Communicating English in Specialised Domains

Communicating English in Specialised Domains:

A Festschrift for Maurizio Gotti

Edited by

Stefania Maci, Michele Sala
and Cinzia Spinzi

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The following academics and former or current colleagues of Maurizio Gotti wish their names to be listed in this Tabula Gratulatoria as an expression of their gratitude and in recognition of his exemplary contribution to the field of English Language studies in specialised settings: Elena Agazzi, Carmen Argondizzo, Miriam Bait, Luca Bani, Paolo Barcella, Francesca Bargiela, Ulisse Belotti, Mario Bensi, Giuliano Bernini, Antonio Bertacca, Marina Bianchi, Ruth Breeze, William Bromwich, Federica Burini, Giuditta Caliendo, Maria Vittoria Calvi, Raul Calzoni, Maria Grazia Cammarota, Sandra Campagna, Gabriella Carobbio, Elena Carpi, Erik Castello, Emanuela Casti, Flavia Cavaliere, Luisa Chierichetti, Stefania Consonni, Belinda Crawford, Pierluigi Cuzzolin, Larissa D'Angelo, Chiara Degano, Davide Del Bello, Cécile Desoutter, Giuliana Diani, Marina Dossena, Richard Dury, Paola Evangelisti, Alessandra Fazio, Eleonora Federici, John Flowerdew, Kjersti Fløttum, Inmaculada Fortanet Gómez, Giovanni Garofalo, Valeria Gennero, Alessandra Ghisalberti, Davide S. Giannoni, Paul Gillaerts, Michela Giordano, Stanislaw Gozdz-Roszkowski, Maria Giuseppina Gottardo, Roberta Grassi, Francesca Guidotti, Christoph Hafner, Dorothee Heller, Raymond Hickey, Giovanni Iamartino, Cornelia Ilie, Susan Kermas, Francesco Lo Monaco, Angela Locatelli, Alessandra Lombardi, Rosa Lorés Sanz, María José Luzón, Maria Luisa Maggioni, Donatella Malavasi, Anna Mauranen, Davide Mazzi, Gabriella Mazzon, Denise Milizia, Pilar Mur Dueñas, Amanda C. Murphy, Teresa Musacchio, Flaminia Nicora, Maria Cristina Paganoni, Nicola Pantaleo, Tommaso Pellin, Carmen Pérez-Llantada, Ugo Persi, Gianluca Pontrandolfo, Tiziana Roncoroni, Stefano Rosso, Françoise Salager-Meyer, Rita Salvi, Carmen Sancho Guinda, Srikant Kumar Sarangi, Susan Šarčević, Giovanni Scirocco, Fabio Scotto, Polina Shvanyukova, Marco Sirtori, Martin Solly, Massimo Sturiale, John Swales, Christopher J. Taylor, Girolamo Tessuto, Massimiliano Vaghi, Ada Valentini. (We apologize to all those who could not be contacted in time to include their names in this Tabula Gratulatoria.)

INTRODUCTION

This collection of essays honors Professor Maurizio Gotti on the occasion of his retirement after many years of multifarious and enduring work in the academic world. Maurizio Gotti was the first student to graduate at the Faculty of Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Bergamo, where he started his academic career. Here—after having been appointed Associate Professor of English Language at the University of Brescia and Full Professor of English Linguistics at the University G. D'Annunzio, Pescara)—he served as Full Professor of History of the Egnlish Language and of English Language and Translation for more than two decades. He was Director of the Language Centre, Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Head of the Master Degree Course in Foreign Languages for International Communication and, more recently, Head of the Department of Foreign Literatures, Languages and Cultures, which, under his direction, has been awarded Department of Excellence by ANVUR (Agenzia Nazionale di Valutazione del Sistema Universitario e della Ricerca, the national agency for the evaluation of the university and research systems). It is at the University of Bergamo that Maurizio Gotti founded the internationally known research centre on specialised languages (CERLIS) and started the *Linguistic Insights* book series with the prestigious publishing house Peter Lang.

In the course of his career he has also been assigned multiple and prestigious offices, at both national level—President of AIA (the Italian Association of English Studies) and of AICLU (the Italian Association of University Language Centres)—and international level—Member of the Board of ESSE (the European Society for the Study of English), President of CERCLES (the European Confederation of University Language Centres), and Member of the Editorial Board of several national and international journals (*ESP Across Cultures, Fachsprache, Hermes, International Journal for the Semiotics of Law, International Journal of Specialized Communication, Journal of Applied Psycholinguistics, Law and Language*, to name but a few).

Prof. Gotti's high academic profile has been reflected in his experience as a visiting professor in many universities around the world—the University of Hong Kong (China), Valparaiso (Chile), München and Aachen (Germany), Innsbruck (Austria), Aarhus (Denmark), La Coruna and

Saragoza (Spain), and numerous others—where he carried out research and teaching activities.

Our experience as his collaborators has been invaluable. From conference organization to book editing, to administrative work, the years spent working together granted us the opportunity to learn greatly from his competence, commitment, determination and practical knowledge of the academic world (its practices, mechanisms, rituals, internal dynamics, etc.). During our regular meetings, we would discuss matters of all sorts, from the most interesting and challenging to the most tedious and problematic: Every apparent hurdle was never an obstacle as Maurizio always had a ready plan A, or B (or even C)! Indeed, his way of approaching issues has always been an operative and managerial one, and a very efficient and successful one at that respect. Furthermore, he has been and still is indefatigable in supporting and helping those who needed his support, with an academic generosity which has no equal. It has been an honor for us to have Maurizio Gotti as our mentor, and we are and will be eternally grateful for both what he has taught us down the years and his outstanding example.

Those working with him, but also scholars carrying out similar research around the world, have often been impressed by the quality, quantity and originality of his work, and by the commitment and enthusiasm with which he carried out his research. Maurizio Gotti's intellectual endeavours have encompassed many knowledge domains: He has made significant contributions to multiple areas of study including specialised discourses, lexicography, history of the English language and language teaching. His work has significantly contributed to extending and expanding existing research territories in both synchronic (i.e. the study of microlanguages and their pedagogy) and diachronic domains (i.e. the development of scientific discourse and of the rhetoric of experimental essays), but has also, and distinctively, contributed to establishing and defining new areas of investigation, bringing together and harmonizing methodologies (i.e. discourse analysis, genre analysis, critical discourse analysis, etc.) and applying them to a specific range of communicative events generally grouped under the label of specialised communication, which comprises academic, economic, legal, political, medical, and tourism discourses. What makes Maurizio Gotti's research stand out is the constant updating and upgrading of his approach to the investigation of the language, which has accounted for the changes in communicative practices—influenced by the use of English as a global language, new technologies, genre contamination and hybridization, popularization, etc.—by including new trends of language analysis (i.e. multimodal approaches, critical genre analysis, etc.).

Evidence of this is represented by all the national and international research projects Maurizio Gotti has been coordinating ever since 1999 on the diachronic and synchronic aspects of the English language, with particular regards to academic discourse, specialised discourse, knowledge dissemination, and arbitration. In addition to that, the editors and colleagues who have contributed to this volume clearly also testify to the richness and diversity that characterizes Maurizio Gotti's work.

Thus, this volume brings together contributions from these various fields of enquiry authored by an international group of scholars—including colleagues past and present—whose academic input interacts in various ways with ideas and topics introduced or extensively discussed in Maurizio Gotti's studies. The chapters have been grouped in four theme-based sections representing the main threads in Maurizio Gotti's research, from the macro area of specialised discourse to the more specific fields of research, namely academic and legal languages. The fourth section includes contributions dealing with the history of English language, and is followed by a miscellaneous section which concludes the collection.

Part 1: Specialised Discourse

The five chapters grouped in this first part deal with recent developments in the area of English for Specific Purposes, an approach to research and practice which has been at the heart of Maurizio Gotti's research, and which is in perpetual expansion. Among the diversity of aims and methods of the essays which follow, fragmentation towards more specific communicative settings dominated by specialised knowledge seems to be visible.

In the introductory chapter, titled "(Un)surprising Vistas in Health Care Communication", **Giuseppina Cortese** stresses the relevance of communication in health care settings which goes beyond the traditional doctor-patient interaction. Cortese looks at hospital as a community of practice where no clear-cut distinction exists among the various types of communication, from professional, institutional and regulative talk to informal and bonding talk. The author discusses some narratives of meaning-making in local public hospitals in Turin, where communication at any level involves people from different social, professional and cultural backgrounds, not least immigrants from foreign countries who are privately hired as caregivers. One very relevant feature of this contribution is that Cortese raises many questions such as the presence of disempowered actors in the communication process because of language and culture barriers; the need for language and cultural mediating services when translating problematic genres (e.g. informed consent) and not only, as already

advocated by Gotti (2013); and the need for an intercultural-oriented training in the workplace. Going through all these issues may respond to the ultimate aim of streamlining or, better, "optimizing" models, as she claims, that may limit the phenomenon of overcrowding in public hospitals, hindered by many social, political and economic factors.

A more specific health communication setting is investigated in **Gillian Mansfield**'s chapter entitled "Diabetics'r'us: Seeeking Information and Emotional Support in an Online Diabetic Community", even though, this time, communication is internet-mediated. Mansfield analyses the online communication regarding diabetes, a problem shared by the social actors taking part in the online forum. Based on previous literature, Mansfield devotes her efforts to investigating the discursive practices (i.e. metadiscursive features and rhetorical strategies) used by interactants in the starter topic thread titles found on a diabetes-related British website. This work is further sustained by previous research (Turnbull 2015) which has demonstrated an ongoing propensity towards a patient-centred approach in medical communication. After a useful review of the literature on metadiscourse, on the main features of online interaction and, finally, on the popularisation of scientific discourse, the author moves on to the investigation of the practices used by the diabetics to express their feelings and describe their behaviours. In so doing, she shows how discussants affected by this chronic desease rely on these online interactions not only to acquire knowledge about their desease from their peers, but also to be emotionally supported by those who share the same suffering.

The chapter by **Mariagrazia Guido**, titled "Migrants' Trauma Narratives through ELF: From Fact Reports to Possible-World Representations", zooms in on trauma-affected migrants' narratives mediated by English as Lingua Franca (ELF). For the purpose of identifying how communicative effectiveness in spoken ELF is achieved, the author develops an ethnographically-informed research by which she points out how, linguistically speaking, some features of Nigerian migrants' L1 are transferred into their use of ELF at a lexical, interpersonal and textual level of the language; content-wise, two main semantic structures feature the migrants' retelling of their journey towards a better life: 'hope' and 'despair'. Focussing in particular on narratives of 'hope', Guido reports the case of a Nigerian young man speaking the local dialect Yoruba as L1 and Nigerian Pidgin English as his displaced variation. Findings demonstrate that narratives of this type are deontically modulated and the author provides a justification calling to mind the Nigerian cultural orientation to "deterministic metaphysics", a kind of unconditioned acceptance of the predestined fate. The same cultural trait of supernatural causation explains the use of ergativity constructions in these

stories. As far as narratives of despair are concerned, apart from the deontic modality, other recurrent features are the use of idiomatic expressions and the presence of tense indefiniteness. If the former increases proportionally to the level of the migrant's discouragement, the latter is mainly attributed by the author to the still alive sense of past traumatic events. The strenght of this chapter lies in the pedagogical implications that these findings have for ESP norms.

This section closes with a chapter entitled "Lexicographic Metalanguage as (a) Specialised Language" by **Stefania Nuccorini,** who carries out a lexicographic investigation of similarities and differences between metalanguages used in three monolingual learner's dictionaries. For the purpose of verifying whether lexicographic metalanguage can be considered a case of specialised language, an overview of the literature on metalanguage, terminology, specialised knowledge, specialised language, and language awareness is provided. Drawing upon Berry's definition of metalanguage as "language about language (where terminology is viewed as the lexis) (2005, 3), the author concludes by stating that if, generally speaking, lexicographic metalanguage represents a case of specialised language, then the learners' dictionaries analysed should be seen as cases of "a specialised language", where the use of the indefinite article, far from being an irrelevant item, stands there to mark the precise contours of the specific concept of language.

Part II: Legal Discourse

The second part of the volume is devoted to the analysis of legal discourse and the four chapters included contribute to the discussion of such notions as accessibility and inclusiveness in language, in terms of accessibility to data and communication but also in the sense of social inclusion. In the first chapter entitled "Interdiscursive Construction of Arbitration Practice: Implied Confidentiality and Accessibility of Data", **Vijay Bhatia,** after paying an explicit homage to Gotti's insightful research in legal discourse, addresses the specific case of arbitration, meant as an alternative dispute resolution to litigation, mainly adopted in commercial contexts. With a view to pinpointing the importance of a multidimensional approach to the study of genre, Bhatia discusses some relevant issues concerning the accessibility of interdiscursive data, through the investigation of a considerable amount of materials from international commercial arbitration practices. Indeed, the main hindrance to this type of research seems to be the lack of access to data, due to the duty of confidentiality and privacy, an issue—Bathia argues— that is not absolute.

The interest of this particular contribution lies not only in its practical suggestion on how to gather materials (e.g. the collection of discursive data from arbitration awards) but also its proposal to access information about procedural decisions through an ethnographic approach, namely through the narratives of experienced practitioners.

Accessibility is also the subject of the second chapter, "Court Judgments and plain Language: Some recent developments in Canada and the United Kingdom", even though with specific reference to the appalling complexity and verbosity of legal language and, hence, the urgency to render it more comprehensible. This is the main thrust in **Cristopher Williams**' contribution which discusses the thorny question of legal (in)accessibility by investigating some recent cases of court judgments in Canada and in the UK. After offering an outline of the main features of judgments, Williams goes on to show the use of a more conversation-like style and several aspects of simplification in these types of texts i.e. short sentences, direct ways of addressing the defendant and many others. The author explains that the adoption of a more 'plain language' (in line with the criteria of the Plain Language Movement) in the judgments analysed, although still too lenghty, responds to the urgency of a clearer and a more effective legal communication, accessible to all, laypeople and also those with special needs (e.g. people with learning difficulties) who might be involved at various levels in legal cases.

One of the threats to comprehension of legal discourse is vagueness, that is the focal point of the following chapter entitled "Linguistic Vagueness in the concept of 'Beyond Reasonable Doubt'". The author, **Patrizia Anesa**, explores the iconic concept of 'beyond reasonable doubt' (BRD) associated with the Anglo-American legal system, namely the proof of guilt required in a criminal prosecution for a person to be convicted of crime. To this end, Anesa concentrates on the informative strategies in jury instructions and in closing arguments through her analysis of the internationally echoed criminal case of the West Memphis Three. The case dates back to 1993 and concerns the brutal murder of three eight-year-old kids. BRD, as Anesa maintains, has always been a very controversial notion and its obscurity is accentuated by a shift from its original purpose. Despite the many attempts to shed light on the doctrine, the case under investigation demonstrates that in the jury instructions and in the closing arguments the concept still implicates subjective interpretation due to its intrinsically indeterminate nature. The notion of BRD is presented through verbal realizations which are in line with the recommendations generally offered by legal experts and, thus, interpretive issues are related mainly to the inherent indeterminacy of the concept rather than to inaccurate linguistic constructions.

Giuliana Garzone in her chapter "Gender Neutrality in Legislative Drafting: Linguistic Perspectives" addresses the compelling question of gender inequality in language, recently verbalised in terms of "gender inclusiveness", an issue of interest to both legal language and communication and gender–based studies. More particularly, the author is interested in exploring how gender is encoded in legislative drafting and in discussing the problems involved in a gender-neutral drafting style dwelling on primarily pronominal reference. To this end a corpus of statutes passed in the British Parliament from 1973 to 2016 is compiled and some guidelines are taken into account. The chapter starts out by defining gender and by identifying the language tools assigned to gender in English. Then, the focus turns towards a review of the 'Masculine Rule' (i.e. the use of male gender in legislative drafting) and its evolution across years and documents, noting that only in the 1980s some countries started to adopt a policy of gender-neutral drafting. Among the techniques recommended to realize gender-neutral writing, some of them (e.g. use of passive, repetition of noun, omission, reorganization of the sentence) imply a re-wording of the sentence to avoid the pronominal use; on the contrary, other strategies to avoid sexist language (e.g. the use of 'he and she' or the 'singular they') entail a change in the pronouns themselves. Interestingly, quantitative observations of the corpus indicate a decrease of the masculine pronouns over the years in favour of substitutive items such as *person* and *individual.* However, as Garzone points out, resorting to gender free strategies in a language system which is essentially gender-based may sometimes compromise clarity and readability of the final product. Only a change in mentality would bring about a transparent and gender-neutral language—the author closes.

Part Three: Academic Discourse

The section on academic discourse is introduced by **Ken Hyland** whose chapter, "Identity Narratives: Scholarly Storytelling in Academic Genres", starts from the assumption that identity in narratives is a performance rather that an interpretative portrayal of the self. By investigating three story-telling genres in academic communication (e.g. acknowledgements, homepages and bios) this chapter explores how scholars construct what Hyland calls "proximity" and "position". The main aim of this chapter is to show that these narratives tell us a lot about the various academic disciplines, that is to say, their membershipping practices and the preferred ways to construct the academics'identity. In order to carry out his analysis the author relies on corpus techniques which are apt to uncover typical patterns of language use

in a specialised context. Findings demonstrate that, acknowledgements, typically associated to research articles, monographs or—as is the case under investigation— dissertations, are representations of both the academic as a skilled professional and a social person. The functional analysis (Halliday 1994) of bios, seen by the author as the most explicit public assertion of self-representation in scholarly life, has instead shown that scholars tend to rely on relational processes (through the verb *be*) to say who they are and material processes (the verb *do*) to state what they do. Interestingly, the rhetorical choices encountered in this narrative of the self reveal that scholars claim their individuality by using a distinctive and very recognisable set of language resources. In line with the case of bios, the investigation of the homepages, reveals that, despite the room made available by this digital format for creative self-representation, scholars do not show a great sense of individuality, preferring aligning to standard, thus easily recognizable, options rather than daring resorting to idiosyncratic forms of self-expression.

In the following chapter, "Dissertations, Essays, and Pamphlets 1660–1800: A Study on the Genres", the author **Irma Taavitsainen** focuses on a scantily investigated genre i.e. dissertation that she scrutinizes from the perspective of historical pragmatics. The aim of this study is to look at diversification of dissertations from some neighbouring genres (e.g. essays and pamphlets) and from the main line of development in the eighteenth century. To answer her research questions, Taavitsainen adopts multiple methodological approaches. Indeed, if dictionaries provide data for establishing the timeline of developments, the use of electronic corpora allows the author to investigate in more detail the generic boundaries and the specificities of the dissertation genre. The results show that in the 18th century this was a genre in the process of formation and the overlap with other more traditional and well-established genres, especially the essay, was still discernible.

The next two chapters concentrate on the role of English as an international language. In the first one, "Analysing Academic ELF in Economics", authored by **Marina Bondi** and **Francesca Vitali**, the role investigated is that of English as a research language in scholarly publishing. The motivation for this research comes from the scholars' ever-increasing request for proof-reading services from English native speakers (e.g. language professionals, reviewers, editors) in order to pursue their publication goals. The authors rightly maintain that this phenomenon cannot be neglected, above all for the delicate function of gate-keeping of these literacy brokers. Indeed, they argue that the English language used in the final draft of works ready for publication might be affected by both the

'selling imperative' of the publishing industry and by reference to native-speaker standards. The main thrust of this chapter lies in the differences found between scientific works published in academic journals and their unpublished drafts. Relying on Hyland's taxonomy of interactive and interactional markers, this study shows that ELF writers prefer not to take a clearly explicit stance towards the topic discussed averting any downplay of the reader's viewpoint. Nevertheless, their stance becomes visible through other patterns in language—i.e. attitudinal expressions containing the adjective *important* as a keyword (e.g. *it is important to*+cognitive verb) which are cognitively and strategically employed to align the reader with the author's position. In published works, namely revised articles, the presence of cohesive ties and the use of a more interactional language seem to make the difference with respect to unpublished texts. According to the authors, these language features allow scholars to be professionally appreciated and recognised as expert writers by the academic community.

With the next chapter, titled "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Which Strategies Can Suit Them All?" and written by **Franca Poppi**, we move from ELF to the role of English as a medium of instruction (EMI). Starting from previous research, which claims the implementation of pragmatic skills to spur the students to be more interactive, the main issue tackled in this study concerns the pragmatic strategies adopted by lecturers who use English as the main code for teaching. The data for the analysis are based on three intensive Master courses (i.e. International Law, Service Management and Marketing strategies) taught in English and complemented by semi-structured questions to lecturers. The author notes that, despite the ever-increasing role of EMI in higher education, its recognition is still controversial among scholars. At the level of pragmatics, instead, she reports on a more conscious use of the strategies employed to perform two main macro functions: introducing new terms and making the progression of the lecture smoother.

The chapter entitled "Getting Ready for the Next Steps: Multimodal and Hypermodal Knowledge Communication in Academic Context" authored by **Jan Engberg** and **Carmen Daniela Maier** closes the section on academic discourse and is a recognition of Gotti's contribution to research on multimodal and hypermodal communication in academic settings. The crucial issue of this work concerns the challenges posed by the use of digital media in traditional genres. The authors start off with providing an overview of the approaches and methods applied in the literature to study the construction and proliferation of new genres and new publishing formats, notably video essays. Then, traditional research articles are compared and contrasted with academic visual essays and video essays to shed light on the

dramatic changes in the communication dynamics of the genres investigated. This chapter proposes new insights into the study of the identity of academic narrators which becomes more prominently visible when using video essays; hence, the authors mention the many advantages recognized: from a new way of controlling the audience, to a closer interpretation of the narrative, to the irrefutable credibility of the narrator, all of which (will) have important reverberations on the dissemination of specialised knowledge.

Part Four: History of the English Language

Digitization has increased the interest in research on the history of language by providing access to a large amount of data which is unprecedented and was hardly foreseeable up until a few decades ago. Against this background, dictionaries have also become undeniably rewarding electronic resources with the *Oxford English Dictionary* as certainly a milestone in this scenario. Hence, works on lexicography and historical aspects of the language have benefited from these means at various levels.

The chapter opening this section is "The Dutch here hav bin very hygh": Charles Longland's Diplomatic Correspondence of the 1650s" where **Nicholas Brownlees** explores the diplomatic correspondence between the English Secretary of State, John Thurloe, and an English agent living in Tuscany (Leghorn, Livorno in Italian), Charles Longland. The 25 letters investigated here date back to 1653-1654, when England determined to establish its commercial supremacy at sea and Longland's role was crucial as an informer about the naval and political situation in Italy. Drawing upon Van Dijk's notions of superstructure and semantic macrostructural levels, on the one hand, and previous studies on contemporary diplomatic correspondence, on the other, Brownlees examines the phraseology of Longland's writing observing some interesting trends. At the level of orthography, which is one of the main focuses of the analysis, some recurrent features (e.g. the absence of the final <e>; the abolition of the double consonant in final position, etc.) are an index of great consistency. As Brownlees argues, probably Longland came across James Howell's publication on spelling reform. Despite their opposite political leaning, Longland and Howell shared the same feeling about the inconsistencies of the English spelling and the need for a reform, supported for Longland by his knowledge of Italian and of the broadly phonetic Italian spelling system.

The study of metadiscourse and evaluation comes back as the focal point of the chapter "The Dawning of Academic Evaluation: Oldenburg's

Transactions of the Royal Society" authored by **Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti**. Starting from the assumption that epistolary texts— drawn from the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (1666) for the purpose of the analysis—are not only informative but also evaluative, for their intrinsic dialogic nature, the author seeks to demonstrate that they are rife with interpersonal elements. To prove this point, the author carries out a quantitative and qualitative text-based discourse analysis and shows that the letters, far from being objective, are presented from the editor's point of view, even though in an implicit and somewhat balanced way. Thus, for example, positive evaluative adjectives used for building a confident and favourable profile of the Royal Society are counter-balanced by other language devices (e.g. hedges, among others) to mitigate the editor's role. Although the letters, seen as a means for disseminating scientific knowledge to a wider audience other than the Society, are characterized by a plain style devoid of the rhetorical ornaments, the author concludes that the evaluations expressed in the epistolary texts represent a key to the dominant system of values of the scientific community of the Royal Society, also pointing out that, strategies for expressing writer's engagement and reader's involvement have always been used since the inception of scientific writing.

In the following chapter, "Language and Power in Early 20th c. China: The Case of Shanghai Minutes of Meeting", **Roberta Facchinetti** focuses on a particular genre, i.e. the Shanghai Council's Minutes of Meetings (MoMs), to carry out both a linguistic and a socio-historical analysis. The author aims to investigate both the main features of the Council's minutes and the evolution of the British management of municipal affairs in Shanghai. The rationale behind this study lies in the particular financial role played by the city of Shanghai on the international arena, especially after the 1911 revolution, which marked a new era in Chinese history. Interestingly, from the linguistic point of view MoMs may be seen as a form of hybrid text revealing features of news reporting and of legal discourse. In a period of co-existence of locals and foreigners (above all British), the author explains the peculiarity of these texts with the need on the part of the government to take decisions and report on them at the same time. From the historical perspective, the texts under scrutiny are manifestations of the evolving relations between China and the western countries.

As suggested by its title, "The Discursive Construction of Ethos in 19th Century Self-Help Medical Books by Women Doctors. An Exploration", the next chapter discusses the strategies and discursive resources exploited by American female physicians in the 19th century in order to construct their identity and professional persona, and convey of themselves the idea of authoritative and reliable experts in the practice of medicine. As pointed out

by the author, **Paola Catenaccio**, who analyses five self-help manuals written over a time-span of 60 years (1834-1893), women—much more than male doctors— needed to find effective ways to write about themselves and their experience as physicians in order to consolidate their ethos and be accepted as medical practicioners in a male-dominated field as the one of medicine at the time, where even the most prestigious medical schools were hardly accessible to women. This study shows that the main ethos-defining traits—shared, though in various degrees, by all the five 'authoresses' of the manuals investigated here—are, on the one hand, the marking of distance from traditional medicine, which is often portrayed as being too abstract and based on principles rather than evidence—and, on the other, the emphasis on closeness and commitment towards patients, both in terms of language— a 'simple' way of codifying meanings, easily understandable also by lay users, is preferred to specialised, hence possibly gate-keeping, formulations—and in terms of common grounds and experience that women doctors are expected to share notably with female users, especially concerning topics such as the female body, childbirth, and pregnancy.

The fourth section of the volume closes with the chapter "The Combining Form *Multi*- in English Compounds", by **Virginia Pulcini**, which investigates neo-classical combinations, that is, those word-formation phenomena, fairly productive in English (Bauer 1998), which consist in the association of a combining form (CF) or affix of Greek or Latin origin to a free-standing or bound base. The author focuses specifically on the case of the CF *multi*, first exploring the dictionary profile of such a term (used to point to numerical quantities, with the meaning of *a large amount of, a large number of*) both as an independent item and as a CF, and then exploring the semantic and morpho-syntactic profile of compounds opening with the CF *multi*-. Contrasting it with the (quasi-) synonymic neo-classical CF form *poly*-, the author shows how *multi*-, while possibly found also in combination with nominal and verbal bases, is mainly associated to adjectival bases, in that they allow for the articulation and specification of the semantics of the modifiers. The chapter suggests that the semantic and syntactic affordances of this CF may be among the reasons explaining its productivity and the expansion of compounds containing *multi*-, which from the second half of the 19th century have considerably increased both in lay communication and, markedly so, in specialised domains like science and technology.

Part Five: Miscellaneous

The main aim in **Luisana Fodde**'s contribution "The Challenges of Translating Italian Regionalisms and Dialects: From Novels to Tv Series"

is to explore how regionalisms and dialect phrases are transferred from Italian into English when dealing with highly culture-bound works such as Andrea Camilleri's and Sergio Atzeni's novels. Fodde starts out with the exemplification of the renderings of these local variations in the novels to turn to their subtitled version later in her chapter. Starting from the premise that the local variation is functional in these novels to the identity construction of the main characters, what she notices, in the translation of Atzeni's novel, is a number of misunderstandings at the idiomatic level, which sometimes jeopardize the comprehension of the target text. More complex is the work for Stephen Sartarelli, the American translator of Montalbano novels, in that sociolect, dialect, idiolect and slang intermingle with standard Italian in Camilleri's works. The use of slang terms, the literal rendition of idioms and newly coined words—the author argues—make the translator more visible in the target text. In the dubbed version, instead, due also to technical constraints, the so-called "Camillerese" is normalized and several dialectal expressions are omitted. The three different translations examined in this chapter show how translation is always an act of negotiation of meanings and, in some extreme cases, as those explored in this chapter, also of manipulation of the language for the sake of communication.

Translation is again the focus of the following chapter, "John Baptist Porta and His *Natural Magick*" by **Gabriella Di Martino**, whose main purpose is to compare, at various levels, some Italian excerpts from Gianbattista Della Porta's philosophical work *Della Magia Naturale* (1611) and the English translation *Natural Magick* (1658). The original work was written in Latin and then translated by the author himself into Italian. However, at the time of the Scientific Revolution neither Italian nor English were considered adequate to report on the scientific findings due to the lack of specialised terms in both languages. The author compares the English and the Italian versions of excerpts taken from the 9th book, which discusses the process and products to make women more beautiful. If processes are given more emphasis in the English translation, products are highlighted in the Italian text. Lexically and semantically speaking, the author finds that the simplified rendition in English clashes with the verbosity in the Italian text, which is due to cultural reasons. By the same token, the English first pronoun substitutes the plural pronoun in Italian where metaphors and similes have been deleted. As shown elsewhere in the literature on translation (Katan 2004), all the language devices used in the English language, such as those mentioned in this chapter—namely, conciseness, referential precision, simplification—are emblematic of other cultural dimensions than those which characterize the Italian culture.

The final chapter of this volume, "Conveying Alterity and Racism" authored by **John Douthwaithe** introduces the reader to the realm of modern literature through a social and psychological analysis of the main character in Doris Lessing's novel *The Grass is Singing*. Telling the story of mental, spiritual, financial and marital disintegration of the life of the married couple Dick and Mary in the form of an extended flashback, the novel not only explores the theme of the effects of institutionalised racism in South Africa but also those of the physical and mental isolation which concerns in particular the heroine. It is right on the extract where Mary's psychological state of mind is described that Douthwaithe concentrates his stylistic analysis, pointing out how the style employed by the author mirrors the character's emotional and mental dragging condition, which is also the effect of the burden represented by social norms of conduct of that time. By analysing the language of the excerpt from different perspectives, i.e. from lexis to syntax (e.g. repetition of words, clause construction), from rhetorics (e.g. metaphors, parallelisms) to pragmatics (violation of Gricean's norms), the author succeeds in showing how Lessing introduces the reader into the character's static mind and makes the reader empathize with her and commiserate her psychological and domestic condidion. Douthwaithe's analysis, although based on one single extract of the novel, definitely provides stimulating insights into the research of alterity.

To conclude, let us say that this collection not only aimed to show our gratitude to Maurizio Gotti for his prolific contribution to the advancement of knowledge, but also to offer a dialogue with his oeuvre of works to all those whose academic life has in some way intersected with his theoretical expertise and practical competence. We are sure that the depth of knowledge he has created will continue to shape our research in the fields of enquiry represented in this volume.

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PART ONE

SPECIALISED DISCOURSE

CHAPTER ONE

(UN)SURPRISING VISTAS IN HEALTH CARE COMMUNICATION

GIUSEPPINA CORTESE

> We paid our medical tuition to learn about the inner process of the body, the intricate mechanisms of its pathologies, and the vast trove of discoveries and technologies that have accumulated to stop them. *We didn't imagine we needed to think about much else.*[*]
>
> —A. Gawande (2014)

1. Doing memory

Hospitals embody and display the commitment of health professionals to any human being in need of care. It almost has a shamanic halo, this notion of the life-preserving community whose healing power seems to be, and is expected to be, constantly growing. But research and innovation, in one word "progress", is no synonym for "improvement". In health care institutions, not unlike other domains in public service, progress is often the harbinger of hard-to-manage techno-social complexity: new procedural know-how and new discourses of knowledge, requiring changes in social organization.

Many like to believe that, compared to current complexity, social situations and communicative canons—the interpersonal "ways with words" and the sets of mental schemata regulating them—used to be "simple" in the not-so-distant past. Of course, architectures of knowledge and belief that sustain social structures and their private and public configurations are never simple. But many of my Italian contemporaries share memories of child play miming a humorous epitome of medical consultations in a three-step sequence: stick out your tongue, cough, say ninety-nine ("Dica trentatre" in Italian), the quintessential doctor-patient

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[*] My emphasis

communication in the collective imaginary as perceived in our post-war infancy.

There was no vexing of the physician by "e-patients".[1] There was, instead, genuine trust in the doctor, based on recognition of the knowledge gap with patients. Doctors had undisputed authority. They matter-of-factly told mothers and nurses what needed to be done. True, they acted a little supercilious at times, and their prescriptions often looked like cryptic scribblings (cf. Solly 2016a, 411-414). Not necessarily would physicians be patronizing and speak down to their patients, yet the qualifier "paternalistic" (Ferreira-Padilla *et al.* 2015) would fit the doctor-patient relationship then.

More than half a century later, and tons of ink since Cicourel's seminal essay on "language and medicine" (Cicourel 1981), the health professions address notions such as that of the "empowered" patient (Ferreira-Padilla *et al.* 2015), and the perspective informing advanced systems of care delivery is expected, or at least supposed, to be patient-centred. But the picture is contradictory. While western society has become increasingly concerned with fitness, with well-being and more generally with access to health care as a fundamental right, state health care systems have been coping with drastic social, political, and more recently financial pressure impacting on professionals at the same time as the advocacy of articulate, symmetrical communication in "person-centred" medicine.

The health care universe of old inspired deference, perhaps a little fear even, in approaching physicians, who also mastered their specialized language so well, almost as if they were its privileged "owners". Socio-cultural transformation now requires health care to make the (once) tacit biomedical knowledge more affordable and to socialize it into more empathic discursive events. Communicative "nontech skills" (Kieran *et al.* 2018) feed paradigms such as narrative medicine and the "medical humanities". How feasible and how satisfactory are these approaches, in

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[1] Discerning reliable scientific information requires research skills which naive internet users usually lack. On the one hand, the popularized discourse of science conveyed by the media is quite positive in terms of raising general awareness concerning health risks (Gotti 2013, 20). On the other hand, digital information is now a complex issue, requiring new stances and strategies with patients whose media-based "health-culture" leads them to challenge and mistrust physicians; hence, the current emphasis in professional meetings on topics such as eHealth, the social media and the need to integrate biomedical know-how with an "anthropological perspective" and "time to listen" in cooperative communication skills (see e.g., "La comunicazione paziente medico: parliamone ancora", held by the Ordine dei Medici, Torino, 16th April 2019). On the patient in the "health market", as protagonist and customer in the so-called "Digital Patient Journey". http://www.merqurio.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Digital-Patient-Journey.pdf.

today's highly demanding world of health work, notably in hospitals? Hospitals are the main site of engagement for health care providers, increasingly caught between the need to gain/maintain credibility by asserting (also discursively) their epistemic and agentive identity, and the need to comply with the overarching, stressful issue of "time- and cost-effectiveness".

This short study will sample some narratives of meaning-making practices in public hospitals located in the city of Turin, Italy, showing how communication in health care is crucial (and critical) in many more areas than the doctor-patient consultation on which the research literature tends to focus. This is not to say that the "technical", medical relationship between health professionals and patients, discussed below in section 3, no longer is the apex in health care. Rather, it seems that health workers, as much as public opinion, need to be more aware that a hospital is a community of practice involving professional, institutional and regulative talk as much as informal and bonding talk, with fuzzy boundaries to be constantly adjusted.

2. Cultural expectations, intercultural gaps

In hospital wards, food trays must be dispensed by the staff. For reasons of hygiene, external caregivers are not allowed to touch the tray stack which is wheeled in, and a certain distance must be kept from it. But a well-mannered African youth assisting his mother, probably for fear of being late, one day entered the room in haste and inadvertently touched the stack. This caused vehement complaints from the woman in charge of handing out the trays. There was a look of humiliated apprehension in the eyes of the young man. The mother in her bed was next to sobbing. One person in the room, who could speak a mutually understood foreign language, luckily provided explanations and the tension eventually dissolved. Crowded spaces and time constraints obviously increase the stress on the staff. However, in this case the somatic dimension of such disproportionate screaming had far-reaching implications, since the woman's loud and irritated utterances could be perceived as manifestations of prejudice and discrimination.

Such small-scale yet disturbing incidents can be prevented by intercultural training in the workplace and by providing tangible tools for intercultural communication. If mealtime rules had been visualized on a poster or explained through an Information sheet, the young man would have been more cautious.

Health settings are social laboratories. Because they are never strictly local, cultural expectations may not concur: in the 1960s the same