
Nelle istituzioni federali della Germania, la governabilità (Regierungsfähigkeit) è garantita dal forte senso di responsabilità della classe dirigente, i cui ambiti d’azione sono peraltro regolati in maniera mirabile dal contenuto di alcuni articoli della Legge fondamentale (Grundgesetz). Qui si propone una descrizione del processo di elezione e nomina del cancelliere. È tale procedimento a determinare la forza dell’esecutivo federale. Diversamente da quanto si afferma nel dibattito politico in Italia, la stabilità politica e istituzionale della Germania non dipende dalla legge elettorale, ma è il risultato di un equilibrio tra legislativo ed esecutivo che non si lascia facilmente riprodurre in un contesto diverso da quello tedesco.


This is the second, revised edition of a book that appeared in 2010. A functional approach to language is proposed in which both the synchronic and diachronic viewpoints are considered. A synchronic description and a diachronic explanation relative to Indo-European are considered on the basis of empirical data from Romance, Germanic and Slavic languages as well as from Latin and Greek.


Some aspects of conceptualization are considered with particular attention to semiotic relevance and motivation. These two organizing principles of language systems are then applied to language description. There is a brief discussion of examples from different European languages that can be related to a particular reading (interpretation) of the world. Other elements show at the same time that the interpretation of the world is often based on cultural and religious traditions which are shared by different language communities. These kinds of observations help us understand cultural peculiarities not only of foreign languages, but also of different varieties of a language. The treatment of categorization can be integrated into a more general description of how languages and cultures interact. This should be taken into account for the purposes of language learning and language awareness.


A short description of contemporary language distribution in Europe is given with particular attention to Central Europe. As a result, it is shown that the map of languages does not reflect the map of cultural diversities.
Some relevant aspects of the pragmatic functioning of questions are described that make it possible to re-consider the traditional classification of questions in "general" or "Yes-No" questions and "particular" or "WH" questions. Questions in English and Italian constitute the basis for such a description.

Connotations are often considered as additional meaning elements that are dependent on the speaker's evaluation of what is denoted in an utterance. In this paper another point of view is developed in which both the logical traditional and Hjelmslev's perspective are taken into account. On the basis of Mill's and Hjelmslev's considerations, it is proposed to see connotations as a meaning component assigned to the elements of the language as it is acquired by the speaker, whereas denotation tends to be constructed later, when the individual is engaged in the reflection on language.

N.S. Trubeckoij's phonological theory as well as his conception of Eurasia are taken into account and its foundations are compared with Othmar Spann's holistic system.

Form and pragmatic functions of some German interrogative structures are considered, with particular attention to the role of particles such as "doch", "etwa" etc., indicating the speaker's attitude toward the proposition or the hearer's cognitive states.

In this paper it is assumed that the propositional content of a question and the range of the relevant answers to it are understood with the help of pragmatic factors. Following Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz and Roman Ingarden, two fundamental components of question content are distinguished - the "datum" and the "obiectum questionis" - the latter consisting in a variable ranging over a research domain. An analysis of concrete questions (both yes-no questions and wh-questions) from a corpus of written texts is made and a Gricean inference model is applied to show that the research domain is determined according to the context and the range of relevant answers established at the token level.
Some peculiarities of Georgian verb morphology are described in a Natural perspective. In particular, the different use of two vocalic affixes "i" and "u" in the Present tense can be explained in terms of the presence vs the absence of the interlocutor in the fundamental structure of the dialogue situation.

The paper is devoted to the connection established by Trubekoj and Jakobson between their phonological theories and Othmar Spann's holistic views. Two passages from the Travaux (1931) are taken into account in which the two linguists make use of Spann's terminology. Spann's name is mentioned by Jakobson, whereas Trubekoj merely points to the fact that his own theorizing meets the requirements of the "modern scientific tendencies". That this remark refers to Spann can be evinced only from the terminology used by Trubekoj in describing the kind of theory he developed. Further evidence concerning the connection to the Austrian scholar can be found in Jakobson’s letters and notes. These documents do not prove that Spann influenced Trubekoj’s and Jakobson’s phonology. They rather demonstrate how the two great linguists were aware of Spann’s ideas and considered their own phonological theories to be consistent with his holistic methodology.

Some theoretical approaches to the semantic status of questions are considered that had been developed in the 19th century logical tradition of the Austrian philosophy. Bolzano's "Satz an sich", Frege's "Gedanke" and Meinong's "Objektiv" are taken into account. A comparision between these notions is made and they are also compared with other conceptions that were developed in the German linguistics of the early 20th century.

The morphological structuring of English borrowings and loanwords into Italian is considered, with particular attention to the entries given in the dictionary of Italian published by Zanichelli.

Some crucial words belonging to the English terminology of Realism in International Relations are considered. Their German and Italian equivalents are then taken into account and described.
Some notable words in the language of political institutions in German-speaking countries are considered and their content is taken into account with particular attention to debate about the innovation of democracy in Italy.

The book offers a new perspective in the scientific study of language. After considering the role of different abstraction levels in science, a non-deterministic point of view is proposed in which language structures are seen as characterized by semantic vagueness and indeterminacy of meaning. This makes it possible to develop a functional point of view in which language units and language processes are described in the model as "conceptual schemes" associated with patterns of manifestation. This point of view is useful in the description of the phonological, morphological and syntactical levels.

In the paper certain aspects of the relations between Graziadio Isaia Ascoli and highly representative persons and institutions of the German-speaking cultural context are reconstructed. In particular, the relation between Ascoli and Hammer-Purgstall is considered. The latter was the founder of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Another relation considered here is that between Ascoli and the Niemeyer publishing house. This publisher played an essential role in the context of the scientific book in Germany. Moreover, the Niemeyer family worked within the "Franckesche Stiftungen" in Halle. This fact is highly interesting, when considering the non-Catholic milieu in which Ascoli himself lived and worked.

The book is a Festschrift in honour of Barbara Stein, who taught German literature and History of the German language.
“Zu path und hat(t)uo”, Laura Balbiani - Giovanni Gobber (a cura di), *Se il pensiero non va grato. Studi in onore di Barbara Stein per i suoi settant’anni*, EDUCatt, Milano 2009, pp. 43-44.

Etymological problems concerning germ. *patha-* are considered. The proposal is made to treat this element not as a borrowing, but as an original Germanic root.


Gemelli’s importance as a scholar was acknowledged by several linguists and psychologists in German-speaking countries. Here some letters from the "Gemelli archive" are presented and translated for the first time into Italian, including a letter of presentation written by Karl Bühler. Other documents show Gemelli’s efforts to help some Jewish colleagues, who were forced by the German government to abandon their academic role.


The paper considers recent anglicisms, i.e. borrowings and loanwords which have appeared in the last three decades in the Italian language. The data are taken from Nicola Zingarelli’s “Vocabolario della lingua italiana”. The attention is focussed on borrowings, because they are prevailing in this dictionary. Along with Betz’ and Gusmani’s model, a fundamental distinction is made between the diffusion (German “Einbürgerung”) of a borrowing in everyday use and its phonological and morphological integration (German “Einlehnung”) in the system of the Italian language. The analysis of the borrowings registered in Zingarelli’s dictionary show that “diffusion without integration” is typical for nouns and adjectives, whereas verbs are always integrated, at least morphologically. This observation allows the conclusion that the structure of the Italian language does not seem to be particularly influenced by anglicisms.


The paper considers how language systems can influence the speaker’s ability to recognize differences in meaning. A series of typical examples is presented and discussed in which differences between language units in a given language are not to be found in another language. This comparison can be made by means of translation.