responsive understanding’. Shared presuppositions are fundamental in
this process for they allow both the source and recipient to evaluate, criticize,
amend and expand the text content.

3.7. J.L. Austin

J. L. Austin (1911-1960) shares the conception that meaning depends on the prac-
tice of using words within well-defined situations, and that speech should be
analysed as an organic whole, in light of its context of culture, and the activities,
intentions, motives and relationship of interactants. He recognizes the usefulness
of sentences devised for grammar-logic studies, but defines them as parasitic
upon normal use and ‘void’ of actual meaning since they rely on arbitrary grammar
rules and definitions. He states that, in verbal interactions, ‘uttering words’ is nec-
[...] it is always necessary that the circumstances in which the words are uttered
should be in some way, or ways, appropriate, and it is very commonly necessary that
either the speaker himself or other persons should also perform certain actions,
whether ‘physical’ or ‘mental’ actions or even acts of uttering words (Austin 1955:
8, original italics).

In the light of the participants’ role, the context of situation, the socio-institu-
tional and factual strands of utterances and their grammar-semantic content,
Austin classes actual speech into two broad categories or speech acts: ‘performa-
tives’ and ‘constatives’. He defines ‘constatives’ as assertions, which have truth-condi-
tional properties, and ‘performatives’ as utterances which can have either
‘happy’ or ‘null’ effects. The ‘happiness condition’ depends on the participants’
compliance with social, institutional, or legal circumstances, their true intentions
in performing the act, as well as the appropriateness of the context and actions of
the speech event (cf. Austin 1955: 70). The philosopher of language explains that
‘performatives’ serve to do things with words, whereas ‘constatives’ are used to ‘say
something’ about facts and procedures. He then identifies three levels of meaning
or ‘action’ for each utterance. He terms the first ‘locutionary act’ and relates it to
the ‘sense and reference’ of the logico-semantic components of a sentence. The
second, he defines as ‘illocutionary act’ by virtue of the intention or force, which
may be associated with the explicit utterance. The third he names ‘perlocutionary
act’ and associates it to the effect that the utterance can have on the addressee, in set circumstances (cf. Austin 1955: 107).

The philosopher explains that, in speech act theory, the concept of force relates to the possible consequences of an utterance and is dependent on all the conditions which render a performative ‘felicitous’ or ‘infelicitous’ (cf. Austin 1955: 101). Thus, this use of the term force implies no measurable ‘knowledge structures’ as ‘path’, ‘direction’ and ‘magnitude’ associated with its homonym used in mechanics. Its occurrence will not occasion association with the term-concept of ‘motion’, ‘vector’, ‘acceleration’, ‘momentum’ as the term would in propositions of the physical sciences. Austin is well aware of the epistemico-pragmatic difference and explains that force in speech act theory “[...] relates to the consequences or effects in a certain sense as getting someone to obey with no implication to physical consequences” (Austin 1955: 115).

The philosopher then discusses constative utterances and observes that they can also be liable to infelicities, especially “[...] in cases of putative statements presupposing [...] the existence of that which it refers to; if no such thing exists, the statement is not about anything” (Austin 1955: 137). He divides constatives into different statement types in relation to the soundness of the argument, the nature of the evidence, the inductive or deductive inferences, the precision of the statement in relation to the particular knowledge and discourse field. He concludes that “[...] there are dimensions in which we can judge, assess, or appraise the constative utterance (granting as a preliminary that it is felicitous) which does not arise with non-constative or performative utterances” (Austin 1955: 140, original parentheses).

Austin presents his inquiry into meaning and language as a tentative exploration and suggests that it requires re-thinking, ‘widening-out’, and ‘reformulating’. The philosopher’s modesty renders the ‘moral’ he posits about studying language within the ‘total speech situation’, in consideration of the participants’ knowledge and commitment and in relation to probability of facts and events, even more significant and worthy of thought. The same can be said of the caution he advises about ‘void’ statements which are devised and used to describe meaning and communication. Thus, presuppositions are implicitly and explicitly evoked in Austin’s discussion.

The discussions touched on above argue for the inclusion of people, mental abilities, actions and other circumstances related to actual speech in describing discourse. They present meaning as person-centred and jointly produced by interactants who share concepts, procedures and the cumulative historico-cultural heritage of knowledge spheres (cf. Toulmin 1972). The agents of communication are participants who share sets of previous utterances and frame new concepts in relation to context, intentions, action, purposes and rules accepted by communities of practice. Therefore, speech processing, besides linguistic forms, involves factors “[...] such as the information or presuppositions that the communicants bring to the task, the extralinguistic context, and the non verbal cues” (Saville-Troike 2003: 105), which are the patrimony of disciplinary worlds.
4. Discussion

The arguments in favour of a holistic approach to speech and meaning, in light of conceptual and pragmatic diversities, are always quoted in studies questioning the over-grammatization and fragmentation of texts which seems to be driving current approaches to discourse analysis. The discussions have been expanded by researchers who argue “[...] in favour of a more dynamic view of the relationship between linguistic and non-linguistic dimensions of communicative events” (Duranti & Goodwin 1997: 31). The ethno-pragmatic approach to language is then supported through observations that “[...] functions of language in society are a problem for investigation, not for postulation [...] since [...] the cognitive significance of language depends not only on structures, but also on patterns of use” (Hymes 1974: 116). Thus, there seems to be a growing consensus that comprehensive discourse models would require “discovering the underlying processes which speakers of language utilize to produce and interpret communicative experience including unstated assumptions which are shared cultural knowledge and understanding” (Saville-Troike 2003: 104). The main argument is that the meaning and intelligibility of patterns of speech depend on the speech situation as well as on the prior experience of speakers in the given subject. The concepts woven in the texts are negotiated during the process of interaction, dependent on the communicants’ intent and connected to previous utterances from the same knowledge sphere. Hence, the interpretation draws on accumulated knowledge shared by the interactants and is adjustable through ‘presupposition accommodation’ in light of what happens in the course of the communication act (cf. Stalnaker 1999).

This dialectic process applies to LSP discourse spheres more than to other domains. The articulation and reception of specialist discourse depend on an open-ended process, which evolves through the weaving of ideas, procedures, images, and words in a structure akin to a three-dimensional network. Each text has its roots in previous texts of the same genre type and projects the arguments discussed for future advancement (cf. Tarantino 2001). The source usually picks up the conceptual and procedural threads left loose by previous discussants and then leaves the discussion strands open for other community members to continue the analysis and discovery enterprise. The kind of representation involved takes language in the form of utterances in discourse, relates these to established knowledge about the world derived from experience and previous representations and constructs a new conceptual model conforming to what is said or meant. Therefore, both in the production and interpretation activity, the epistemic process relies heavily on presuppositions.

5. Conclusions

The arguments posed by scholars of language sciences contend that the meaning of words is acquired through social interactions and that extra-linguistic categories are determinant factors in the production and interpretation of speech in action. Following their teachings, linguistic studies should be enriched with concerns of the ‘underlying mental processes’ or presuppositions, which facilitate the meaning-
making interaction. The inclusion may provide arguments in favour of more organic approaches to communication studies with consequent spin-offs on language for specific purposes (LSP) and language and translation (LT) studies. As suggested by Widdowson: “What interpretation involves is the relating of the language in the text to the schematic constructions of knowledge, belief and so on outside the text” (Widdowson 1998: 414). Hence, pragmatic and cognitive presuppositions appear to be of great importance also in this profession, where the analysis, interpretation and construction of texts must bridge linguistic, cultural and disciplinary realms.

The foregoing arguments attest that, in order to be effective, the LT profession as well as LSP researchers and teachers require more than knowledge of the language system and its application in social exchanges. They should have insight into spheres of activities and related repertoires of speech genres and the consequent presuppositions shared by the communities of practice engaged in the struggle to understand natural and social processes. This implies that they should be familiar with the aims and ‘knowledge structures’ behind the terms of disciplinary realms. They should have some understanding of how specialist concepts are organized and interact with concepts of the same discipline or interdisciplinary branches in actual communication.

When working in scientific discourse areas, they should have some knowledge of the theories, rules, techniques and instruments that contribute to the argumentation process. They should also be aware of the role that the scientific method and topographic approaches of observation and representation have in the discussions of events, experiments, findings and hypotheses. They should have some insight into the history and philosophy of science and into the steps through which concepts are elaborated and appropriate terms are created or adopted to suit theoretical or factual findings. In other words, LT and LSP researchers and practitioners should develop cognitive strategies that will allow them to interact with specialist texts through the activation of conceptual, pragmatic and linguistic frames similar to those shared by the speech community.

The inclusion of text-based presupposition analyses in LSP research and descriptive models would enhance the diachronic nature of this branch of language study and define its scientific boundaries. This insight could open language studies to multidisciplinary concerns and prove beneficial for theoretical and applied purposes. It could then encourage scholars of different cultural backgrounds, who are often unaware of each others’ work, to appreciate complementary perspectives on language study. At the same time, it could brace the holistic approach to language and lead theorists and practitioners to question anew simplistic models of speech and to consider more attentively strategies useful for the description of the discourse of disciplinary domains other than their own.

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References

Notes on contributors

Cinzia Bevitori is a researcher of English language and linguistics in the SITLeC Department and the Faculty of Political Science “Roberto Ruffilli” of the University of Bologna at Forlì. She has collaborated in the design and realization of a number of computer-based projects, ranging from corpus construction to the preparation of multimedia language learning material. She co-authored the self-access courses, *Learning English through Culture and Heritage* (Bologna, Clueb 2001); *Re-views – Online Reading Skills for Political Science* (Bologna, Clueb 2003). Her main research interests are in the field of Corpus Linguistics, more specifically specialized corpus-assisted discourse analysis, Systemic Functional Linguistics and Appraisal. In recent years, she has been interested in combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies in the analysis of parliamentary language and has published a number of articles, among which ‘Negotiating Conflict: Interruptions in British and Italian Parliamentary Debates’ (John Benjamins 2004). She is a member of the national CorDis Project, co-financed by the Italian Ministry of University and Research.

Cristiano Broccias is Associate Professor in English Language at the University of Genoa. His main research interests lie in the description and Cognitive Linguistic analysis of English grammar, both synchronic and diachronic. His publications include a monograph on English change constructions, *The English Change Network. Forcing Changes into Schemas* (Walter de Gruyter 2003).

Chiara Bucaria graduated in translating and interpreting from the University of Bologna’s Advanced School in Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators, with a thesis on the perception of dubbing. She received a Master’s Degree in English from Youngstown State University (USA), where her final dissertation focused on lexical and syntactic ambiguity in humorous newspaper headlines. She is currently...
enrolled in a doctoral course of studies at the University of Bologna at Forlì (Department of Interdisciplinary Studies in Translation, Languages and Culture), where she is investigating black humour as portrayed in British and American dark comedies and in their dubbed Italian versions. At the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies in Translation, Languages and Culture she is also part of a research group on humour studies and audiovisual translation. She also works as an English and Italian teacher and as a freelance translator.

Daniele Canepa graduated from the Faculty of Modern Languages of the University of Genoa in 2005 and is currently an English Language Teacher at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Genoa. His university degree dissertation investigates metaphorical language in written Football English in The Times and in The Western Mail.

Marina Dossena is Professor of English Language at the University of Bergamo (Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures). Her research interests focus on the features and origins of British varieties of English and the history of specialized discourse. Recent publications include Insights into Late Modern English, co-edited with Charles Jones (Bern, Peter Lang 2003), Methods and Data in English Historical Dialectology, co-edited with Roger Lass (Bern, Peter Lang 2004), and Scotticisms in Grammar and Vocabulary (Edinburgh, John Donald 2005). She is currently compiling a corpus of nineteenth-century Scottish correspondence and is the editor of the Online Bibliography of Scots and Scottish English.

Lysbeth Ford has spent the last 18 years documenting endangered languages of the Daly River region of the Northern Territory of Australia. She has a BA in Classics from University College, London, an MA and PhD in Linguistics from the Australian National University, Canberra, and a Grad Dip TESL. In 1997 she published a dictionary of Batjamalh and has since published texts in several other Daly languages for use in the region’s bilingual schools. Her article on the language of Marri Ngarr songs appears in 2006 and she is currently working on chapters for two books on Daly song genres. Since 2001, she has trained Indigenous linguists at Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education; she co-authored the monograph Open and Flexible PhD Study and Research published in 1997 by the Evaluations and Investigations Program of the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA), Canberra.

Sattar Izwaini is currently Assistant Professor of Translation at Abu Dhabi University in United Arab Emirates. He gained his PhD from UMIST (now University of Manchester). He has been a professional translator for about 16 years in Iraq, Jordan, Sweden, and UAE. He has taught translation, English for Specific Purposes, and Languages (English & Arabic). His research interests include: descriptive translation studies, corpus-based translation studies, translation and localization, corpus linguistics, terminology, and lexical semantics.
Cynthia Jane Kellett Bidoli is Associate Professor of Consecutive Interpretation at the Advanced School of Modern Languages, University of Trieste. Her research interests lie in lexicography, the history of interpretation and interpretation quality assessment with particular focus on non-verbal aspects of consecutive delivery. Interest in non-verbal communication has led her to research signed language focusing on specific aspects of cultural and linguistic mediation between the English-speaking world and the Italian Deaf signing community through a multimodal corpus approach, to identify textual recasting and the mechanisms at play during the complex translation process from the oral/aural channel to the visual/gestural one. She has published articles in the proceedings of several national and international conferences as well as in *Textus* and the *Interpreters’ Newsletter*. Electronic analysis of the English-LIS corpus has led to the compilation (in progress) of a multimodal trilingual terminological glossary in electronic format on CD-ROM for students of sign language.

Lucía Loureiro-Porto has been a Lecturer in the Department of Spanish, Modern and Latin Studies at the Universitat de les Illes Baleares (Spain) since October 2005. She is also a member of the research project Variation and Linguistic Change, directed by Professor Teresa Fanego at the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela, where she received her PhD in English Historical Linguistics in June 2005. Currently she teaches subjects related to English grammar and sociolinguistics. Her main areas of specialization are semantic, syntactic and morphological change in the history of English and grammaticalization. More specifically, she is concerned with the evolution of English modal verbs, which has been the subject of some of her latest papers and articles.

Dominic McCormack is a Director of MARLUK Link-Up working as an interpreter, trainer and facilitator. His clients include the Aboriginal Interpreter Service (NT), Thamarrurr Regional Council and the Office of Indigenous Policy Co-ordination. With the Thamarrurr Regional Council he is heavily involved in the Indigenous Community Co-Ordination Pilot, with Wadeye being the Trial Site in the Northern Territory for this Council of Australian Government’s project. He grew up at the community of Wadeye, learned Murrinh-patha and gained a wealth of experience with respect to the local culture and Indigenous life. He received accreditation as a Para-professional interpreter through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters in 1997. After gaining a Bachelor of Law through the Northern Territory University in 1993 he was an Associate to His Honour, Mr. Justice Mildren in the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory. He has worked at the Northern Territory Department of Justice’s Land Claims Unit, as a commercial lawyer with De Silva Hebron and as a Crown Law Officer in the Queensland Native Title Unit. For further information, please go to www.marluk.com.au.

Elena Seoane is Associate Professor of English in the Department of English at the University of Santiago de Compostela (Spain), and a member of the research proj-
Professor Teresa Fanego. In 1996 she received her PhD in English Historical Linguistics from the University of Santiago. Her main areas of specialization are syntactic change in the history of English, historical pragmatics and grammaticalization theory. Her latest publications include a chapter in the Blackwell Handbook on the History of English, published in 2006. More recently she has been interested in scientific English both from a diachronic and a synchronic perspective, and has written a number of articles on its stylistic changes.

Maria Tarantino is Associate Professor of English at the Faculty of Science, University of Bari. Her main interests lie in the area of English for Special Purposes with particular focus on the pragmatic, cognitive and semiotic systems interacting in communication. Her published studies draw on direct experience with professional users of specialist-discourse genres. This has motivated her outline of the epistemic, operational, verbal and non-verbal components which contribute to meaning evolution, knowledge and language expansion in disciplinary fields. The teaching of students, with specific expectations, has led her to investigate both the linguistic needs of the Italian professional and student population and the most recurrent errors at discourse level. In turn, she has discussed the opportunity to integrate semantic and grammatical approaches to discourse analyses with concerns of the philosophy, reasoning strategies, verbal and non-verbal codes interwoven in the expository patterns of specific research and speech domains.
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