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La linguistica di Paolo Marzolo e il pensiero scientifico del suo tempo

Leonardo M. Savoia

Studi italiani di linguistica teorica e applicata XLVII, 3 (2008), pp. 511-548

SUMMARY

The linguistic work of Marzolo, professor of Grammar and Comparative Linguistics at the University of Pisa from 1862, is an interesting document of the relation between the general theory of language developed by illuminist scholars and the nineteenth-century historical paradigm of linguistic research. Graziadio Ascoli, the most representative historical linguist in nineteenth-century Italy, considered Marzolo a 'genial heterodox' who aimed at defining an universal theory of language that however lacked an adequate scientific base. The methodological weakness indicated by Ascoli seems to us to depend on the fact that the questions and the conceptual

points raised by Marzolo take up fundamental aspects of the linguistic reflection of illuminist authors, and this in a period in which the prevailing epistemological perspective was historical in character. On the other hand the approach of Marzolo is characterized by a crucial link with the scientific thought of his time and with the conceptual framework of positivism; in particular, the entire reflection of Marzolo is inspired by a naturalistic perspective in the study of language. This article aims at examining the principal aspects of the linguistic analysis of Marzolo by relating them to the scientific framework of the first half of nineteenth century, especially to the new evolutionist ideas which influenced the domain of natural sciences, anthropology and linguistics. Thus, the conception of linguistic research as ‘philosophy of history’ and as key for the reconstruction of ancient cultures, the question of the origin of language and the debate on language monogenesis vs polygenesis, are themes that largely emerge in nineteenth-century Italian culture and its scientific milieu, involving influential linguists such as Cattaneo, Biondelli, and subsequently Lignana and others. The work of Marzolo reflects this cultural and scientific context in a very interesting way: in particular, Marzolo maintains a monogenetic approach even if he does not explicitly refer to the Darwinian theory of evolution.

Comportamenti lessico grammaticali delle costruzioni intransitive

Fabiola Bocchino

Studi italiani di linguistica teorica e applicata XLVII, 3 (2008), pp. 549-580

SUMMARY

In this paper we will show the essential principles for the classification of intransitive verbs within the methodological framework of Lexicon-Grammar. We will start our work by the individuation of three syntactic structures and by the identification of their semantical and lexical features. Then we will individuate twenty classes with intransitive verbal uses and we will show their most significant properties. Finally, we will see how these properties can be represented in lexicon-grammatical tables.

*La selezione del perfetto di sum con il participio
in -tus in latino: motivazioni temporali e aspettuali*

Rossella Iovino

SUMMARY

The aim of this paper is to analyse Latin constructions formed by a participle in *-tus* and the perfect tense of the verb *sum*, taking into account recent studies on Tense and Aspect. The first section (§§ 2-3.1) offers a brief overview of the notions of Tense and Aspect and shows the *status quaestionis* about the consideration of these categories in Latin and in Indo-European. The second section (§§ 4-4.3.1), showing examples selected by the production of Latin authors from the origin to the fourth century A.D., demonstrates how this Latin construction expresses the relative tense (§§ 4.1-4.1.3), the absolute tense (§§ 4.2-4.2.1) and the aspectual value of stativity (§§ 4.3-4.3.1).

La competenza passiva del vocabolario di base di Italiano

Anna Dal Negro

SUMMARY

This paper analyses the passive competence in the Italian basic vocabulary of 14 German speaking persons with different interlanguage in Italian. The study aims to observe which and how many words are probably recognized by persons (1) who have never learnt Italian; (2) with an intermediate competence in Italian and (3) with an advanced competence in Italian. Besides, this research is to determine the factors which simplify and those making more difficult the comprehension of words at each interlanguage level.

The results are of relevance to the didactics of Italian as a second language as well as to the research on the Italian basic vocabulary. For the didactic it can be useful to examine which and how much of the vocabulary can be given as known by absolute beginners. As studies to multilingual didactic show, it is very stimulating to the learning process considering a new languages as in part already known: this permits to treat also from the very first complex topics and texts. Besides, the results are interesting because they show the sequence in which the vocabulary is learnt and the strategies which can be applied to simplify its acquisition. For the research in the field of basic vocabulary can be interesting to know – especially for a multiethnic society as the today's Italian – what part of the basic vocabulary, which is given to be known by all Italians, creates problems for non native speakers with a high level of education and an advanced competence in Italian.

The research treats first the external factors of the language as the vocabulary's frequency; afterwards the internal factors like the wordlength, the grammatical rules, the affinity with cognates in the L1 and other L2 and finally semantic factors as clarity, polysemy, synonymy and semantic fields.