

AIA 32 Conference

BOOK OF SEMINARS

Paper proposals for a specific seminar should be sent to convenors by 23 April 2025. Please submit your abstract as a word file following the given template. Format your in-text and bibliographic references according to APA7. Papers may be single or multiple authors (fully paid-up AIA members).

Seminar list (click on the page number to jump to the seminar abstract)

Seminar n. 1. Shakespeare and the re-invention of the human	4
Seminar n. 2. Humanism in motion: Travel literature, salon culture, and cosmopolitan networks	5
Seminar n. 3. “In behalf of the human race”: Reviving <i>The Liberal</i> and liberalism.....	6
Seminar n. 4. British Romantic Literature as Cultural Heritage: Texts, Objects and Places	7
Seminar n. 5. U/Dys/Eco-topias: Hope and despair in anthropocenic literature.....	8
Seminar n. 6. Contemporary narratives of humanity in a dystopian world	9
Seminar n. 7. Monstrous bodies: Deviance, transformation, and belonging in contemporary British fiction	10
Seminar n. 8. Questioning the <i>anthropos</i> in Anglophone Anthropocene narratives.....	11
Seminar n. 9. Ecology, affect, and young adult literature	12
Seminar n. 10. New gender perspectives in the literary Anglosphere: A more inclusive view of the ‘human’	13
Seminar n. 11. Gender-ed representations and/in migration.....	14
Seminar n. 12. Empathy in aesthetic experience: Themes, genres, forms	15
Seminar n. 13. Innovative approaches to the teaching of literature between theory and practice	16
Seminar n. 14. Weaving voices: Collaborative creativity in literature and culture.....	17
Seminar n. 15. “P <i>raises his head</i> ”: Acts of resistance in Samuel Beckett.....	18
Seminar n. 16. Italian approaches to stylistics	19
Seminar n. 17. The grammar of silence: Cross-disciplinary, transmedia echoes.....	20
Seminar n. 18. Framing the feminine: Language, crime, and cultural narratives	21
Seminar n. 19. Discourses on memory: Cultural, literary and linguistic perspectives.....	22
Seminar n. 20. Reframing human(e) voices: Exploring contemporary British identities through cultural studies and the multimodal toolkit.....	23
Seminar n. 21. “It’s the end of the world as we know it”: Politics of the apocalypse in literary and cultural studies.....	24
Seminar n. 22. Literary songs. Literary voices: English literature and popular music	25
Seminar n. 23. The human factor in audiovisual translation history.....	26
Seminar n. 24. AI and human audiovisual translation and media accessibility: Ethical and practical challenges for translators and language learners	27
Seminar n. 25. Artificial intelligence and media accessibility: New frontiers and emerging challenges	28
Seminar n. 26. Language, ecology, and artificial intelligence: A critical eco-linguistic perspective	29
Seminar n. 27. Beyond human exceptionalism: Social and ecojustice perspectives in climate crisis discourse	31
Seminar n. 28. Revisiting affect: The emotional turn in discourse analysis in the age of technologies. Linguistic, intercultural and translation perspectives.....	32
Seminar n. 29. Women represented: Investigating gender dynamics in political discourse	34
Seminar n. 30. A house is not a home? Discursive representations of contemporary households	35
Seminar n. 31. De-/Re-humanizing the language of global fears: Crises, extremisms, terrorisms.....	36
Seminar n. 32. Intersectional hate speech in the digital age: Media, power, and resistance.....	37
Seminar n. 33. Addressing hate speech and promoting digital citizenship in English studies	39
Seminar n. 34. Edible narratives: Multidisciplinary representations of novel and traditional foods	40

Seminar n. 35. Crafting comfort: The rhetorical and linguistic representation(s) of well-being in late modern newspapers and magazines	41
Seminar n. 36. Language, health and wellbeing: Individual and collective perspectives from past to present	42
Seminar n. 37. Tourism discourse at the human-digital interface: Technology, regeneration, storytelling	43
Seminar n. 38. Tourism and digital communication in online spaces.....	44
Seminar n. 39. Glossing and translanguaging as conceptualizations about trans-semiotizing practices, identity construction and humane culture	45
Seminar n. 40. Specialized knowledge dissemination and international communication in the digital age	46
Seminar n. 41. Separate opinions: The human and the humane in judicial discourse	47
Seminar n. 42. “It's personal – it's (also) business”: Business communication's interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary	48
Seminar n. 43. A human and humane approach? Metaphor, argumentation and (counter)institutional discourses	49
Seminar n. 44. Exploring the interplay between Artificial Intelligence (AI), English-Medium Instruction (EMI) and Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) settings	50
Seminar n. 45. English Medium Instruction (EMI) as a catalyst for humane and equitable education... or not?.....	51
Seminar n. 46. English language teaching and learning in the digital era: Exploring challenges, opportunities and ethical concerns	52
Seminar n. 47. AI and English as a foreign language: Bridging classroom practice and research	53
Seminar n. 48. In contact with English: Informal language learning practices and processes in Italy	54
Seminar n. 49. Human connections in growing online communities: Redefining English teaching and learning in digital contexts	55
Seminar n. 50. English Linguistics for Academicians and Professionals (ELAP): New paths and updated trends in specialized discourse and communication	56
Seminar n. 51. Language uses and languaging users in video games	57
Seminar n. 52. Memory landscapes and heritage storytelling: Human voices and their digital representations	58
Seminar n. 53. Communicating with migrants: Languages, policies and (human) ethics	59
Seminar n. 54. Worlds beyond words: Lines of enquiry about language, metaphysics and spirituality.....	60
Seminar n. 55. English multimodal pragmatics in the digital era	62
Seminar n. 56. Multilingual/multimodal text-types and language learning in the Early Modern English context (1500–1750)	63
Seminar n. 57. The metalanguage of linguistics in English through history: human knowledge and computational methods	64
Seminar n. 58. Linguistic landscapes: Exploring language variation and change in language users' space	65
Seminar n. 59. Linguistic perspectives on Caribbean Englishes and English-lexified Caribbean creoles	66

Seminar n. 1. Shakespeare and the re-invention of the human

Convenors

Carlo M. Bajetta (Università della Valle d'Aosta) c.bajetta@univda.it

Rocco Coronato (Università degli Studi di Padova) rocco.coronato@unipd.it

Abstract

In his provocative *Shakespeare and the invention of the human*, Harold Bloom controversially posits that Shakespeare is the true inventor of the human. More radically, we ask: Is the concept of 'the human' still a valid category in Shakespeare studies? Can the idea of the human—along with its various denials, approximations, extensions, and inversions—be re-invented by considering the dual meanings of 'inventing', both as creating anew and as discovering? How does the human intersect with vaguer, more indistinct concepts, and how is this (re)discovery portrayed in Shakespeare's works? We encourage contributions that examine how Shakespeare's texts challenge or reinforce early modern notions of humanity, explore the relationships between humans, nature, and other beings—such as monsters and aberrations—and investigate how his writings shape the conception of the human. Additionally, we welcome discussions on the contemporary relevance of Shakespeare's portrayal of humanity, considering how these early modern perspectives can inform modern debates about identity, agency, and the environment.

References

Bevington, D. M. (2005). *Shakespeare: the seven ages of human experience*. Blackwell.

Bloom, H. (1998). *Shakespeare: the invention of the human*. Riverhead.

Heffernan, J. J. (2015). *Shakespeare's extremes: wild man, monster, beast*. Palgrave.

Lee, J. (2009). Shakespeare, Human Nature, and English Literature. *Shakespeare*, 6, 177–190.

Marantz Cohen, P. (2021). *Of human kindness: what Shakespeare teaches us about empathy*. Yale University Press.

Refskou, A. S. (2025). *Shakespeare's compassion: emotion and the classics on the early modern stage*. Bloomsbury.

Scott, C. (Ed.). (2024). *Shakespeare / Nature: contemporary readings in the human and non-human*. Arden.

Werth, T. J. (Ed.) (2015). *The Shakespearean International Yearbook. Special section: Shakespeare and the human*. Ashgate.

Seminar n. 2. Humanism in motion: Travel literature, salon culture, and cosmopolitan networks

Convenors

David George Lyons (Università di Bologna) david.lyons@unibo.it

Antonia Marcarelli (Università di Bologna) antonia.marcarelli2@unibo.it

Giovanni Iamartino (Università degli Studi di Milano) giovanni.iamartino@unimi.it

Abstract

This seminar proposes an exploration of the importance of humanism within travel writing from the Anglosphere, focusing on salon culture and the social role of travel writing. The chronological focus of the seminar broadly encompasses works from the 17th-19th centuries. Recent historiography has investigated the complex relationship of salon culture to the public sphere (Habermas, 1989), and, more importantly, the role of women in shaping such a culture (Landes, 1988; Pekacz, 1999), while other scholars, such as Dena Goodman (1994), have highlighted the value of salons as spaces where ideas could circulate across national and cultural boundaries. Travel writers often operated within complex networks of patronage and sociability, positioning their works as mediators of cultural dialogue and as reflections of humanist ideals.

By situating travel writing within these broader frameworks, this seminar seeks to investigate its dual role as a representation of individual human experience and as an instrument for collective understanding. In order to promote a wide engagement on the topic, and invite a truly transdisciplinary style, we welcome methodological approaches varying from literary criticism, cultural studies, discourse analysis, historiographical approaches, and digital humanities.

We invite topics focused on, but not limited to:

- the influence of humanist principles and how they are articulated by travel writers
- travel writers as mediators of culture(s)
- the role of salon culture in the production and dissemination of travel writing
- salons as networks of cross-cultural dialogue and as sites for exchanging ideas
- the importance of the role of women in travel writing.

References

- Bodek, E. G. (1976). *Salonnières and the Bluestockings: Educated obsolescence and germinating feminism*. *Feminist Studies*, 3(3/4), 185–199.
- Craveri, B. (2005). *The age of conversation*. New York Review Books.
- Goodman, D. (1994). *The republic of letters: A cultural history of the French Enlightenment*. Cornell University Press.
- Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society* (T. Burger, Trans.). MIT Press. (Original work published 1962)
- Kale, S. (2006). *French salons: High society and political sociability from the old regime to the revolution of 1848*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Landes, J. B. (1988). *Women and the public sphere in the age of the French Revolution*. Cornell University Press.
- Pekacz, J. T. (1999). *Conservative tradition in pre-revolutionary France: Parisian salon women*, Peter Lang.
- Romani, G. (2015). *A room with a view: Interpreting the Ottocento through the literary salon*. Thefreelibrary.com.
<https://www.thefreelibrary.com/A+room+with+a+view+%3a+interpreting+the+Ottocento+through+the+literary...-a0178121021>

Seminar n. 3. “In behalf of the human race”: Reviving *The Liberal* and liberalism

Convenors

Maria Elena Capitani (Università degli Studi di Parma) mariaelena.capitani@unipr.it

Alessandra Crotti (Università di Roma Sapienza) alessandra.crotti@uniroma1.it

Fabio Liberto (Università di Bologna) fabio.liberto@unibo.it

Abstract

The Liberal: Verse and Prose from the South was a short-lived but influential literary and political periodical published in London in 1822–23 and co-edited in Pisa and Genoa by prominent intellectuals including Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley led by Leigh Hunt. This publication emerged in the early 1820s as a platform for the trio’s shared vision of artistic freedom, political reform, and social justice. Reflecting the radical ideals of the time, *The Liberal* advocated for liberty, individual rights, and the critique of political and social institutions, particularly those representing authoritarianism and oppression. It featured original poetry, essays, translations, short stories, and commentary, and its contributors included not only Byron, Hunt, and Shelley but also other figures such as Mary Shelley and the radical journalist William Hazlitt. Though made up of only four issues, the periodical is a pivotal, yet often overlooked, historical document, useful for understanding early 19th-century intersections of political thought and literary innovation, as it provided a critical space for the circulation of ideas central to Romantic-period debates and the early phases of liberalism in Britain.

This seminar aims to bring together a range of scholarly perspectives on *The Liberal* in order to reconsider how it reflects both the ambitions and limitations of Romantic political radicalism, as well as its broader literary and cultural implications for European liberal culture. The seminar intends to illuminate the complex relationship between literature and politics in the early 19th century, focusing on the ways in which, through *The Liberal*, Byron, Shelley, and Hunt engaged with contemporary debates over liberty, authority, and the role of the artist in effecting social change.

Objectives:

- to examine *The Liberal* as a collaborative work that reflects the distinct political and poetic visions of its contributors
- to reposition *The Liberal* in 1820s culture in Britain and Italy
- to investigate its relationship to the political and social context of post-Napoleonic Europe, particularly in regard to radicalism and liberal culture
- to consider its legacy in the broader context of Romanticism, of Anglo-Italian relations, and its continued relevance to contemporary discussions of literature and politics.

References

- Craig, D. M. (2012). The origins of ‘liberalism’ in Britain: The case of *The Liberal*. *Historical Research*, 85(229), 469–487.
- Crisafulli, L. M., Baiesi, S., & Farese, C. (Eds.). (2023). *Imprinting Anglo-Italian relations in The Liberal*. Peter Lang.
- Franklin, C. (2005). Cosmopolitanism and Catholic culture: Byron, Italian poetry, and *The Liberal*. In D. Saglia & L. Bandiera (Eds.), *British Romanticism and Italian literature: Translating, reviewing, rewriting* (pp. 255–268). Rodopi.
- Gross, J. D. (1993). Byron and *The Liberal*: Periodical as political posture. *Philological Quarterly*, 72(4), 471–485.
- Gross, J. D. (2001). *Byron: The erotic Liberal*. Lexington Books.
- Hay, D. (2008). Liberals, *Liberales* and *The Liberal*: A reassessment. *European Romantic Review*, 19(4), 307–320.
- Marshall, W. H. (1960). *Byron, Shelley, Hunt and The Liberal*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Steier, M. (2019). *Byron, Hunt, and the politics of literary engagement*. Routledge.

Seminar n. 4. British Romantic Literature as Cultural Heritage: Texts, Objects and Places

Convenors

Serena Baiesi (Università di Bologna) serena.baiesi@unibo.it

Marco Canani (Università degli Studi di Milano) marco.canani@unimi.it

Abstract

The seminar intends to explore the many ways in which British literature of the Romantic period becomes a site of cultural heritage when writers, texts, and places become objects of material enquiry. Key to this are two concepts: on the one hand, the idea of literature as ‘heritage’ finds its rationale in the recently redefined guidelines of the UNESCO Convention (2017), which introduces the notion of ‘cultural landscape’ as one that is able to trigger specific associations in the human mind, connecting a number of artifacts, literary texts included, with places. On the other hand, the idea of the humanities, and therefore literature, as cultural heritage puts institutions, places and practices at a centre stage for materialist and neo-materialist investigations (Gillman, 2010). This perspective is especially crucial at present in an attempt to account for the complex interplay between tangible and intangible elements in a world dominated by digital practices.

A practice grounded in this perspective is certainly literary tourism (Palmer & Tivers, 2019), which traditionally designs destinations and shapes itineraries, conflating the tourist's gaze (Urry and Larsen, 2011) with the expectations of the readers. Romantic literature offers many an example of this, both in the UK and abroad. The period witnessed the rise of a new attention to natural and cultural sites that promoted conservatism, and the institutionalization of places such as Dove Cottage, Chawton House, Keats House at Hampstead, and the Keats-Shelley House in UK and *Golfo dei Poeti* in Italy further demonstrate this (Castellano, 2013; Bevan, 2023). In their role as sites of memory (Nora, 1989), these places give new meanings and realities to the literary text, often suggesting alternative stories as in the case of Chatsworth House, which lives in the popular imagination as ‘the real’ Pemberley owing to the success of the BBC adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (1995). At the same time, the role of institutions is crucial in reshaping the transmission of Romantic literature as cultural heritage, bringing about new scenarios where the complex relationship between material textual holdings, and the cultural practices in which they are entangled, invites novel investigation (Sommer, 2025). The Convenors invite proposals for papers exploring the ways in which British literature of the Romantic period redefines the role of the humanities in contemporary context by becoming cultural heritage.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- literature as material heritage
- tourist itineraries and experiences connected with British Romantic literature in the UK and abroad
- textual materiality
- sites of memory and the role of institutions
- literary mementos and souvenirs.

References

Bevan, A. (2023). *Gothic Literary Travel and Tourism*. University of Wales Press.

Castellano, K. (2013). *The Ecology of British Romantic Conservatism, 1790–1837*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Gillman, D. (2010). *The Idea of Cultural Heritage*. Cambridge University Press.

Nora, P. (1989). Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*. *Representations*, 26, 7–24.

Palmer, C. & Tivers, J. (Eds.). (2019). *Creating Heritage for Tourism*. Routledge.

Sommer, T. (Ed.). (2025). *Cultural Heritage and the Literary Archive. Objects, Institution, and Practices between the Analogue and the Digital*. Routledge.

UNESCO. (2017). Cultural Landscapes. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscape/>.

Urry, J. & Larsen, J. (2011). *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*. Sage.

Seminar n. 5. U/Dys/Eco-topias: Hope and despair in anthropocenic literature

Convenors

Gioia Angeletti (Università degli Studi di Parma) gioia.angeletti@unipr.it

Roberta Grandi (Università della Valle d'Aosta) r.grandi@univda.it

Abstract

Since Moore's *Utopia* (1516), ideal nowhere lands envisioning a "redeemed future" (Garrard, 2004: 37) have often morphed into dystopian stories that "frighten and warn, [engaging] with pressing global concerns" (Basu, Broad, & Hintz, 2013: 1). From Wells and Perkins to Dick and Atwood, from *The Matrix* and *Avatar* to *Wall-e*, imaginary futuristic scenarios increasingly address climate change, environmental disaster, and humanity's destiny.

In today's Anthropocene era, eco-anxiety dominates, with young adult dystopias like *Uglies*, *The Hunger Games*, and *Divergent* becoming blockbuster films, and post-apocalyptic tales like McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) earning literary prizes and worldwide acclaim. Recent studies, however, question dystopic narratives' effects. Rather than alerting readers to urgent environmental needs, the doom-and-gloom rhetoric (Arnold, 2018), by undermining people's *locus of control* (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002), often triggers flight, fight, or freeze responses (Wakeman in Young, 2022), generating inactivity, escapism, or aggression. Ecotopias and solarpunk fiction, instead, inspire positive emotions like hope and desire. These narratives portray "future worlds that [are] not depressing but instead so enticing that they might lead us to yearn for a new way of being" (Weik von Mossner, 2017: 163), encouraging activism and change.

This seminar invites contributions on classic or recent works read through the lens of Climate Change and the Anthropocene, Petrocultures and Energy Humanities, Posthumanism, and Ecocriticism. Moreover, we are interested in papers that apply affect studies to explore how these imaginary worlds influence readers' reactions and behaviour.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- U/Dys/Eco-topias and Ecoanxiety and Solastalgia
- U/Dys/Eco-topias, Affect Studies and Empirical Ecocriticism
- U/Dys/Eco-topias, Petrocultures and Energy Humanities
- Cyberpunk, Solarpunk, & co.
- Eco-Apocalypses and Cli-fi
- U/Dys/Eco-topias, Ecocriticism, Ecofeminism, and the Environmental Humanities
- U/Dys/Eco-topias, Posthumanism and New Materialism
- U/Dys/Eco-topias rhetoric, stylistics, and discourses
- U/Dys/Eco-topias and children's literature, picturebooks, games, and films.

References

- Basu, B., Broad, K. R., & Hintz, C. (2013). Introduction. In B. Basu, K. R. Broad, & C. Hintz (Eds.), *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults. Brave New Teenagers* (pp. 1–15). Routledge.
- Garrard, G. (2004). Apocalypse. In G. Garrard (Ed.), *Ecocriticism* (pp. 85–107). Routledge.
- Kollmuss, A. & Agyeman, J.. (2002). Mind the Gap: Why Do People Act Environmentally and What Are the Barriers to pro-Environmental Behavior?. *Environmental Education Research*, 8(3), 239–60.
- Weik von Mossner, A. (2017). *Affective Ecologies: Empathy, Emotion, and Environmental Narrative*. The Ohio State University Press.
- Young, R. L., (Ed.) (2022). *Literature as a Lens for Climate Change: Using Narratives to Prepare the Next Generation*. Lexington Books.

Seminar n. 6. Contemporary narratives of humanity in a dystopian world

Convenors

Lucia Esposito (Università degli Studi Roma Tre) lucia.esposito@uniroma3.it

Alessandra Ruggiero (Università degli Studi di Teramo) aruggiero@unite.it

Abstract

Since the beginning of the 20th century, dystopias have been far more popular than utopias: all contemporary forms of storytelling seem to compete to imagine a negative, if not catastrophic, future for humanity. Both utopias and dystopias have always constituted a critical mirror of contemporary society, but while the former project – in another place or time – a better version of reality, as in an inverted mirror (reality as it should be), the latter tend to act as a deforming mirror of a present that finds itself reflected in its worst version (reality as it should not be or become).

The seminar's objective is to explore the reasons behind the contemporary unabashed preference for the genre of dystopia. As Krishan Kumar noted in 1987, fictional dystopias frequently do not signify a sense of pessimism and resignation, but rather, they function as a form of caution, motivated by an aspiration to avert potential political, ideological, or technological scenarios that could result in adverse consequences. Consequently, dystopian narratives aim to provoke awareness and galvanize individuals to act ethically before the most unfavourable outcomes materialize. The prevailing threats to liberal democracy, the looming catastrophe of climate change and environmental collapse, along with the apprehensions engendered by the transhumanist vision of hyper-technologized bodies and lives, within a milieu increasingly dominated by algorithms and artificial intelligence (Harari, 2018), could collectively provide ample rationale for the pervasive presence of dystopian, if not apocalyptic, narratives.

However, should we totally surrender to the idea that the world will persist in being envisioned solely as it ought not to be, or to be recounted retro-topically, as Bauman (2017) laments, rather than explore the options for a better society? Might we consider alternatively Fredric Jameson's (2005) perspective, which emphasizes the importance of resuming utopia as a political instrument and an in-depth reflection on the future of humanity, intended to counteract dominant discourses that may seek to divert attention from any aspiration for change?

References

- Baccolini, R. & Moylan, T. (Eds.) (2003). *Dark Horizons. Science Fiction and the Dystopian Imagination*. Routledge.
- Bauman, Z. (2016). *Retrotopia*. Polity Press.
- Claeys, G. (2010). *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*. Cambridge University Press
- Foucault, M. (1984). Des espaces autres. In *Dits et écrits* (1994, vol. IV, pp. 752–762). Gallimard.
- Harari, Y. N. (2018). *21 Lessons for the 21st Century*. Jonathan Cape.
- Jameson, F. (2005). *Archaeologies of the Future. The Desire called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*. Verso.
- Kumar, K. (1987). *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*. Basil Blackwell.

Seminar n. 7. Monstrous bodies: Deviance, transformation, and belonging in contemporary British fiction

Convenors

Luca Baratta (Università degli Studi di Siena) luca.baratta@unisi.it

Michela Compagnoni (Università degli Studi Roma Tre) michela.compagnoni@uniroma3.it

Abstract

This seminar will explore how contemporary British fiction (2000–2025) portrays monstrous or deviant bodies as sites of cultural anxieties and resistance. The works of authors such as Ian McEwan, Jeanette Winterson, Ali Smith, Julian Barnes, Zadie Smith, Guy Gunaratne, Mohsin Hamid, and Deborah Levy often challenge and redefine humanity's boundaries, examining intersections with disability, gender, queerness, race, and social marginalization. They also engage with disembodiment and transformation through emerging technologies, the metaverse, and cyborg identities.

Building on Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's seminal *Monster Theory* (1996), which frames monstrosity as a cultural construct reflecting societal fears and desires, the seminar will focus on how British fiction reimagines these ideas in response to sociopolitical and technological changes. These shifts disrupt traditional understandings of embodiment and reshape human interaction, creativity, and labour. The notion of monstrosity, often associated with the othering of bodies and identities, is reconfigured amidst evolving cultural anxieties. Theories by Donna Haraway, Lennard J. Davis, Rosi Braidotti, and Avtar Brah underpin the examination of monstrosity's intersections with migration, displacement, diasporic identities, and disability.

The seminar also addresses how contemporary British fiction interrogates the impact of Brexit and UK immigration policies on cultural narratives of belonging and exclusion, critiques evolving definitions of humanity, and examines how 'new monsters' emerge in an era of globalization, technological disruption, and ecological crisis.

Possible topics include:

- Brexit, migration, and diasporic displacement
- Monstrosity, agency, and resistance
- Representations of physical and cognitive disabilities as they intersect with monstrosity
- Gendered and queer embodiment as resistance or marginalization
- Posthuman transformations: cyborgs, digital bodies, and virtual identities
- Monstrosity and ecological crises as human failure narratives
- Empathy and compassion in depictions of deviant bodies
- Reworking classical monstrous archetypes

References

Braidotti, R. (2013). *The Posthuman*. Polity Press.

Brah, A. (1996). *Cartographies of diaspora: Contesting identities*. Routledge.

Cohen, J. J. (1996). *Monster theory: Seven theses*. University of Minnesota Press.

Davis, L. J. (1995). *Enforcing normalcy: Disability, deafness, and the body*. Verso Books.

Haraway, D. (1991). A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century. In *Simians, cyborgs, and women: The reinvention of nature* (pp. 148–181). Routledge.

Seminar n. 8. Questioning the *anthropos* in Anglophone Anthropocene narratives

Convenors

Lucio De Capitani (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) lucio.decapitani@unive.it

Angelo Monaco (Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro) angelo.monaco@uniba.it

Abstract

Since its emergence in 2000, the concept of the Anthropocene – which identifies our epoch as the one in which the human species has become a geological agent – has catalyzed a heated intellectual discussion. In the humanities, the Anthropocene has brought to the forefront crucial challenges such as global climate change, alterations in the water cycle, soil degradation, accelerated loss of biodiversity, and pollution from toxic and non-biodegradable substances. It also raises biopolitical issues, like overpopulation and new forms of authoritarianism. In this light, the contentious interpretations of human responsibilities towards the environment – tackling who is truly responsible for environmental collapse and thus questioning who is the *Anthropos* in ‘Anthropocene’, with its implications of undifferentiated responsibilities – have generated intense debate (Haraway, 2016; Chakrabarty, 2021). Several alternative definitions have been put forward to illuminate the contradictions of the human impact on the planet, such as, among many others, Capitalocene (Moore, 2015) and Plantationocene (Barua, 2024). These contradictions are particularly evident in discussions surrounding the postcolonial Anthropocene (van Amelsvoort, 2024), which seeks to highlight the multifaceted and uneven nature of human impact on the planet. Importantly, and in parallel to these discussions, the proliferation of cli-fi and other cultural expressions that address the new realities brought about by the Anthropocene highlights the growing significance of climate change in today’s cultural landscape: the Anthropocene, in short, can be argued to be the unconscious of the art and literature of our time (Bould, 2021).

Starting from this premise, in this seminar we invite scholars to expand this narrow understanding of the ‘human’ by engaging with the multiple forms of the human impact on the planet as represented in Anglophone literatures and other media (novels, poetry, drama, personal essays, memoirs, films, TV series, and other storytelling practices).

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- climate migration
- critiques of sustainability and mainstream environmental discourses
- postcolonialism and ecojustice
- hydrocolonialism
- nuclear cultures
- intersections of gender, class and ethnicity in relation to environmental or climate crises
- the posthuman condition and the future of the human species
- indigenous and/or marginalized ecological discourse; environmentalism of the poor

References

- Barua, M. (2024). *Plantation Worlds*. Duke University Press.
- Bould, M. (2021). *The Anthropocene Unconscious. Climate Catastrophe Culture*. Verso.
- Chakrabarty, D. (2021). *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age*. University of Chicago Press.
- Ghosh, A. (2016). *The Great Derangement. Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. The University of Chicago Press.
- Haraway, D. J. (2016). *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press.
- Moore, J. (2015). *Capitalism in the Web of Life*. Verso.
- Sklair, L. (2020). *The Anthropocene in Global Media. Neutralizing the Risk*. Routledge.
- Srinivasan, R. T. (2022). The Anglophone and the Anthropocene: Postcolonial in the Present Tense. *Modern Language Quarterly*, 83(2), 191–205.
- van Amelsvoort, J. (2024). The Postcolonial Anthropocene. In P. de Medeiros & S. Ponzanesi (Eds.), *Postcolonial Theory and Crisis* (83–10). De Gruyter.
- Vermeulen, P. (Ed.) (2020). *Literature and the Anthropocene*. Routledge.

Seminar n. 9. Ecology, affect, and young adult literature

Convenors

Irene Bordignon (IUSS Pavia / Università degli Studi di Ferrara) irene.bordignon@iusspavia.it

Chiara Xausa (Università di Bologna) chiara.xausa2@unibo.it

Abstract

According to Greg Garrard (2012: 5), “the widest definition of the subject of ecocriticism is the study of the relationship of the human and the non-human” in culture. In the last few years, a small number of studies have tried to map the complex and articulated field of children and YA ecocriticism (Dobrin & Kidd, 2004, Massey & Bradford, 2011), as well as the representation of environmental crises and climate change in these texts (Basu et al., 2013; Curry, 2013). Donna Haraway (2016), for instance, imagines young ecocitizens as “the symbiont children” who “developed a complex subjectivity composed of loneliness, intense sociality, intimacy with nonhuman others, specialness, lack of choice, fullness of meaning, and sureness of future purpose” (149).

The potential of literature to promote hope for humankind in the post-Anthropocene is the subject of intensive research that stresses the central role of young generations in addressing anthropogenic changes in Earth’s ecosystems (Oziewicz, 2022). With regard to YA literature, Alexa Weik von Mossner (2017) argues that reading a literary text is a form of mental simulation that engages readers’ bodies in a way similar to their interaction with the real world. This seminar explores how young people’s encounters with nature shape their embodied sense of being in the world, their spatial and temporal (dis)locations, and their affective experiences. We invite reflections on climate change and affective ecologies in young adult literature in times when cultivating the belief in the possibility of better realities is becoming increasingly difficult.

Key questions:

- How does YA literature represent nature, non-human actors, and environmental justice, and what roles do these elements play in shaping young protagonists' relationships with the environment?
- What kind of climate change emotions should YA literature convey?
- How does YA literature foster ecological citizenship, convey fears and hopes about the future, and inspire creative thinking and long-term environmental action?

References

- Basu, B., et al. (Eds.) (2013). *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers*. Routledge.
- Curry, A. (2013). *Environmental Crisis in Young Adult Fiction*. Palgrave.
- Dobrin, S., & Kidd, K. B. (Eds.) (2004). *Wild Things: Children's Culture and Ecocriticism*. Wayne State UP.
- Haraway, D. (2016). *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press.
- Massey, G., & Bradford, C. (2011). Children as Ecocitizens: Ecocriticism and environmental texts. In K. Mallan, & C. Bradford (Eds.), *Contemporary Children's Literature and Film* (pp. 109–126). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Oziewicz, M., & Saguisag, L. (2021). Introduction: Children’s Literature and Climate Change. *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 45(2), v–xiv.
- Weik von Mossner, A. (2017). *Affective Ecologies*. Ohio State UP.
- Weik von Mossner, A. (2017). Vulnerable lives: the affective dimensions of risk in young adult cli-fi. *Textual Practice*, 31(3), 553–566.

Seminar n. 10. New gender perspectives in the literary Anglosphere: A more inclusive view of the ‘human’

Convenors

Paola Della Valle (Università di Torino) paola.dellavalle@unito.it

Federica Zullo (Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo) federica.zullo@uniurb.it

Abstract

Since the publication of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792, feminist thought has developed over the centuries not only as a response to gender inequalities but also to assert a concept of ‘human’ and ‘human nature’ all the more inclusive and multifaceted. Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. Equity leads to equality. Where gender inequality exists, it is generally women who are excluded or disadvantaged in relation to decision-making and access to economic and social resources. More recently, gender studies have connected the term ‘gender’ to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. Gender thus differs from sex in that it is social and cultural in nature rather than biological. While emphasizing the masculine bias in scientific culture, Donna Haraway back in 1985 dismantled the ‘antagonistic dualisms’ or dichotomies that order western discourse, among which male/female, self/other, culture/nature, human/nonhuman, with the metaphor of the ‘cyborg’, which rejects rigid boundaries, even that between human and machine. Judith Butler (2006) has offered a further critique of any binary division by seeing gender as a reiterated social performance rather than the expression of a prior reality and Rosi Braidotti (2021) claims that feminism is one of the precursors of the present posthuman turn. Finally, gender is inflected according to race, ethnicity and religion in contemporary multicultural societies and postcolonial countries. Non-western cultures and ontologies include different paradigms in gender relations and issues. The seminar will include papers dealing with new inflections of feminisms, new gender representations, and new gender perspectives that redefine the concept of ‘human’, in English and postcolonial literary works.

References

- Braidotti, R. (2021). *Posthuman Feminism*. Polity Press.
- Boyce, D. C. (1984). *Black Women, Writing and Identity. Migrations of the Subject*. Routledge.
- Butler, J. (2006). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (1985). A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century. *The Socialist Review*, 69–107.
- Hooks, bell. (2000). *Feminism is for Everybody. Passionate Politics*, SouthEnd Press.
- Hooks, bell. (1984). *Feminist Theory. From Margins to Center*, SouthEnd Press.
- Mohanty, C. T. (1984). Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. *Boundary*, 2 (12/13), 333–58.
- Spivak, G. C. (1985). Three Women’s Texts and a Critique of Imperialism. *Critical Inquiry*, 12(1), 243–61.

Seminar n. 11. Gender-ed representations and/in migration

Convenors

Raffaella Antinucci (Università degli Studi di Napoli Parthenope) raffaella.antinucci@uniparthenope.it

Claudia Capancioni (Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln, UK) claudia.capancioni@bishopg.ac.uk

Mariaconcetta Costantini (Università "G. d'Annunzio" di Chieti-Pescara) mariaconcetta.costantini@unich.it

Abstract

The seminar seeks to explore the narratives and literary representations of migration and diaspora, spanning across both the temporal and geographical boundaries of the Anglosphere. By examining these stories with particular attention to the gendering of migrant identities, the seminar intends to investigate how migration experiences are portrayed and re-imagined. It brings together interdisciplinary fields such as travel writing, gender studies, and diaspora and migration studies to critically analyze how human migration is represented in various literary genres.

Incorporating the concepts of 'humane' and 'human' interaction, the seminar will consider how literary works about migration reflect the complexities of migrant experiences and identity formation. These literary texts often capture the struggles, resilience, and transformation of individuals as they face the challenges of displacement. With reference to the field of gender studies, the seminar will interrogate how gender shapes and redefines migrant identities.

Prospective speakers are invited to submit proposals that address the diverse modes of migrant identity formation and reformation, considering how these identities are circulated across different genres and cultures. By intersecting gender with diasporic and migration studies, the seminar will explore the various issues that arise from the representation of migrant identities, questioning the power of these portrayals to shape public perception and policy, as well as the ethical responsibility of representing such profoundly human experiences.

The aforementioned issues are represented in writings by a large variety of authors. Examples include diasporic writers from the global South such as Samuel Selvon, George Lamming, Buchi Emecheta and Imbolo Mbue. Their works show how, in relocating in their host societies, migrants are not only challenged to overcome ethno-cultural boundaries but also have to cope with thorny gender questions that complicate their identities and sense of belonging.

References

Amelina, A. & Lutz, H. (2019). *Gender and migration: Transnational and intersectional prospects*. Routledge.

Butler, J. (2024). *Who's afraid of gender?* Penguin.

Capancioni, C., Costantini, M., & Mattoscio, M. (Eds.). (2024). *Rethinking identities across boundaries: Genders/genres/genera*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Clifford, J. (1994). Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology*, 9(3), 302–338.

Nixon, J. V. & Costantini, M. (Eds.). (2022). *Becoming home. Diaspora and the Anglophone transnational*. Vernon Press.

Quayson, A. & Daswani, G. (Eds.). (2013). *Companion to diaspora and transnational studies*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Said, E. (2000). *Reflections on exile and other essays*. Harvard University Press.

Schiller, G. N., Basch, L., & Blanc-Szanton, C. (Eds.). (1992). *Towards a transnational perspective on migration: Race, class, ethnicity, and nationalism reconsidered*. The New York Academy of Sciences.

Seminar n. 12. Empathy in aesthetic experience: Themes, genres, forms

Convenors

Claudia Cao (Università degli Studi di Cagliari) claudia.cao@unica.it

Angela Leonardi (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) angela.leonardi@unina.it

Federica Perazzini (Università di Roma Sapienza) federica.perazzini@uniroma1.it

Abstract

Empathy is one of the most defining experiences of the human condition. It is no coincidence that both literary and non-fiction works on posthuman and human-machine interactions often highlight the question of whether these new ‘beings’ can experience emotional engagement, not only with other machines but also with humans themselves (Braidotti, 2013; Winterson, 2021). Moreover, the theme of empathy and its limits has long been central to works of fiction which deal with experimentation with human life and nature. From Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) to its more recent reinterpretations, such as Winterson’s *Frankissstein* (2019), the failure of empathy has been a key theme in examining the complex relationship with new forms of otherness.

Empathy is a feeling that is also involved in the aesthetic experience, especially if we consider it as a form of encounter and dialogue with the other. From Nussbaum (1990) to the more recent insights from neuroscience (Keen 2007), numerous contributions over the past few decades have enriched the debate on the role of literature and art in fostering empathy and enhancing the exercise of “putting ourselves in another’s shoes” (Chavel, 2012). Not only can artistic fruition be seen as an exercise in empathy, but the creative process itself can stem from this feeling. In literary genres such as biography and narrative medicine, empathy is crucial, but also plays a significant part in various forms of rewriting and intermedial reuse – such as transpositions and fanfictions – where empathy for minor characters can lead to a revision of canonical works from postcolonial or gender perspectives. At the same time, art serves as a privileged space for exploring various forms of empathy. It often presents negatively connoted figures and spaces that foster ambivalent, destabilizing relationships – simultaneously invoking both attraction and repulsion. This dynamic is what Ercolino & Fusillo (2022: 10) term “negative empathy”, which allows one to test “the limits of the ethical positioning of the user of the work of art”.

This seminar aims to engage with the latest discussions surrounding the role of empathy, with a particular focus on investigating the limits of this experience in both aesthetic fruition and production. It invites proposals that explore this topic across a range of domains, including – but not limited to – the following:

- the role of empathy in the reading experience
- the role of empathy in aesthetic fruition (theatre, cinema, tv series, graphic novels)
- the role of empathy in the writing experience (including both original texts and rewritings and adaptations from the perspective of minor characters)
- empathy as a theme
- empathy and literary genres (e.g. biography, narrative medicine, posthuman)
- negative empathy.

References

Braidotti, R. (2013). *The Posthuman*. Polity Press.

Chavel, S. (2012). *Se mettre à la place d’autrui. L’imagination morale*. Presses universitaires de Rennes.

Ercolino, S., & Fusillo, M. (2022). *Empatia negativa. Il punto di vista del male*. Giunti-Bompiani.

Keen, S. (2007). *Empathy and the Novel*. Oxford University Press.

Nussbaum, M. (1990). *Love’s Knowledge. Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. Oxford University Press.

Winterson, J. (2021). *12 Bytes. How Artificial Intelligence Will Change the Way We Live and Love*. Vintage.

Seminar n. 13. Innovative approaches to the teaching of literature between theory and practice

Convenors

Maurizio Ascari (Università di Bologna) maurizio.ascari@unibo.it

Alessandra Petrina (Università degli Studi di Padova) alessandra.petrina@unipd.it

Laura Tosi (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) tosilaur@unive.it

Abstract

As scholars and teachers of English literature, we want to emphasize the value of literary studies in the Humanities. Despite the challenges of substantial cuts in the field and the impact of A.I. as a substitute of critical thinking, we vindicate the importance of getting to grips with the flexibility and ambiguity of the literary texts. In C. S. Lewis's words, "Literature adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides".

Our aim is to explore and expand the range of ways in which literature can be taught and discussed inside a university classroom. Prospective contributors are invited to share their own experiences in organizing classroom activities that engage students at diverse levels, fostering the development of skills that comprise critical and interdisciplinary thinking, narrative and fictional creativity, teamwork, public speaking, forms of performance. The idea is that of using the classroom as a space in which instructors and students creatively interact among themselves and with the literary texts, within a wider historical, cultural and linguistic context.

Also building on the experience that the recent pandemic has enforced, this seminar welcomes and aims to foster practical and theoretical reflections concerning the teaching of literature through active learning and related instructional strategies such as flipped classrooms, rewriting and adaptation strategies, remediation from the verbal to the visual and problem-based learning – all teaching possibilities that can be enhanced by the use of dedicated online platforms.

The seminar itself is meant as a springing board for new reflections as well as a site for sharing teaching experiences across different generations of instructors. We welcome submissions that showcase firsthand teaching experiences, offering insights into practical classroom strategies and challenges. Additionally, we encourage papers that delve into theoretical perspectives on literature instruction, examining pedagogical frameworks, methodologies, and innovative approaches to engaging students with literary texts.

References

Collier, P. (2021). *Teaching Literature in the Real World. A Practical Guide*. Bloomsbury.

Fletcher, J. (2018). *Teaching Literature Rhetorically*. Routledge.

Showalter, E. (2002). *Teaching Literature*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Seminar n. 14. Weaving voices: Collaborative creativity in literature and culture

Convenors

Francesca Di Blasio (Università degli Studi di Trento) francesca.diblasio@unitn.it

Ilaria Natali (Università degli Studi di Firenze) ilaria.natali@unifi.it

Abstract

Literary theory and book history have increasingly questioned the notion of individualistic authorship, given the multitude of factors influencing the processes of writing, editing, and publishing. Stone & Thompson's (2006: 19) heterotextual model frames the author as a composite entity "incorporating different subjectivities and speaking in multiple voices"; similarly, Van Hulle (2022: 75) considers creativity as an "ecology" involving the manuscript's physical environment, the author's literary influences, dialogic exchanges with peers, and other non-human agents of change. However, a tendency persists to regard modifications deriving from non-authorial sources as forms of impurity, contamination, or unnatural hybridization; as Stillinger (1991: vi) observes, "where others besides the nominal author have a share in the creation of a text, we ... call it corruption and try to get rid of it". Arguably, standard editorial practices continue to adhere to what McGann (1984: 8) characterizes as "ideas ... which so emphasize the autonomy of the isolated author as to distort our theoretical grasp of [creativity]".

This seminar invites investigations into diverse forms and modes of joint creativity – ranging from overt co-signatures to silent revisions – across literary and non-literary contexts, from antiquity to the present day, in traditional and digital spaces, and encompassing interactions both among humans and between humans and computers.

Potential topics include:

- Gendered perspectives on collaboration and authorship
- Manuscript studies, archival work, and textual variance
- Editorial practices, textual authority, and the history of the book
- Translation as a collaborative process
- Digital humanities and its evolving practices
- AI-human collaboration and its implications for authorship
- Scholarly co-writing and knowledge-making.

References

LeFevre, K. (1987). *Invention as a social act*. Southern Illinois University Press.

Love, H. (2002). *Attributing authorship: An introduction*. Cambridge University Press.

McGann, J. (1984). *A critique of modern textual criticism*. University of Chicago Press.

Stillinger, J. (1991). *Multiple authorship and the myth of solitary genius*. Oxford University Press.

Stone, M., & Thompson, J. (Eds.). (2006). *Couplings: Authority, agency, and identity in the romantic text*. University of Wisconsin Press.

Van Hulle, D. (2022). *Genetic criticism: Tracing creativity in literature*. Oxford University Press.

Seminar n. 15. “P raises his head”: Acts of resistance in Samuel Beckett

Convenors

Davide Crosara (Università di Roma Sapienza) davide.crosara@uniroma1.it

Rossana Sebellin (Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata) sebellin@lettere.uniroma2.it

Abstract

Despite the fact that it is often characterized by nihilistic interpretations, Beckett’s oeuvre depicts several acts of resistance, from Word’s final sigh in *Words and Music* (1962) to the upward gaze of the Protagonist in *Catastrophe* (1982). The weight and inescapability of mortality marks Beckett’s work since its very beginning, as testified by his first poetry collection, *Echo’s Bones* (1935). Beckett’s meditation on finitude is nonetheless accompanied by an enquiry into the residual possibilities of language, even when his goal is to dissolve “that terrible materiality of the word surface” (Beckett, 1937), testing the limits of the linguistic medium. Beckett’s postwar considerations on painting are imbued with explicit ethical undertones, as clearly indicated in the “obligation to express” which concludes *The Three Dialogues* (Beckett, 1949). The intermedial experiments that follow often stage acts of domination and torture, frequently alluding to contemporary historical events, from the Algerian War to the Cold War. Strongly opposed to the idea of writing as a repository of a political message, he conveys his ethics by means of a rigorous reshaping of form. The aim of this seminar is to examine the presence and meaning of resistance in Beckett’s corpus.

Proposal may address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- Beckett and Resistance
- Beckett and Testimony
- Beckett and Anti-Totalitarian Dissent
- Beckett, Nationalism and Internationalism
- Beckett and Censorship
- Beckett and Ethics
- Political Interpretations of Beckett
- Philosophical Interpretation of Beckett
- Modalities of Resistance: the Dissolution of Identity
- Modalities of Resistance: the Dissolution of Form
- Modalities of Resistance: the Dissolution of Language
- Beckett as a Director: Freedom and the Marketplace
- Beckett and his Publishers: Freedom and the Marketplace
- Alienation, Commodification and the Marketplace in his Prose, Plays, Essays, Poetry.
- Alienation, Commodification and the Marketplace in Beckett’s Correspondence
- Hybrid Bodies in Beckett
- Ecocritical Interpretations of his Work
- Beckett and Popular Culture
- Acts of Resistance in Beckett and his Contemporaries
- Political Reappropriations of Beckett
- Postcolonial Rewritings of Beckett

References

Anderton, J. (2016). *Beckett’s Creatures. Art of Failure After the Holocaust*. Bloomsbury.

Davies, W. & Bailey, H. (2011). *Beckett and Politics*. Palgrave.

Frasca, G. (2023). *La galassia Beckett al crepuscolo del millennio*, in Samuel Beckett, *Romanzi, teatro e televisione*. Mondadori.

Gontarski, S. E. (2018) *Revisoning Beckett. Samuel Beckett’s Decadent Turn*. Bloomsbury.

Houston Jones, D. (2011). *Samuel Beckett and Testimony*. Palgrave.

Morin, E. (2017). *Beckett’s Political Imagination*. Cambridge U.P.

Nixon, M. (2011). *Samuel Beckett’s German Diaries 1936–1937*. Continuum.

Smith, R. (Ed.) (2011). *Beckett and Ethics*. Continuum.

Seminar n. 16. Italian approaches to stylistics

Convenors

Bianca Del Villano (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale) bdelvillano@unior.it

Daniela Francesca Viridis (Università degli Studi di Cagliari) dfviridis@unica.it

Abstract

Stylistics is the systematic study and analysis of texts, grounded in precise and comprehensive linguistic description, and characterized by a meticulous close reading and interpretation of the texts under examination. As a discipline within the humanities, stylistics is primarily concerned with the linguistic composition of texts and the central role of language in textual construction. Over time, the field has developed a robust theoretical framework along with a diverse array of linguistic and analytical methodologies that enable the critical, scientific, and systematic interrogation of not only language, texts, and textual meaning but also the interpretive contexts of readers. In this sense, stylistics extends beyond linguistic meaning-making processes and textual features to enlarge the focus to human subjectivity in order to examine the cultural and social ideologies, perspectives, and belief systems embedded within individual texts and their broader social and cultural frameworks.

Within this context, this seminar will explore how geopolitical, ideological, and ecological challenges and crises are represented in texts and discourses, as well as how these texts and discourses engage with, respond to, and critique such issues. Aligned with the objectives of the Poetics and Linguistics Association (PALA) and the Centro di Ricerca Interuniversitario di Argomentazione, Pragmatica e Stilistica (ARGO), the seminar contributions will analyze a range of literary and non-literary texts, through the application of theoretical frameworks and methodologies advanced by contemporary stylistics. In doing so, the seminar will offer a comprehensive mapping of current stylistic approaches embraced by Italian scholars and the analytical methodologies presently employed within the Italian stylistics research community, reinforcing the integral role of stylistics within the humanities.

References

Burke, M. (Ed.). (2023/2014). *The Routledge Handbook of Stylistics*, 2nd edition. Routledge.

Simpson, P. (2014/2004). *Stylistics: A Resource Book for Students*, 2nd edition. Routledge.

Sotirova, V. (Ed.). (2016). *The Bloomsbury Companion to Stylistics*. Bloomsbury.

Stockwell, P., & Whiteley, S. (Eds.). (2014). *The Cambridge Handbook of Stylistics*. Cambridge University Press.

Seminar n. 17. The grammar of silence: Cross-disciplinary, transmedia echoes

Convenors

Francesca Saggini (Università degli Studi della Tuscia) fsaggini@unitus.it

Enrichetta Soccio (Università “G. d’Annunzio” di Chieti-Pescara) enrichetta.soccio@unich.it

Abstract

“Nor was the Silence and Emptiness of the Streets so much in the City as in the Out-parts, except just at one particular time, when, as I have mention’d, the Plague came East; and spread over all the City”
(Daniel Defoe, *A Journal of the Plague Year*).

During the coronavirus pandemics, perceptions of silence and sound changed forever. They embodied a sonic dystopia in which the two etymological meanings of the lemma ‘silence’ – the Latin verbs *silēre* and *tacēre*, denoting now the absence of sound (*silēo*), now the absence of speech (*tācēo*) – interplayed. Silence may be reticent, dissembling, or imposed by others. Voluntary or enforced, it might be the silence of women, of marginalized social and religious groups, of communities that are denied the right to speak. With these considerations in mind and moving from the recent experience of Covid19, this seminar aims to reconceptualize the historical, textual and literary forms of silence, including the silence of individuals and cultures, of the physical voice or the written word and of information erased from the page.

We invite proposals addressing the many voices of silence, including erasure, reticence, pauses, ellipses, discretion, *omertà* in the Anglosphere from conterminous vantage points. The period considered is from 1700 to the present days. Proposals using multimodal, Film Sound and Media Studies approaches are also welcome.

References

Cage, J. (2011) *Silence: Lectures and Writings*. Wesleyan University Press.

Césaire, A. (2000). *Discourse on Colonialism*. New York University Press.

Constable, M. (2006). *Just Silence: The Limits and Possibilities of Modern Law*, Princeton University Press.

Foley, M. (2023). *Gothic Voices: The Vococentric Soundworld of Gothic Writing*, Cambridge University Press.

Gal, S. (1991). Between Speech and Silence: The Problematics of Research on Language and Gender. In M. Leonardo (Ed.), *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era*, University of California Press.

Garavelli, Mortara B. (2015). *Silenzi d'autore*, Laterza.

Itten, T. (2000), *The Art of Silence and Human Behaviour. Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. Routledge.

Spivak, Chakravorty G. (2010). *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris. Columbia University Press.

Seminar n. 18. Framing the feminine: Language, crime, and cultural narratives

Convenors

Viviana Gaballo (Università degli Studi di Padova) viviana.gaballo@unipd.it

Emilia Di Martino (Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa) emilia.dimartino@unisob.na.it

Abstract

This seminar explores how language and cultural narratives frame representations of women in crime, examining how linguistic choices and storytelling conventions shape perceptions of gender, agency, and justice. By analyzing the intersection of language, crime, and culture, we aim to uncover the discursive and narrative strategies that construct women's roles as victims, perpetrators, and consumers of crime across media, legal texts, and fiction. Drawing on methodologies from corpus linguistics, critical discourse analysis, frame theory, and feminist literary criticism, the seminar will analyze how gendered stereotypes are perpetuated or challenged in crime narratives.

Crime narratives, whether factual or fictional, reflect and reinforce societal attitudes toward gender and justice. Women's roles in these narratives are often framed in ways that perpetuate patriarchal norms, with female criminals portrayed as emotional or deviant and female victims depicted as passive or vulnerable. These representations are not merely descriptive but performative, influencing how society perceives and responds to women involved in crime. The seminar will investigate how language and cultural narratives intersect to produce these gendered portrayals, as well as how audiences engage with and interpret them.

We invite papers that examine the representation of women in crime across a variety of contexts, including true crime media, courtroom discourse, crime fiction, and social media discussions. Potential topics include the lexical framing of female criminals, the narrative construction of women's agency or victimhood, and the cultural tropes that shape readers' perceptions of women in crime. By bridging the gap between linguistics, cultural studies, and literary analysis, this seminar aims to offer new insights into how language and cultural narratives perpetuate or challenge societal norms.

This seminar will provide a platform for interdisciplinary dialogue, bringing together researchers from linguistics, literary studies, media studies, and gender studies. By examining the intersection of language, crime, and cultural narratives, we hope to contribute to broader discussions about justice, representation, and equality. Join us in uncovering the linguistic and cultural mechanisms that frame the representation of women in crime narratives, and in exploring how these representations influence societal attitudes and behaviors.

References

- Baker, P. (2006). *Using Corpora in Discourse Analysis*. Continuum.
- Ehrlich, S. (2001). *Representing Rape: Language and Sexual Consent*. Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and Power*. Longman.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis*. Harper & Row.
- Jeffries, L. (2007). *Textual Construction of the Female Body*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lazar, M. (Ed.) (2005). *Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis: Gender, Power and Ideology in Discourse*. Palgrave.
- Tannen, D. (Ed.) (1993). *Framing in Discourse*. Oxford University Press.
- Van Dijk, T. A. (2008). *Discourse and Power*. Palgrave.

Seminar n. 19. Discourses on memory: Cultural, literary and linguistic perspectives

Convenors

Elisabetta Marino (Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata) marino@lettere.uniroma2.it

Saverio Tomaiuolo (Università degli Studi di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale) s.tomaiuolo@unicas.it

Laura Tommaso (Università del Piemonte Orientale) laura.tommaso@uniupo.it

Abstract

“...there are stores in the archives of collective memory
of symbolic wounds that need to be healed”
(Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*)

This seminar seeks to explore memory through a diverse range of approaches, methodologies, and objects of study across different literary, cultural, and linguistic disciplines concerned with discourse in society. It aims to investigate how linguistic perspectives, both epistemologically and methodologically, can deepen our understanding of how collective and cultural memories are formed, represented, and transmitted across generations and communities. The ways in which we talk about the past can alter the very content of those memories, influencing collective identity and cultural narratives. Simultaneously, memories themselves are embedded in the cultural and historical contexts from which language emerges, shaping its usage and evolution.

Memory can also turn into a politically and culturally contentious issue as regards those who have been relegated to the margins of official history and narratives: from (post-)colonial subjects to women, from the so-called ‘freaks’ to all those individuals who did not conform to social standards. In this respect, oral histories, archives, novels, poems, journals, graphic novels, and audiovisual texts can become fundamental in rediscovering and recovering submerged stories.

References

Boldrini, L. (2021), *Autobiographies of Others: Historical Subjects and Literary Fiction*. Routledge.

Eilittä, L., Louvel, L. & Kim, S. (Eds.). (2012). *Intermedial Arts: Disrupting, Remembering and Transforming Media*. Cambridge Scholars Press.

Fitzgerald, C., & Timmis, I. (2024). *Corpus Linguistics for Oral History*. Taylor & Francis.

Gairola, R. K., & Jayawickrama, S. (Eds.). (2021). *Memory, Trauma, Asia: Recall, Affect, and Orientalism in Contemporary Narratives*. Routledge.

King, N. (2000). *Memory, Narrative, Identity: Remembering the Self*. Edinburgh University Press. Mitchell, K. (2010). *History and Cultural Memory in Neo-Victorian Fiction: Victorian Afterimages*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Ricoeur, P. (2004). *Memory, History, Forgetting*, translated by K. Blamey & D. Pellauer. University of Chicago Press.

Toolan, M. J. (2013). *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction*. Routledge.

Seminar n. 20. Reframing human(e) voices: Exploring contemporary British identities through cultural studies and the multimodal toolkit

Convenors

Ester Gendusa (Università degli Studi di Palermo) ester.gendusa@unipa.it

Emanuele Monegato (Università degli Studi di Milano) emanuele.monegato@unimi.it

Anna Pasolini (Università degli Studi di Milano) anna.pasolini@unimi.it

Abstract

Drawing on a theoretical paradigm integrating the interpretative tenets of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis and Cultural Studies, this seminar investigates the complex identity negotiations that permeate the (re)configurations of contemporary Britishness as portrayed in cultural products of the first decades of the new millennium which converse with multimodal textualities and cross-digital platforms (such as TV adaptations, theatre transpositions, song playlists, podcasts, blogs, etc). More specifically, the seminar aims to disclose the transformative role of storytelling in constructing, challenging, and re-signifying British cultural identities within a conflictual glocal sphere so as to foster possibilities for social justice and renewed human(e) relationships.

In this context, the investigation of the interplay of the inherent affordances of the cultural texts under scrutiny through the analytical lens of MCDA reveals how their sociopolitical constructs evolve, are shaped, challenged, and redefined across different media and over time, reflecting broader shifts in the understanding of Britishness in contemporary society. Inasmuch as the multimodal analytical perspective enables the examination of meaning-making practices within complex intertextual and cross-media networks, the critical framework adopted here helps interrogate how cultural products engage with and reframe key concepts such as language, (classed/racialized/gendered) identity, community and belonging. Thus, this seminar explores how the theoretical porosity between the culturalist and the multimodal paradigms provides new opportunities to scrutinize the complexity of today's British meaning-poietic arenas. Against this backdrop, the English language is viewed as a carrier of (oppositional) semiotic resources and a vehicle for decentred/excentric discursive practices, interwoven with performances of cultural identity.

Aiming to reflect on the perceptions and self-perceptions of an ever-evolving Britishness in the context of contemporary socio-political events and historical/cultural shifts, the convenors welcome abstract proposals centred around (but not necessarily limited to):

- revisited perspectives on and intersections of class, race/ethnicity, gender, etc., in contemporary British (multimodal) storytelling, particularly within urban and suburban settings
- the analysis of hybrid narratives and storytelling across transmedial circuits
- the (problematized) depiction of migration, cultural relocation, and multiculturalism in contemporary British cultural products
- the engagement of artistic expressions, such as Artivism, with political and social discourses surrounding British cultural identities.

References

- Balirano, G. (2017). Who's afraid of Conchita Wurst? Drag performers and the construction of multimodal prosody. In M. G. Sindoni et al. (Eds.), *Mapping multimodal performance studies* (pp. 154–179). Routledge.
- Di Martino, E. (2022). *Indexing 'chav' on social media: Transmodal performances of working-class subcultures*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hall, S., Evans, J., & Nixon, S. (Eds.). (2025). *Representation* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2021). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Ledin, P., & Machin, D. (2020). *Introduction to multimodal analysis* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury.
- Machin, D., & Mayr, A. (2012). *How to do critical discourse analysis: A multimodal introduction*. Sage.
- Vallorani, N. (Ed.). (2016). *Introduzione ai Cultural studies. UK, USA e Paesi anglofoni*. Carocci.
- Williams, R. (1985). *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society*. Oxford University Press.

Seminar n. 21. “It’s the end of the world as we know it”: Politics of the apocalypse in literary and cultural studies

Convenors

Marta Cariello (Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli) marta.cariello@unicampania.it

Serena Guarracino (Università degli Studi dell’Aquila) serena.guarracino@univaq.it

Abstract

This seminar will explore the apocalypse as a hermeneutic framework for literature and cultural studies, focusing on how queer theory, postcolonial studies, and ‘post-historical’ perspectives engage with apocalyptic narratives as sites of ideological conflict, historical rupture, and cultural transformation. Apocalyptic imagery shows a productive ambivalence in elaborating the crucial issue of *whose* world is under threat or disappearing. In postcolonial contexts, for example, apocalyptic tropes are often reflective of colonial and postcolonial anxieties, where the apocalypse represents both the demise of imperial authority and the uncertain emergence of new, often fragmented, identities and realities. In queer theory, on the other hand, the apocalypse harks the end of the compulsory gender binary, which may be hailed as empowering or cataclysmic according to different positionalities. Through the lens of post-history, apocalyptic discourses disrupt linear historical narratives, offering a critique of the capitalist, heteronormative, and colonial systems that perpetuate cycles of oppression. We propose that apocalyptic scenarios provide a powerful and even heuristic tool for understanding how histories of oppression and resistance are interpreted and reimagined, and that apocalyptic narratives not only envision ends but also offer avenues for reinterpreting the possibilities of new beginnings.

We invite proposals that discuss the apocalypse as hermeneutic framework in literary and cultural studies, looking at specific case studies or, more widely, at methodologies and their own crises.

References

- Bernini, L. (2016). *Queer Apocalypses. Elements of Antisocial Theory*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Collins, J. J. (Ed.). (2014). *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*. Oxford University Press.
- De Cristofaro, D. (2019). *The Contemporary Post-Apocalyptic Novel. Critical Temporalities and the End Times*. Bloomsbury.
- Dellamora, R. (Ed.). (1995). *Postmodern Apocalypse: Theory and Cultural Practice at the End*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Haraway, D. (2016). *Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chtuluchene*. Duke University Press.
- Malvestio, M. (2022). Theorizing Eco-Dystopia: Science Fiction, the Anthropocene, and the Limits of Catastrophic Imagery. *European Journal of Creative Practices in Cities and Landscapes*, 5(1), 24–38.
- Peters, M. A., Wang, C., Mika C., & Fuller, S. (2022). Cultural Apocalypse, Western Colonial Domination and ‘the End of the World’. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 55(14), 1617–27.
- Pitetti, C. (2017). Uses of the End of the World: Apocalypse and Postapocalypse as Narrative Modes. *Science Fiction Studies* 44 (3), 437–454.

Seminar n. 22. Literary songs. Literary voices: English literature and popular music

Convenors

Pierpaolo Martino (Università di Bari Aldo Moro) pierpaolo.martino@uniba.it

Pietro Deandrea (Università di Torino) pietro.deandrea@unito.it

Maddalena Pennacchia (Università degli Studi Roma Tre) maddalena.pennacchia@uniroma3.it

Abstract

Our goal is to throw light on an enthralling and internationally expanding horizon in Cultural Studies, namely the relationship between English literature and popular music. From Early Modern music to Twenty-first century pop, literature and popular music often engage in fascinating dialogues; songs combine a musical composition and a verbal/narrative text, hence we could define pop songs as ‘miniature’ novels, thus paraphrasing Iain Chambers, or we may think of them as poems set to music, highlighting their lyrical aspects. Be as it may, songs related to literature bring the human voice centre stage through singing, thus breaking the silence of the printed literary page. In this perspective the interplay between literature and popular music can also break silence as indifference, expressing themes of humanity, empathy and interconnectedness, as witnessed by Linton Kwesi Johnson giving voice through his words and music to the oppressed Caribbean community in early 1980s London.

Contemporary British popular music is profoundly fascinated by this intermedial dimension and is very often defined by a contamination between the musical and the literary, whether as transmutation of literary works, or as fresh and often experimental forms of song-writing which use literature as an aesthetic prospect from which to construct meaning. The first category implies the translation/adaptation of literary works into songs: David Gilmour, among others, turns Shakespeare’s poems into songs, as did Syd Barrett with James Joyce, and Gavin Friday with Oscar Wilde. The latter category includes songwriters who conceive their music in terms of literary themes and imagery, nourishing their writing with poetic and narrative resources. This approach defines The Smiths’ Morrissey’s poetic songwriting, with his debts to Wilde and Shelagh Delaney, and David Bowie who, besides being fascinated by science fiction, released in 1974 the album *Diamond Dogs* largely based on George Orwell’s *Nineteen-Eighty-four*. Other committed artists working both as poets and singers – from L. K. Johnson to Kae Tempest – have established intriguing dialogues between the two languages inviting their fans to inhabit the threshold between the musical, the literary and the human, turning listening into a critical and ethical process. We invite submissions dealing with, among other possibilities: intermediality in contemporary popular music; writers (from Shakespeare to Rushdie and beyond) and popular music; music, literary orality and the human; pop, rock and intertextuality; literature, music and interconnectedness.

References

Chambers, I. (1985). *Urban Rhythms. Pop Music and Popular Culture*. Macmillan.

Deandrea, P. (2016). Secret thinker sometimes listening aloud: social commitment in David Bowie’s lyrics. *Ricognizioni. Rivista Di Lingue e Letterature Straniere e Culture Moderne*, 3(5), 99–110.

Fabbri, F. (2001) La canzone. In J. J. Nattiez (Ed.), *Enciclopedia della musica, Il Novecento I*. (pp. 551–576). Einaudi.

Hansen, A. (2010). *Shakespeare and popular music*. Bloomsbury.

Martino, P. (2023). *Wilde Now. Performance, Celebrity and Intermediality in Oscar Wilde*. Palgrave.

Moore, A. (2012). *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Popular Songs*. Ashgate.

Pennacchia, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Literary Intermediality. The Transit of Literature through the Media Circuit*. Peter Lang.

Pennacchia, M. (2024). The Languages of Water: musical blue stories from Shakespeare to now, *Applied Shakespeare*, <https://appliedshakespeare.org/en/events-activities/universita-degli-studi-roma-tre/the-languages-of-water> (audiovisual product).

Seminar n. 23. The human factor in audiovisual translation history

Convenors

Carla Mereu Keating (University of Bristol, UK) c.mereukeating@bristol.ac.uk
Serenella Zanotti (Università degli Studi Roma Tre) serenella.zanotti@uniroma3.it

Abstract

Audiovisual Translation is a complex intersemiotic practice whose historical developments are closely intertwined with the introduction and diffusion of novel screen technologies (Cornu, 2014; Cornu & O'Sullivan, 2019). The 20th century has witnessed the professionalization and specialization of a diversely skilled workforce, including linguists, script translators, dialogue adapters, voice actors and directors, subtitlers and editors, who have been engaged in various degrees in the linguistic adaptation of filmic, video, and digital content.

Catering to diverse tastes and sensibilities around the world, AVT work has been impacted by policies that control the production and circulation of screen media across national and linguistic borders, norms and regulations that have in turn shaped the socio-cultural and legal status of AVT professions throughout the 20th century. The more recent introduction of generative AI is now challenging the professional standards of a translation industry that has relied on technological innovation since its inception and thus poses new challenges for both highly specialized practitioners and those who are training and wish to enter the AVT field.

Taking a historical perspective, the proposed seminar aims to investigate the human element in audiovisual translation. It will host a selection of case studies which highlight continuities and disruptions in the *modus operandi* of audiovisual translators at key points in the history of screen media. Based on the analysis of archival materials and extant translations, this seminar ultimately aims to unravel the tension that exists between the human factor and technology-driven practices, assessing how this tension has in turn impacted AVT policy, quality standards and linguistic output.

Specific lines of investigation might include:

- Historical and archival approaches to AVT
- Diachronic perspectives: (shared) translation practices and their evolution
- Agents in AVT history
- Historical approaches to AVT reception: the role of audiences
- Developments in AVT policy and impact on linguistic output
- Changes in artistic, aesthetic and quality standards in AVT
- Becoming an audiovisual translator (linguistic and technical training, market forces etc.); Processes of professional specialization in a historical perspective
- The interplay between technological innovation and professionalization of the AVT workforce

References

Cornu, J.-F. (2014). *Le Doublage et le sous-titrage: Histoire et esthétique*. Presses universitaires de Rennes.
O'Sullivan, C., & Cornu, J.-F. (Eds.). (2019). *The Translation of Films 1900–1950*. British Academy-Oxford University Press.

Seminar n. 24. AI and human audiovisual translation and media accessibility: Ethical and practical challenges for translators and language learners

Convenors

Micòl Beseghi (Università degli Studi di Parma) micol.beseghi@unipr.it

Margherita Dore (Università di Roma Sapienza) margherita.dore@uniroma1.it

Abstract

In recent years, the rise and application of sophisticated technologies and tools powered by Artificial Intelligence (AI) have become increasingly pervasive in training audiovisual translation professionals and facilitating second language acquisition, particularly in English as a lingua franca. Among these are speech-to-text applications for subtitling (e.g., Speechmatics, Turboscribe, Broadstream), machine translation tools (e.g., Google Translate, DeepL), machine learning applications (e.g., ELSA Speak, Loora, Talkpal, TalkMe), and language-learning platforms (e.g., Duolingo, Babbel, Rosetta Stone, Pi). More recently, ChatGPT has also become an integral part of interlingual communicative processes.

Within Audiovisual Translation and Media Accessibility training and practice, several studies have highlighted the advantages that AI can offer (cf. for instance, Georgakopoulou, 2019). However, this more-than-human agency has raised not only methodological but also ethical concerns among practitioners and scholars (cf. the AVTE Statement 2024; Oziemblewska & Szarkowska, 2020). In the realm of language learning, conversational AI tools that simulate real-life conversations with learners can enhance the learning process (Sone et al., 2023), regardless of their economic situation (Dugošija, 2024). These tools offer ubiquitous access, foster learner autonomy, and often employ gamification principles (Al-Dosakee & Ozdamli, 2021), thus making it more enjoyable and rewarding. However, their limitations include the (in)ability of chatbots to interpret and respond to user inputs in a manner resembling human interaction (Rapp et al., 2021), as well as difficulties in recognizing and accommodating language variations (e.g., accents, British vs. American English, etc.).

In this light, this seminar seeks to address the following key issues:

- What are the benefits and limitations of using AI tools and technologies in training and learning contexts?
- How effective are these tools and methodologies in improving learners' skills?
- What appreciable differences can be detected in the comparison of human vs. more-than-human agency?
- Can any theoretical and methodological lessons be learned? If so, can such lessons be systematically conceptualized to enhance AVT teaching and/or language learning?

References

- Al-Dosakee, K. & Ozdamli, F. (2021). Gamification in Teaching and Learning Languages: A Systematic Literature Review. *Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională* 13(2), 559–577.
- AVTE (2024) AVTE Statement on Generative Artificial Intelligence, <https://avteurope.org/avte-statement-on-generative-artificial-intelligence> (accessed 10/03/2025).
- Dugošija, T. (2024). Benefits and Challenges of Artificial Intelligence in English Language Teaching, *Knowledge - International Journal*, 62(2), 275–280.
- Georgakopoulou, P. (2019). Template files: The holy grail of subtitling. *Journal of Audiovisual Translation*, 2(2), 137–160.
- Oziemblewska, M., & Szarkowska, A. (2020). The quality of templates in subtitling. A survey on current market practices and changing subtitler competences. *Perspectives*, 1–22.
- Rapp, A., Curti, L., Boldi, A. (2021). The human side of human-chatbot interaction: A systematic literature review of ten years of research on text-based chatbots. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 151, 102630.
- Son, J. B., Ružić, N. K. & Philpott, A. (2023). Artificial intelligence technologies and applications for language learning and teaching. *Journal of China Computer-Assisted Language Learning*, 1–19.

Seminar n. 25. Artificial intelligence and media accessibility: New frontiers and emerging challenges

Convenors:

Francesca Raffi (Università di Macerata) f.raffi@unimc.it

Angela Sileo (Università degli Studi di Milano) angela.sileo@unimi.it

Abstract

The rapid rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies is profoundly reshaping the field of media accessibility, defined as the practices, tools, and technologies aimed at making media content accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities or other special needs (Remael, 2012). In this evolving landscape, AI-powered technologies are increasingly being integrated into specific domains of media accessibility (Pereira & Duarte, 2023), ranging from traditional forms such as cinema and video games to streaming and digital platforms. More recent innovations, including virtual and augmented reality (Gluck et al., 2021), as well as interactive tools like chatbots and virtual assistants, are further transforming how media is accessed and experienced. These advancements prompt critical discussions about the future of creativity, the restructuring of traditional workflows, and the role of AI in learning processes, particularly in relation to accessibility (Huang et al., 2022). Additionally, they raise questions about the potential for these technologies to revolutionize user engagement and the ethical considerations surrounding AI-driven systems (Rane & Choudhary, 2024). While AI can contribute to democratizing access to media content and enhancing personalized experiences, it also carries the risk of inadvertently reinforcing existing biases due to the data used to train AI algorithms.

This seminar aims to explore the transformative potential of AI and other emerging technologies in reshaping media accessibility across media environments. It seeks contributions that explore innovative tools, theoretical approaches, and ethical considerations to ensure these advancements foster equitable and accessible outcomes. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- AI-driven innovations: theoretical and practical studies on AI-powered tools for enhancing accessibility
- automation and creativity: investigating how AI is transforming creative and technical work in the media landscape
- linguistic and cultural accessibility: the role of AI in breaking down language and cultural barriers in media content
- ethical challenges: ethical implications of AI use for media accessibility
- personalized media: studies on AI's role in tailoring content delivery to meet individual needs.

References

- Gluck, A., Boateng, K., & Brinkley, J. (2021). "Racing in the Dark": Exploring Accessible Virtual Reality by Developing a Racing Game for People Who Are Blind. *Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting*, 65(1), 1114–1118.
- Huang, W., Hew, K. F., & Fryer, L. K. (2022). Chatbots for Language Learning - Are They Really Useful? A Systematic Review of AI-Driven Chatbot-Supported Language Learning. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 38(1), 237–257.
- Pereira, L. S., & Duarte, C. (2023). AI and Media Accessibility: An Overview. In A. Marcus-Quinn, B. Beranek, & E. Noonan (Eds.), *Transforming Media Accessibility in Europe* (pp. 187–208). Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Rane, N., & Choudhary, S. (2024). Role and Challenges of Chatgpt, Google Bard, and Similar Generative Artificial Intelligence in Arts and Humanities. *Studies in Humanities and Education*, 5(1), 1–11.
- Remael, A. (2012). Media Accessibility. In Y. Gambier & L. van Doorslaer (Eds.), *Handbook of Translation Studies: Volume 3* (pp. 95–101). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Seminar n. 26. Language, ecology, and artificial intelligence: A critical eco-linguistic perspective

Convenors

Lucia Abbamonte (Università degli Studi di Napoli Parthenope) lucia.abbamonte@uniparthenope.it

Douglas Mark Ponton (Università di Catania) dponton@unict.it

Anna Raimo (Università di Bologna) anna.raimo2@unibo.it

Abstract

As artificial intelligence (AI) reshapes our world (Brown et al., 2020, Bender & Koller, 2020, Bowman & Dahl, 2021), its role in framing and influencing environmental perceptions demands exploration. This seminar examines the intersection of Ecolinguistics and AI, emphasizing how AI discourse shapes ecological understanding. As language influences attitudes toward environmental crises, Ecolinguistics (Stibbe, 2021) provides tools to assess how AI narratives reinforce or challenge ecological values (Vallego, 2023). Research may examine how AI reproduces or contests dominant discourses, promotes sustainability or unsustainability, and the ethical implications of AI-generated ‘natural’ experiences.

A central premise is that language does not merely reflect reality but constructs it. Halliday observed how Western languages, particularly English, encode an anthropocentric worldview, positioning nature as passive rather than autonomous. Grammar limits nature’s agency yet frames destruction actively, as in “the earthquake destroyed the city” (Halliday, 1992: 85). If AI is trained on data reflecting these patterns, it risks reinforcing an instrumentalist view of nature, perpetuating its subordination to human interests. Lexical choices in AI-generated texts shape public perception, either reinforcing or mitigating environmental urgency.

This seminar explores AI’s potential to disseminate environmental awareness, reduce ecological footprints via virtual simulations, and enhance digital communication. Conversely, AI could enable greenwashing, subtly manipulating consumers who equate technology with environmental salvation. It may also present simulations as substitutes for direct contact with nature. As ecolinguists, we must ask whether AI can advance the ecological agenda by fostering ethical discourse. Could it amplify voices advocating sustainability or deepen nature’s commodification? We invite contributions addressing these questions and further establishing Ecolinguistics as central to environmental and linguistic studies. We welcome contributions on:

- Virtual vs. real nature experiences
- AI and ecological imaginaries
- AI in environmental politics
- AI and environmental justice
- AI and greenwashing
- AI and sustainability discourse
- Ecological representations in digital media
- AI and green identities
- AI in environmental risk prevention
- AI and biodiversity
- AI for ecological advocacy
- AI and ecological narratives
- AI in human–more-than-human relations

References

- Bender, E. M., & Koller, A. (2020). Climbing towards NLU: On meaning, form, and understanding in the age of data. *Proceedings of the 58th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics*, 5185–5198.
- Bender, E. M., Gebru, T., McMillan-Major, A., & Shmitchell, S. (2021). On the dangers of stochastic parrots: Can language models be too big? *FACCT '21: Proceedings of the 2021 ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency*, 610–623.
- Bowman, S. R., & Dahl, G. (2021). What will it take to fix benchmarking in natural language understanding? *Proceedings of the 2021 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics*, 4843–4855.
- Brown, T. B., Mann, B., Ryder, N., Subbiah, M., Kaplan, J., Dhariwal, P., & Amodei, D. (2020). Language models are few-shot learners. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems*, 33, 1877–1901.
- Halliday, M. A. K. ([1990] 1992). New ways of analysing meaning: A challenge to applied linguistics. In M. Pütz (Ed.), *Thirty years of linguistic evolution* (pp. 59–96). John Benjamins.
- Stibbe, A. (2021). *Ecolinguistics: Language, ecology and the stories we live by*. Routledge.

Vallego, J. (2023). Ecolinguistics and AI: Integrating eco-awareness in natural language processing. *Language and Ecology*.

Seminar n. 27. Beyond human exceptionalism: Social and ecojustice perspectives in climate crisis discourse

Convenors

Maria Bortoluzzi (Università degli Studi di Udine) maria.bortoluzzi@uniud.it

M. Cristina Caimotto (Università di Torino) mariacristina.caimotto@unito.it

Katherine E. Russo (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale) kerusso@unior.it

Abstract

The climate crisis is not solely an environmental issue but also a profound social, cultural, and political challenge, exacerbating vulnerabilities related to gender, disability, poverty, age, place of birth, and indigeneity (IPCC 2023). Moreover, dominant discourse frequently marginalizes, silences, or renders invisible more-than-human participants, processes, and entities (Stibbe, 2021; Bortoluzzi & Zurru, 2024). Given that language and discourse play a constitutive role in shaping ecological realities (Steffensen, 2024), language and discourse analysis can contribute to raising awareness of ecojustice issues, fostering equitable relationships within life-sustaining ecosystems, and challenging the hegemonic ideologies of growth and consumerism (Lakoff, 2010; Fløttum, 2017; Russo, 2018; Caimotto, 2020).

Following this line of thought, this seminar invites scholarly contributions that propose innovative theoretical frameworks, methodological approaches, or in-depth investigations examining environmental and climate crisis discourse from an eco- and social justice perspective. In particular, we seek analyses that explore the representation, positioning, and agency of marginalized voices – both human and more-than-human – that are frequently backgrounded or excluded from mainstream environmental narratives. Ultimately, this seminar aspires to advance the scholarly debate on how language and discourse can foster alternative perspectives, stimulate transformative action, and promote social and ecological justice in response to the ongoing climate emergency.

References

- Bortoluzzi, M., & Zurru, E. (Eds.). (2024). *Ecological communication and ecoliteracy: Discourses of awareness and action for the lifescape*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Caimotto, M. C. (2020). *Discourses of cycling, road users and sustainability: An ecolinguistic investigation*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Fløttum, K. (2017). Willingness to action. In K. Fløttum (Ed.), *The role of language in the climate change debate* (pp. 113–129). London and New York: Routledge.
- IPCC, 2023: *Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report*. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, H. Lee & J. Romero (Eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, pp. 35–115.
- Lakoff, G. (2010). Why it matters how we frame the environment. *Environmental Communication*, 4(1), 70–81.
- Russo, K. E. (2028). Stop Adani: Risk Communication and Legal Mining Conflicts in Australian Media Discourse, *Anglistica: An Interdisciplinary Journal* (A.I.O.N), 22.1 (2018), 7–23.
- Steffensen, S. V. (2024). Surveying ecolinguistics. *Journal of World Languages*. Published online October 14, 2024.
- Stibbe, A. (2021). *Ecolinguistics: Language, ecology and the stories we live by*. Routledge.

Seminar n. 28. Revisiting affect: The emotional turn in discourse analysis in the age of technologies. Linguistic, intercultural and translation perspectives

Convenors

Chiara Degano (Università degli Studi Roma Tre) chiara.degano@uniroma3.it

Giuliana Garzone (Università IULM Milano) giuliana.garzone@iulm.it

Abstract

Emotions play a fundamental role in the state of being human and being humane; so they inevitably filter – whether implicitly or explicitly – into language and account for a huge part of human interaction through discourse. Emotions influence how individuals and groups relate to one another, driving mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. Given their centrality to human interaction, emotions – often referred to in their complex as ‘affect’ – have increasingly attracted scholarly attention across various disciplines, including sociology, visual analysis, linguistic anthropology, and ethnography (cf. Mackenzie & Alba-Juez, 2019; Milani & Richardson, 2021; Scherer et al., 2001). This growing interest has contributed to what social and cultural theorists describe as the ‘affective turn’ (Clough, 2007).

In the more linguistically-oriented area of discourse studies, however, emotions seem to have received comparatively less attention. Even within the Appraisal model (Martin & White, 2005), which has been instrumental in highlighting the role of emotions in linguistic communication, ‘affect’ – the linguistic resources used to convey emotional reactions – has been somewhat overshadowed by other analytical categories which are now well-established and more extensively relied on (e.g. attitude, engagement, appreciation, graduation, etc.). Yet, the study of emotions in discourse is more essential than ever, particularly in technology-mediated communication, where profiling and algorithm-driven content curation ensure that contents proposed are in line with the reader’s preferences, creating a sort of emotion-driven loop. Moreover, the increasingly multimodal nature of communication, where concise textual content is often paired with images, relies on emotions as cognitive shortcuts, conveying meaning in ways that would otherwise require more elaborate and more explicit reasoning. The study of linguistic resources involved in the encoding of affect, as the direct expression of emotional responses, is key to promoting an awareness that can help foster a more humane approach to communication. In today’s digital and multimodal landscape, it provides linguistic resources that enable writers and speakers to express empathy and respect diverse perspectives.

Building on these insights, this seminar explores the emotive dimension of meaning, i.e. affect, in Discourse Analysis and related disciplines, and in Rhetoric/Argumentation studies (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1956; van Eemeren, 2010), in a context where research has often tended to focus more on the negotiation of values than on the encoding of emotions for expressive and/or perlocutionary purposes. This involves testing theoretical constructs and analytical tools for identifying and interpreting emotional elements in discourse, while also examining case studies across various domains and genres where such elements can be identified. These include social media, corporate communication, scientific research articles, conference presentations, journalism, and political debates, etc., particularly when dealing with critical issues such as climate change, trade policies, war and conflict, vaccination, and other socially and politically charged topics.

Contributions will be welcome especially, although not exclusively, on the following topics:

- Affect in public discourse (political, institutional, media, etc.)
- Emotional resources in public debates on sensitive issues (migration, climate change, race and ethnicity, etc.)
- Affect in specialized discourse (scientific, technological and popularizing)
- Affect in legal discourse (judgements, pleadings, etc.)
- Encoding of emotions in movie dialogue and in its translation (dubbing, subtitling)
- Affect in an intercultural perspective and its translation
- Affect model refinements (or reappraisal)
- Emotions, argumentation and persuasion
- Affective engagement of the audience
- Triggers of emotion in discourse

References

- Clough, P. (2007). *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social*. Duke University Press.
- Mackenzie, J. L. & Alba-Juez, L. (Eds.). (2019). *Emotion in Discourse*. John Benjamins.
- Martin, J. R., & White P. R. R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave/Macmillan.
- Milani, T. M., & Richardson, J. E. (Eds.). (2021). Discourse and affect [Special Issue], *Social Semiotics*, 31(5), 671–676.

- Perelman, Ch., & Olbrechts-Tyteca, L., (1958). *Traité de l'argumentation. La nouvelle rhétorique*. Presses Universitaires de France [English translation by J. Wilkinson & P. Weaver (1969): *The New Rhetoric. A Treatise on Argumentation*. University of Notre Dame Press].
- Scherer, K. R., Shorr, A., & Johnstone, T. (Eds.). (2001). *Appraisal Processes in Emotion: Theory, Methods, Research*. Oxford University Press.
- van Eemeren, F. H. (2010). *Strategic Manoeuvring in Argumentative Discourse: Extending the Pragma-Dialectical Theory of Argumentation*. John Benjamins.
- van Eemeren, F. H & B. Garssen (Eds.) (2009). *Pondering on Problems of Argumentation: Twenty Essays on Theoretical Issues*. Springer.

Seminar n. 29. Women represented: Investigating gender dynamics in political discourse

Convenors

Jacqueline Aiello (Università degli Studi di Salerno) jaiello@unisa.it

Polina Shvanyukova (Università degli Studi di Udine) polina.shvanyukova@uniud.it

Abstract

Ensuring women's visibility, influence, and voice in the public sphere is a hallmark of democracy. Women's representation in politics grew steadily throughout the twentieth century, as they gradually overcame structural barriers and accessed more domains of public life. However, in 2025, the outlook for women's political participation appears grim. Conservative, authoritarian, paternalistic leaders, under the pretence of "protecting women", are increasingly re-framing women's rights (e.g., bodily autonomy, education, equal pay, political participation) not as universal human rights but as "special" rights tied to pro-life, pro-family and pro-marriage values. Recent backlash and pushback against gender equality, amplified by social media platforms, the growing reach of the so-called manosphere, and political developments such as Trump 2.0, further underscore the urgency to examine how gender is constructed, contested, and instrumentalized in the public sphere.

Drawing on theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches that have examined how language reflects and shapes gender dynamics (Angouri & Baxter, 2021, Esposito, 2023, Lazar, 2005, Romaniuk & Ehrlich, 2018, among others), this seminar seeks contributions that explore political discourse focused on women as politicians, advocates, and subjects of mediated narratives. It considers discourses surrounding women's political representation and issues such as reproductive rights, gender-based violence, and objectification, through a range of frameworks and approaches, including (M)CDS, feminist CDA, narrative analysis, pragmatics, and corpus linguistics, to investigate intersections among language, gender, power, agency, and ideology.

References

Angouri, J., & Baxter, J. (Eds.) (2021). *The Routledge handbook of language, gender and sexuality*. Routledge.

Esposito, E. (2023). Discourse, intersectionality, critique. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 21(5), 505–521.

Lazar, M. (Ed.) (2005). *Feminist critical discourse analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Romaniuk, T., & Ehrlich, S. (2018). Language and gendered politics. In R. Wodak & B. Forchtner (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of language and politics* (pp. 514–527). Routledge.

Seminar n. 30. A house is not a home? Discursive representations of contemporary households

Convenors

Antonio Fruttaldo (Università degli Studi del Sannio) antonio.fruttaldo@unisannio.it

Giorgia Riboni (Università di Torino) giorgia.riboni@unito.it

Angela Zottola (Università di Torino) angela.zottola@unito.it

Abstract

Diverse family formations and practices are at the forefront of contemporary societal debates (Balirano et al., 2024) as issues of representation, inclusivity and equity continue to shape the cultural, political and digital landscapes. In this seminar, we explore the discursive representation of different family forms, i.e. households which come together in ways that steer away from the traditional cisgender, heteronormative, binary, monoethnic matrix. From queer (Mackenzie, 2023) and multiethnic (Riboni, 2024) families to the evolving portrayal of diversified households, discourse plays a pivotal role in both perpetuating and challenging traditional norms (Fruttaldo, 2024; Zottola, 2024).

We invite scholars to submit research proposals that explore the heterogeneity of households in contemporary linguistic representations. In particular, we welcome contributions that investigate how discursive practices construct, contest, or redefine kinship identities in and across media, policy and specialized domains. Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Intersectionality in discourses of families and households: gender, sex, race, class, disability, age
- The role of language in perpetuating or dismantling discrimination and bias
- Discursive constructions of family and parenting in different cultural contexts
- Queer linguistics and the evolution of language surrounding different household formations
- The impact of digital and multimodal platforms on family and household representations
- Policy, education and institutional discourses shaping contemporary households
- Legal and medical discursive practices that frame contemporary families and households.

We encourage interdisciplinary approaches, drawing on critical discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, queer theory, corpus linguistics, pragmatics, and multimodal discourse analysis. Papers addressing current events, emerging societal issues, or intersectional (in)visibility are particularly welcome.

References

- Balirano, G., Mackenzie, J., & Zottola, A. (2024). The Discursive Construction of Contemporary Family Forms. *de genere – Rivista di Studi Letterari, Postcoloniali e di Genere*, 10, 1–8.
- Fruttaldo, A. (2024). Family Portrait: A Corpus-Based Analysis of the Discursive Construction of Traditional Families. *de genere – Rivista di Studi Letterari, Postcoloniali e di Genere*, 10, 9–31.
- Mackenzie, J. (2023). Negotiating Normativities of Gender, Sexuality and the Family in Gay Parents' Small Stories. *Journal of Language and Sexuality*, 12(1), 23–45.
- Riboni, G. (2024). "Flip the Script" on Transracial Adoption: Counter Discourse Activism on Social Media. *de genere – Rivista di Studi Letterari, Postcoloniali e di Genere*, 10, 121–138.
- Zottola, A. (2024). *LGBTQ+ and Feminist Digital Activism*. Cambridge University Press.

Seminar n. 31. De-/Re-humanizing the language of global fears: Crises, extremisms, terrorisms

Convenors

Ilaria Moschini (Università degli Studi di Firenze) ilaria.moschini@unifi.it

Denise Filmer (Università degli Studi di Pisa) denise.filmer@unipi.it

Kim Grego (Università degli Studi di Milano) kim.grego@unimi.it

Abstract

The new millennium has brought forth an escalating series of global challenges including mass migration, climate change, pandemics, AI development, acts of terrorism and wars or conflicts (e.g., Russia-Ukraine) – which have contributed to a heightened sense of global fear. These crises are not only material, but also profoundly discursive, as they are framed and reframed in public discourse. At the heart of these representations lies the strategic construction of humanity and its boundaries, which shapes how crises, extremisms, and terrorisms are mediated, understood, and responded to (Cap, 2017; Demata, 2018; Wodak, 2020 [2015]).

The seminar critically examines how language both dehumanizes and rehumanizes in times of crisis. While dehumanizing strategies strip individuals or groups of their agency and moral worth – reinforcing fear and legitimizing exclusion – rehumanizing discourses work to restore dignity, agency, and empathy, often serving as counter-narratives to dominant fear-based frames (Entman, 1993). We invite contributions that explore these discursive processes across political speeches, media discourse, and other public texts, analyzing both the linguistic mechanisms that construct fear-driven Othering and those that attempt to reclaim shared humanity.

While embracing diverse linguistic approaches outlined in the AIA call for seminars, the proposal prioritizes critical perspectives that analyze how language shapes meaning, constructs identities, and influences worldviews (possibly also considering the interaction with semiotic resources, e.g. Machin, 2013; van Leeuwen, 2014). By examining the processes of de-humanization and rehumanization in political and media discourse, the seminar seeks to uncover pathways for fostering more ethical, inclusive, and empathetic narratives in an increasingly polarized world.

References

- Cap, P. (2017). *The language of fear: Communicating threat in public discourse*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Demata, M. (2018). Representations of terrorism in the discourse of the US presidential campaigns: Metaphors we campaign by. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines*, 10(1), 64–81.
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51–58.
- Machin, D. (2013). What is multimodal critical discourse studies? *Critical Discourse Studies*, 10(4), 347–355.
- Wodak, R. (2020 [2015]). *The politics of fear: The shameless normalisation of far-right discourse* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- van Leeuwen, T. (2014). Critical discourse analysis and multimodality. In C. Hart & P. Cap (Eds.), *Contemporary critical discourse studies* (pp. 281–295). Bloomsbury Academic.

Seminar n. 32. Intersectional hate speech in the digital age: Media, power, and resistance

Convenors

Annalisa Raffone (Università Telematica Pegaso) annalisa.raffone@unipegaso.it

Marina Niceforo (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale) mniceforo@unior.it

Francesco Nacchia (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale) fnacchia@unior.it

Abstract

The proliferation of Social Media Sites (SMSs) in recent years has intensified hate speech targeting specific identity markers, including gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, physical aspect and political or religious beliefs (Balirano & Hughes 2020; Rasulo 2023). This phenomenon manifests both online and offline, often escalating into hate crimes (European Parliament, 2024).

Rooted in harmful mental models, hate speech serves to dehumanize, stigmatize, and marginalize individuals, thereby reinforcing social divisions and undermining fundamental human rights. Recognizing this threat, global institutions such as the Council of Europe (2022) have implemented monitoring mechanisms and legal frameworks to address its spread.

While hate speech has been widely studied, research on intersectional discrimination, the compounded effects of “interlocking systems of oppression” (ENAR, 2020), remains relatively underexplored (Council of Europe, 2023). This seminar seeks to advance scholarly discussions by investigating the intersectional dimensions of hate speech in media environments, with a particular focus on digital discourse and SMSs (KhosraviNik, 2024). Adopting a critical lens (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2020), we invite contributions that examine how intersectional hate speech shapes power asymmetries, influences identity construction, and triggers resistance strategies.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Limitations of current hate speech theories
- Identifying and classifying hate speech
- Intersectional hate speech in digital communication and SMSs
- Intersectional representation in the media (e.g., news, cinema, television, advertising)
- Media policies and regulatory responses to intersectional discrimination
- Resistance and counter-discourse strategies in SMSs
- Forms of intersectional discrimination in institutional and political discourse
- Intersectional hate speech in specialized discourse
- The role of humour (e.g., irony, parody, satire) as a tool for intersectional hate speech
- Building in-group and out-group identity through hate speech
- Multimodal representations of hate speech
- Intersectional hate speech in AI
- Rhetorical tropes (e.g., metaphors, metonymy) and discursive strategies in intersectional discrimination

We welcome papers employing diverse methodologies, including (critical) discourse analysis, corpus linguistics, multimodal (critical) discourse analysis, ethnolinguistics, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, comparative studies, translation studies, media studies, and communication studies.

References

- Balirano, G., & Hughes, B. (Eds.) (2020). *Homing in on Hate: Critical Discourse Studies of Hate Speech, Discrimination and Inequality in the Digital Age*. Loffredo.
- Council of Europe. (2022). Recommendation on Combating Hate Speech. Council of Europe. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/combating-hate-speech/recommendation-on-combating-hate-speech>.
- Council of Europe. (2023). Intersectionality and Multiple Discrimination. Gender Matters. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/gender-matters/intersectionality-and-multiple-discrimination>.
- European Network against Racism (ENAR). (2020). Hate Crime Provisions in EU Member States: The Importance of an Intersectional Approach to Ensure Victims' Rights. https://www.enar-eu.org/wp-content/uploads/intersectionality_and_hate_crime_briefing_final-2.pdf.
- European Parliament. (2024). Hate Speech and Hate Crime: Time to Act? *Europarl.europa.eu*. European Union. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2024/762389/EPRS_BRI\(2024\)762389_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2024/762389/EPRS_BRI(2024)762389_EN.pdf).
- Flowerdew, J., & Richardson, J. E. (Eds.) (2020). *The Routledge Handbook of Critical Discourse Studies*. London and New York: Routledge.
- KhosraviniK, M. (2024). *Social Media Critical Discourse Studies*. New York: Routledge.

Rasulo, M. (2023). *Master Narratives of Hate Speech: A Multimodal Analysis*. Loffredo.

Seminar n. 33. Addressing hate speech and promoting digital citizenship in English studies

Convenors

Margherita Rasulo (Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli) margherita.rasulo@unicampania.it

Maria Grazia Sindoni (Università degli Studi di Messina) mariagrazia.sindoni@unime.it

Abstract

In alignment with the objectives of the ECHOES (English Studies to Contrast Hate Online and Enhance Solidarity) PRIN project (project ref. number 2022KZFT24) led by the University of Naples L'Orientale in cooperation with the University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli, the University of Messina and the University of Naples Parthenope, this seminar seeks to advance research on responsible digital citizenship in and through discourse (Balirano & Hughes, 2020) as advocated by UNESCO's principles (2016). We aim to explore creative and critical engagement with today's multimodal digital products and environments in Virtual English as a Lingua Franca (i.e., VELF, Sindoni, 2023), that is conceptualized as the English language of international communication used within digital scenarios and beyond.

The seminar invites proposals that investigate research methodologies and pedagogical practices, including, but not limited to, studies on multimodal digital literacies (Lim & Tan-Chia, 2022), within educational settings and broader social contexts. These proposals should help develop knowledge dissemination and awareness regarding the identification of hate or harmful online speech and practices, particularly within English multimodal digital texts that threaten individuals, communities, and societal cohesion. To incorporate diverse perspectives and address a range of research questions, we invite submissions employing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches to the analysis of multimodal digital texts and practices in VELF. Our aim is to advance research on the mechanisms through which hate is triggered within and through digital discourse and to explore strategies for its mitigation in the context of peace education.

References

- Balirano G., & Hughes, B. (Eds.). (2020). *Homing in on Hate: Critical Discourse Studies of Hate Speech, Discrimination and Inequality in the Digital Age*. Loffredo.
- Lim, F.V., & Tan-Chia, L. (2022). *Designing Learning for Multimodal Literacy: Teaching Viewing and Representing*. Routledge.
- Sindoni, M. G. (2023). A multimodal and translanguaging approach to video-mediated interaction in Virtual English as a lingua franca contexts. In: Pineda I., Bosso R., (Eds.). *Virtual English as a Lingua Franca* (pp. 63–82). Routledge.

Seminar n. 34. Edible narratives: Multidisciplinary representations of novel and traditional foods

Convenors

Stefania M. Maci (Università degli Studi di Bergamo) stefania.maci@unibg.it

Daniela Cesiri (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) daniela.cesiri@unive.it

Abstract

An interesting notion in the context of food studies has been developed by Montanari (2006): any food can be associated with the values of 'natural' and 'edible' as long as these notions are associated by the specific community that consumes that food. For instance, in the context of digital communication, food blogs in English are a case in point: in these virtual communities, the construction of food-centred discourse and the cultural values that the members of the community come to associate with the food that is presented in the food blog are determined and mediated by the food blogger who acts as the leader of the community itself (Cesiri, 2020).

Therefore, the difference in terms of traditional and novel foods is essentially cultural and has very little to do with their nutritional content. However, it has received early attention from the European Union, which has proceeded with the definition and regulation of novel foods for human consumption in Regulation No. 258/97, which dates back to 1997. Since then, novel foods have been used in the media in association with different kinds of food, from GMFs to cultivated meat, to insects as food (Patinho et al., 2021), whose communicative potential in the general public's psyche is regularly exploited by political propaganda (Domaneschi, 2024).

Drawing on (critical) discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992; Gee, 2014), multimodal analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; van Leeuwen, 2008) and conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the seminar explores how traditional and novel foods challenge the notions of 'human' and 'humane'. Furthermore, it examines the linguistic and narrative representations of traditional and novel foods in English and how these food practices are discursively constructed across institutional, medical, marketing, corporate, and tourism domains. By analyzing these contexts, the seminar highlights how traditional and novel food narratives stimulate human responses to ecological crises, cultural change, and ethical dilemmas. Finally, it will critically examine these discourses to explore how food is used as a means to reflect and reshape contemporary cultural and environmental paradigms.

References

- Cesiri, D. (2020). *The Discourse of Food Blogs: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. Routledge.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and Social Change*. Polity Press.
- Gee, J. P. (2014). *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. Routledge.
- Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design*. Routledge.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live By*. University of Chicago Press.
- Montanari, M. (2006). *Food is Culture*. Columbia University Press.
- Patinho, I., Saldaña, E., Selani, M. M. et al. (2021). Original burger (traditional) or burger with mushroom addition? A social representation approach to novel foods. *Food Research International*, 147, 1–10.
- van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis*. Oxford University Press.

Seminar n. 35. Crafting comfort: The rhetorical and linguistic representation(s) of well-being in late modern newspapers and magazines

Convenors

Giulia Rovelli (Università degli Studi di Bergamo) giulia.rovelli@unibg.it

Massimo Sturiale (Università degli Studi di Milano) massimo.sturiale@unimi.it

Abstract

The Late Modern period witnessed an unprecedented surge in print media production in Britain and its colonies, catering to a growing readership eager for information, entertainment, and self-improvement (Brownlees, 2023; Finkelstein, 2020; King, Easley & Morton, 2016; Shattock, 2017). Newspapers and magazines of this era not only reflected societal values, but also actively shaped them, offering rhetorical and linguistic blueprints for navigating the complexities of modern life and human experience. Among those blueprints, themes of well-being, happiness, comfort, and leisure emerged prominently, encompassing as diverse domains as fashion, food and drink, travel, music, dance, sports, and games (Oishi et al., 2013; Glatzer, 2019; Mazzi, 2023). Those representations served as cultural touchstones, reflecting and constructing notions of individual and collective well-being.

This seminar seeks to explore how well-being and comfort were rhetorically and linguistically crafted in Late Modern newspapers and magazines published in Britain and its colonies. We invite contributions that examine those themes through a variety of methodological lenses, including corpus linguistics, historical sociopragmatics, and historical discourse analysis. By investigating the textual and contextual strategies employed in those representations, we aim to uncover the ways in which comfort and well-being were constructed, contested, and commodified during that pivotal historical moment. Papers might address questions such as:

- How were activities like food and drink consumption, travel, or sports linguistically framed as pathways to well-being?
- What rhetorical strategies were used to persuade readers of the benefits of leisure and self-care?
- How did representations of well-being intersect with issues of gender, class, or national identity?
- In what ways did Late Modern media contribute to the commodification of comfort and well-being?

By bringing together diverse perspectives, this seminar aims to foster a nuanced understanding of the cultural and linguistic underpinnings of well-being in the Late Modern period, shedding light on their lasting impact on contemporary discourses of health, comfort and leisure.

References

- Brownlees, N. (Ed.) (2023). *The Edinburgh history of the British and Irish press. Volume 1. Beginnings and consolidation, 1640–1800*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Finkelstein, D. (Ed.) (2020). *The Edinburgh history of the British and Irish press. Volume 2. Expansion and evolution, 1800–1900*. Edinburgh University Press.
- Glatzer, W. (2019). *History and politics of well-being in Europe*. Springer.
- King, A., Easley, A. & J. Morton (Eds.). 2016. *The Routledge handbook to nineteenth-century British periodicals and newspapers*. Routledge.
- Mazzi, D. (2023). *The discourse of well-being in late-modern Ireland: A case study of letters to the editor*. Cambridge Scholars.
- Oishi S., Graham, J., Kesebir, S. & Costa Galinha, I. (2013). Concepts of happiness across time and cultures. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 1–19.
- Shattock, J. (Ed.) (2017). *Journalism and the periodical press in nineteenth-century Britain*. Cambridge University Press.

Seminar n. 36. Language, health and wellbeing: Individual and collective perspectives from past to present

Convenors

Alessandra Vicentini (Università degli Studi dell'Insubria) alessandra.vicentini@uninsubria.it

Elisabetta Lonati (Università del Piemonte Orientale) elisabetta.lonati@uniupo.it

Abstract

From Early and Late Modern medical texts to contemporary public health campaigns, the language of wellbeing has evolved alongside scientific advancements and social transformations producing a variety of texts and discourses which deserve close examination for the role they have in popularizing and disseminating information, and directing individual and collective choices.

The seminar will examine the multi-faceted relationship between language and health, with a focus on wellbeing across both historical and contemporary contexts. Drawing on a range of texts and discourses, the contributions will address how the English language has evolved in its representations of health and illness, offering insights into the socio-cultural contexts that have informed these discourses. Employing methodologies such as corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, and (historical) pragmatics, this seminar will investigate how English has been employed to conceptualize, communicate, and negotiate health and wellbeing. By integrating diachronic and synchronic perspectives and highlighting both personal and collective experiences, contributors will analyze linguistic shifts in medical discourse and the ways in which language shapes, and is shaped, by changing understandings of health.

Potential topics may include:

- Life course health, old age, midwifery, mental and public health.
- Linguistic representations of health and illness in historical and contemporary medical discourse.
- The role of metaphor and framing in shaping perceptions of wellbeing.
- Medical writing and the evolution of health-related terminology.
- Public health campaigns and their linguistic strategies.
- The impact of digital communication on health discourse (e.g., social media, telemedicine, etc.).
- Narrative structures in patient experiences and medical case reports.
- Gender, identity, and power dynamics in medical discourse.

References

Bergoldt, K. (2008). *Wellbeing: A Cultural History of Healthy Living*. Polity Press.

Kennaway, J. & Knoeff, R. (Eds.). (2020). *Lifestyle and Medicine in the Enlightenment. The Six Non-Naturals in the Long Eighteenth Century*. Routledge.

Pennarola, C., Polese, V. & Zollo, S. A. (2021). *Specialised Discourses of Well-Being and Human Development: Cross Disciplinary Perspectives*. L'Harmattan.

Sointu, E. (2005). The rise of an ideal: tracing changing discourses of wellbeing. *The Sociological Review*, 53(2), 255–274.

Taavitsainen, I. & Hiltunen, T. (Eds.). (2019). *Late Modern English Medical Texts. Writing Medicine in the 18th Century*. John Benjamins.

Taavitsainen, I. & Hiltunen, T. (Eds.) (2022). *Corpus Pragmatic Studies on the History of Medical Discourse*. John Benjamins.

Taavitsainen, I. & Pahta, P. (Eds.) (2011). *Medical Writing in Early Modern English*. Cambridge University Press.

Seminar n. 37. Tourism discourse at the human-digital interface: Technology, regeneration, storytelling

Convenors

Maria Cristina Paganoni (Università degli Studi di Milano) mariacristina.paganoni@unimi.it

Eleonora Gallitelli (Università degli Studi di Udine) eleonora.gallitelli@uniud.it

Elena Mattei (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) elena.mattei@unive.it

Abstract

Contemporary tourism spans a hybrid continuum, from market-driven digital representations of destinations to embodied travel experiences, increasingly mediated by technology. Tourists navigate virtual and real routes through an array of digital tools which include tourist board websites, travel portals and blogs, social media platforms, smart wearable devices, geo-tracking apps, QR codes and augmented reality. These technologies not only guide experiences but also shape expectations, generating vast amounts of data that feed into industry algorithms to personalize and optimize digital tourism offerings and flows.

While such tools enhance customization, they also raise ethical concerns, particularly as overtourism continues to contribute to global inequalities and environmental degradation. Unless aligned with sustainability and social justice principles, the integration of technology into tourism risks perpetuating the same extractive logics.

In response, alternative discourses and practices are emerging in which digital technologies actively contribute to making travel more sustainable in its deepest human-centric articulation of cultural, social, environmental and economic issues. Whereas ecotourism has traditionally emphasized the preservation of natural environments and low-impact travel, these newer trends go further by incorporating social dimensions and digital innovation to reimagine the relationship between visitors and destinations. On the one hand, regenerative tourism reframes destinations as living ecosystems, encouraging eco-sensitive value co-creation and respect for local communities by promoting active involvement in the restoration of natural resources and ensuring fair income distribution. On the other, storytelling in various forms – participatory, community-based, ethical – educates locals and visitors about pluralism by uncovering often neglected perspectives on heritage and tradition beyond the mainstream. Amid differences and similarities, the common anthropological foundation of these approaches arguably lies in the use of digital technologies not just to enhance the tourist-as-consumer experience but to cultivate awareness and stimulate critical participation in the ethical values of justice, peace, and social engagement.

This seminar, framed within the theoretical and empirical scope of Critical Discourse Studies, welcomes contributions that examine recent trends and experiments aimed at integrating digital innovation with human-centric values. Particular emphasis is placed on linguistic, discursive and multimodal strategies that foster ethical engagement, responsible travel and sustainable perspectives.

References

- Antonucci, B. & Gallitelli, E. (Eds.). (2024). *Beyond the last 'post'. Il turismo e le sfide della contemporaneità*. RomaTrE-Press.
- Bortoluzzi, M., & Zurru, E. (Eds.). (2024). *Ecological communication and ecoliteracy: Discourses of awareness and action for the lifescape*. Bloomsbury.
- Floridi, L. (2024). The hardware turn in the digital discourse: An analysis, explanation, and potential risk. *Philosophy & Technology*, 37(1), Article 39.
- KhosraviNik, M. (2022). Digital meaning-making across content and practice in social media critical discourse studies. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 19(2), 119–123.
- Mattei, E., & Maci, S. M. (forth.). For a future (re)generation: Modelling effective tourism communication for social-ecological development of local communities and destinations. In F. Fusté-Forné & A. Hussain (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Regenerative Tourism*. Routledge.
- Paddison, B., & Hall, J. (2024). Regenerative tourism development as a response to crisis: Harnessing practise-led approaches. *Tourism Geographies*, 1–18.
- Paganoni, M. C. (2023). The words and routes of peace-sensitive tourism. *Poli-Femo* 26, 81–94.

Seminar n. 38. Tourism and digital communication in online spaces

Convenors

Eleonora Federici (Università degli Studi di Ferrara) eleonora.federici@unife.it

David Katan (Università del Salento) david.katan@unisalento.it

Abstract

The digital turn has significantly reshaped the tourism industry, with social media, websites, and AI-driven platforms playing central roles in framing how destinations are represented, marketed and experienced. These digital spaces not only facilitate the dissemination of information but also actively influence tourist expectations, decision-making, and experiences, often blurring the lines between reality and digitally constructed narratives (Can et al., 2025).

Web 2.0 has democratized access to information by fostering participation, interactivity, and user-generated content (Herring, 2013). Websites, social media, blogs, and review apps serve multifaceted functions in tourism communication, acting as tools for information retrieval, consumer engagement, and destination promotion (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). These platforms amplify individual voices and potentially challenge traditional destination imageries, allowing tourists to construct, negotiate and challenge the image of a destination (Van Nuenen & Scarles, 2021). At the same time, these platforms shape linguistic and multimodal representations of destinations, influencing perceptions of authenticity, cultural identity and heritage (Federici 2018); and offer new possibilities for accessibility, leveraging multimodal features such as videos, subtitles, and interactive content to reach diverse audiences (Domínguez Vila et al., 2024; Katan & Fina, 2024).

Drawing on this theoretical background, the panel explores how language, multimodal strategies, and translation practices shape digital tourism communication. Specifically, we aim to foster discussion among scholars on key issues related to digital storytelling of tourist destinations (Katan, 2022), tourism discourse in digital media (e.g., social media, websites, blogs, etc.), human interaction with digital platforms, digital humanities approaches to tourism communication, and the role of AI and emerging technologies in tourism communication. As to new insights we will investigate how AI can be used by linguists to analyse tourism discourse, and in particular we will focus on new and evolving technologies to analyse the semiotic interplay between text and image both intra and interlingually.

References

- Can, A. S., Ekinci, Y., & Dilek-Fidler, S. (2025). Fantasy or reality? Unveiling the power of realistic narratives in tourism social media advertising. *Tourism Management*, 106, 104998.
- Domínguez Vila, T., Rubio-Escuderos, L., & Alén González, E. (2024). Accessible tourism: Using technology to increase social equality for people with disabilities. *Tourism Review*. Published 12 July 2024.
- Federici E. (2018). *Translation Theory and Practice: Cultural Differences in Tourism and Advertising*. Loffredo Editore.
- Herring, S. C. (2013). Discourse in web 2.0: Familiar, reconfigured, and emergent. In D. Tannen & A. M. Trester (Eds.), *Discourse 2.0: Language and New Media* (pp. 1–25). Georgetown University Press.
- Katan, D & Fina, E. (2024). Profiling the Heritage Tourism translator. In M. Ehrensberger-Dow, E. Angelone & G. Massey, *Handbook of the language industry: contexts, resources and profiles*. Mouton De Gruyter.
- Katan, D. (2022). Tools for transforming translators into homo narrans or ‘what machines can’t do’. In G. Massey, E. Huertas Barros & D. Katan (Eds.) *IATIS Yearbook 2022: The Human Translator in the 2020s*. (pp. 74–90). Routledge.
- Van Nuenen, T., & Scarles, C. (2021). Advancements in technology and digital media in tourism. *Tourist Studies*, 21(1), 119–132.
- Zeng, B., & Gerritsen, R. (2014). What do we know about social media in tourism? A review. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 10, 27–36.

Seminar n. 39. Glossing and translanguaging as conceptualizations about trans-semiotizing practices, identity construction and humane culture

Convenors

Laura Diamanti (Università degli Studi di Enna “Kore”) laura.diamanti@unikore.it

Heather Pagan (University of Westminster, London, UK) H.Pagan@westminster.ac.uk

Abstract

Glossing and translanguaging have long been pivotal in the study of language contact, offering insights into how multilingual speakers negotiate meaning and construct their linguistic identities. From Middle English to the present, glossing has served as an interpretive tool in contexts of linguistic hybridity, mediating between Latin, French, and English in medieval texts such as *Ancrene Wisse* and *Piers Plowman* (Machan, 1994; Burrow & Turville-Petre, 1996).

Glossing has historically enabled EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners to position themselves as active interpreters of meaning, engaging with language as a dynamic and socially embedded phenomenon (Kim, Lee & Lee, 2024). Whereas, translanguaging supports “[...] language users entextualize meaning in situated and embodied interactions, drawing on neural, bodily, and situational resources” (Wei, 2023). In particular, translanguaging challenges the monoglossic view opposing the deterministic one: it entails spontaneous human languaging as a multilingual, multisemiotic, multisensory, and multimodal resource for sense- and meaning-making. Translanguaging pedagogies may empower learners by validating their linguistic resources, challenging rigid language hierarchies, and promoting metalinguistic awareness (García & Wei, 2014).

Two questions arise: 1) Can historical glossing practices prefigure the translanguaging strategies observed in contemporary multilingual contexts? 2) Can glossing and translanguaging be based on common ground in trans-semiotizing practices in multilingual contexts? Glossing and translanguaging foster critical cognitive and identity-building skills and underscore their shared role in shaping multilingual subjectivities to cultivate linguistic flexibility, critical thinking and cross-cultural understanding (Aloni & Weintrob, 2017)

Additionally, digital technology has introduced new spaces for translanguaging, whereas online glossaries, digital annotations, and machine-assisted translation tools function as modern glossing mechanisms favouring multilingual negotiation (Pérez-Llantada, 2020). Digital platforms amplify translanguaging by enabling real-time, multimodal exchanges across linguistic boundaries, reinforcing the interplay between historical and contemporary multilingual practices (Androutsopoulos, 2015). Contributions from linguistic and humane education studies, including ongoing research, are encouraged.

References

- Androutsopoulos, J. (2015). Networked multilingualism: Some language practices on Facebook and their implications. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 19(2), 185–205.
- Aloni N., & Weintrob L. (2017). *Beyond Bystanders. Educational Leadership for a Humane Culture in a Globalizing Reality*. Rotterdam, Boston, Taipei: Sense Publishers.
- Burrow, J. A., Turville-Petre, T. (1996). *A Book of Middle English*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- García, O., Wei, L., (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kim, H. S., Lee, J. H., & Lee, H. (2024). The relative effects of L1 and L2 glosses on L2 learning: A meta-analysis. *Language Teaching Research*, 28(1), 7–28.
- Wei, L. (2023). Towards critical translanguaging pedagogy – new ways of raising and answering questions from a Global South perspective. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 20(3), 298–303.
- Machan, T. W. (1994). *Textual Criticism and Middle English Texts*. University Press of Virginia.
- Pérez-Llantada, C. (2020). *Scientific Discourse and the Rhetoric of Globalization: The Impact of Culture and Language*. Bloomsbury.

Seminar n. 40. Specialized knowledge dissemination and international communication in the digital age

Convenors

Giuliana Diani (Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia) giuliana.diani@unimore.it

Christina Samson (Università degli Studi di Firenze) christina.samson@unifi.it

Abstract

The dissemination of specialized knowledge in the digital age plays a crucial role in shaping international communication, particularly within the Anglosphere (Incelli et al., 2022; Salvi & Turnbull, 2017). It is well recognized that digital platforms have transformed the ways in which specialized knowledge is transferred, raising both opportunities and challenges for communicators across disciplines (Bondi & Cacchiani, 2021). This seminar explores how digitalization affects specialized discourse in professional and academic domains (Gotti, 2011).

One key aspect is the increasing role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in facilitating cross-border communication. Additionally, the dominance of English as the lingua franca of international communication influences the way specialized knowledge is disseminated, often marginalizing local and minority languages in digital spaces (Crystal, 2019). Social media, webinars, and digital repositories serve as spaces for knowledge dissemination, but they also challenge traditional notions of authorship and credibility (Hyland, 2021). However, they have influenced international communication, creating hybrid discourse styles that blend formal and informal registers. This affects knowledge dissemination, particularly in fields like medicine, law, and business, where accuracy and clarity are critical (Garzone, 2020).

This seminar aims to address these developments by bringing together scholars to discuss the evolving landscape of digital specialized discourse. It will explore strategies for effective communication, the impact of emerging technologies, e.g. AI-powered tools, and the role of discourse analysis in understanding digital communication practices. By examining these dynamics, we can better navigate the complexities of international communication in an increasingly digital world (Bhatia, 2017).

References

- Bhatia, V. K. (2017). *Critical genre analysis: Investigating interdiscursive performance in professional practice*. Routledge.
- Bondi, M., & Cacchiani, S. (2021). *Knowledge communication and knowledge dissemination in a digital world*. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 186, 117–123.
- Crystal, D. (2019). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Garzone, G. (2020). *Specialized communication and popularization in English*. Carocci.
- Gotti, M. (2011). *Investigating specialized discourse* (3rd ed). Peter Lang.
- Hyland, K. (2021) . The scholarly publishing landscape. In C. Hanganu-Bresch, M. J. Zerbe, G. Cutrufello, & S. M. Maci (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of scientific communication* (pp. 15–25). Routledge.
- Incelli, E., Mocini, R., & Turnbull, J. (Eds.). (2022). *The research-practice interface in English for specific purposes: Past, present and future*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Salvi, R., & Turnbull, J. (Eds.). (2017). *The discursive construal of trust in the dynamics of knowledge diffusion*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Seminar n. 41. Separate opinions: The human and the humane in judicial discourse

Convenors

Jekaterina Nikitina (Università degli Studi di Milano) jekaterina.nikitina@unimi.it

Katia Peruzzo (Università degli Studi di Trieste) kperuzzo@units.it

Abstract

Judicial reasoning provides fertile ground for exploring the possible human and humane dimensions of legal discourse, especially when attention is given to separate judicial opinions, which allow judges to voice individual perspectives (Goźdz-Roszkowski, 2020). These often diverge from the majority narrative, thus highlighting the human element of judicial deliberation: the values, empathy, and personal convictions that shape legal reasoning and, at least for the time being, seem to elude AI-generated interventions.

Separate opinions represent a form of specialized discourse that embodies the challenges of multilingual communication and cross-cultural understanding. Judges in international courts must navigate the complexities of drafting in non-native languages, most frequently in English. Separate opinions are also human artifacts where the precise language of the law intertwines with the need to reflect the voices, values, and intellectual struggles of their authors. For this reason, they feature rhetorical creativity, polyphony, dialogical argumentation (Garzone, 2016) as well as metadiscursive means such as hedging, boosters, etc. (McKeown, 2021).

This seminar invites proposals exploring the human and humane dimensions of separate judicial opinions as instances of specialized discourse and international communication, with emphasis on human rights discourse (Nikitina, 2025).

Topics may include:

- Empathy, ethics, and humane values
- Pragmatics (e.g. stance, evaluation, politeness)
- The rhetoric of dissent and the human voice
- Representations of sensitive topics (e.g. gender, race, and class) (Peruzzo, 2024)
- Creativity and metaphors in judicial discourse (El-Farahaty, Biel & Seracini, 2026, forth.)
- Dialogism and polyphony

References

- El-Farahaty, H., Biel, L. & Seracini, F. (2026, forth.). Legal Metaphors Across Languages and Cultures (LeMALC): Interdisciplinary approaches for the identification and translation of human rights metaphors. *Special issue of International Journal for the Semiotics of Law – Revue internationale de Sémiotique juridique*.
- Garzone, G. (2016). Polyphony and dialogism in legal discourse: Focus on syntactic negation. In G. Tessuto, V. K. Bhatia, G. Garzone, R. Salvi & C. Williams (Eds.), *Constructing Legal Discourses and Social Practices: Issues and Perspectives* (pp. 2–27). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Goźdz-Roszkowski, S. (2020). Communicating dissent in judicial opinions: A comparative, genre-based analysis. *International Journal for the Semiotics of Law = Revue Internationale de Sémiotique Juridique*, 33(2), 381–401.
- McKeown, J. (2021). A corpus-based examination of reflexive metadiscourse in majority and dissent opinions of the U.S. Supreme Court. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 186, 224–235.
- Nikitina, J. (2025). *Human Rights Discourse: Linguistics, Translation and Genre at the European Court of Human Rights*. Routledge.
- Peruzzo, K. (2024). Trans, transgender, and transsexual in case law: A corpus-assisted analysis of ECtHR judgments. In E. L. Jiménez-Navarro & L. M. Martínez Serrano (Eds.), *Where Gender and Corpora Meet: New Insights into Discourse Analysis*, (pp. 157–180). Peter Lang.

Seminar n. 42. “It's personal – it's (also) business”: Business communication's interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary

Convenors

Roxanne Barbara Doerr (Università degli Studi di Brescia) roxanne.doerr@unibs.it

Walter Giordano (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) walter.giordano@unina.it

Abstract

The kaleidoscopic nature of business communication allows corporate actors to interact with a number of expert and non-expert interlocutors through an extensive range of traditional and innovative modes, content and forms of online and offline presence. In contrast with the common perception of business communication as “just business” - and therefore objective, results-driven and “self-less” - it increasingly encompasses the “human” (the identity of a person or representative of an organization), “humane” (inclusivity, ethics, cultural diversity) and “humanities” (studies of interactions and relations within a professional discourse community) (Jameson, 2022; Darics & Koller, 2019).

Research has explored and continues to probe into the human aspects of conducting business, including trust and relationship building, face giving and threatening, brand and professional name, identity and communities, teamwork and collaboration, active listening and power (a)symmetry, customer service and satisfaction, responsibility and sustainability. This increasingly personalized corporate and business culture is reflected in its language and discourse in relation to technological advances and tempers the hype of intense, high-quantity online communication (e.g. spam emails, standardized chatbots and routine automatic phone calls) with a greater focus on quality interaction, customized offers, gestures, understanding of others' circumstances and word of mouth/mouse about personal experiences and feedback, with the intent of “keeping communication human” and being credible, accountable and trustworthy by any audience.

The seminar endeavours to create the ideal setting for an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary debate, starting from examples of and reflections on the linguistic and discursive aspects of and strategies surrounding the personal and human face of business communication. Such studies involve the boardroom and workplace, the classroom (Doerr, 2023) or the office itself (be it traditional, mobile or shared, Doerr, 2018) and the plethora of multimedia channels and approaches at company's disposal to productively - but also humanely - interact within and outside of the organization.

Possible topics for contributions include, but are not limited to:

- trust and relationship building in in-house and out-house business communication and correspondence (e.g. e-mails, press and news releases, websites)
- brand identity and strategic stance (e.g. CEO letters, institutional and financial communication)
- human presence and personal/professional identity in traditional and multimodal business communication via social media
- marketing communication and promotion (e.g. advertising, sponsorship, crowdfunding, appeals to stakeholders and business angels)
- human and humane storytelling of and by authentic self-made leaders, family businesses and testimonies (e.g. assistants, customers, employees)
- inclusion, diversity and equality in small talk and other instances of interpersonal cooperation and networking
- enforcement and/or violation of traditional politeness standards and etiquette in business and organization communication (e.g. hiring, firing, empowerment, appraisals, reprimands, complaints).

References

- Darics, E., & Koller, V. (2019). Social Actors “to Go”: An Analytical Toolkit to Explore Agency in Business Discourse and Communication. *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly*, 82(2), 214–238.
- Doerr, R. B. (2023). *Academic Style Proofreading: An Introduction*. Peter Lang Group AG.
- Doerr, R. B. (2018). Work on the go: Linguistic and Discursive Dynamicity in Online Workshifting Communities. In G. Garzone & W. Giordano (Eds.), *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise: Where Business Meets Discourse* (pp. 88–109). Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Jameson, D. A. (2022). Selling My Soul: Moving from the Humanities to Business Communication. In J. Forman (Ed.), *The Business Communication Profession: Essays on the Journeys of Leading Teacher-Scholar* (pp. 141–156). Routledge.

Seminar n. 43. A human and humane approach? Metaphor, argumentation and (counter)institutional discourses

Convenors

Ilaria Rizzato (Università degli Studi di Genova) ilaria.rizzato@unige.it

Cecilia Boggio (Università di Torino) cecilia.boggio@unito.it

Abstract

Are the metaphors underlying institutional discourses on current burning issues reliable predictors of the “human and humane” (Panebianco, 2021) approaches they advocate and claim to incorporate in their policy-making processes? Are the metaphors used to criticize the dominant institutional discourse effective in creating counter-discourses that challenge the dominant ones? Do dominant discourses and counter-discourses use the same metaphorical frames (Kövecses, 2009; Burgers, Konijn & Steen, 2016)? If so, what are the different properties selected to build their arguments?

We call for contributions that address these questions –both from the perspective of metaphor theory (Charteris-Black 2011; Musolff & Zinken, 2009; Lakoff, 1993) as well as from the perspective of argumentation theory (van Poppel, 2021, Wagemans, 2016) – and thus investigate the role of metaphors in relation to their argumentative function in both dominant discourses and discourses that produce a resistance to the dominant ones. We especially encourage the submission of papers that explore issues related to sustainability, health and well-being, economic and social policies concerning and influencing the public debate as well as the personal sphere.

References

- Burgers, C., Konijn, E. A. & Steen, G. J. (2016). Figurative framing: Shaping public discourse through metaphor, hyperbole, and irony. *Communication Theory*, 26(4), 1–21.
- Charteris-Black, J. (2011). *Politicians and rhetoric: The persuasive power of metaphor*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kövecses, Z. (2009). Metaphor, culture, and discourse: The pressure of coherence. In A. Musolff & J. Zinken (Eds.), *Metaphor and Discourse* (pp. 11–24). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In A. Ortony (Ed.), *Metaphor and thought* (pp. 202–251). Cambridge University Press.
- Musolff, A. & Zinken, J. (Eds.) (2009). *Metaphor and discourse*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Panebianco, S. (2021). Towards a ‘human and humane’ approach? The EU discourse on migration amidst the Covid-19 crisis. *The International Spectator*, 56(2), 19–37.
- van Poppel, L. (2021). The Study of metaphor in argumentation theory. *Argumentation*, 35, 177–208.
- Wagemans, J. (2016). Analyzing metaphors in argumentative discourse. *Rivista italiana di filosofia del linguaggio*, 10(2), 79–94.

Seminar n. 44. Exploring the interplay between Artificial Intelligence (AI), English-Medium Instruction (EMI) and Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) settings

Convenors

Cristina Mariotti (Università di Pavia) cristina.mariotti@unipv.it

Stefania Cicillini (Università di Torino) stefania.cicillini@unito.it

Francesca Costa (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore) francesca.costa@unicatt.it

Abstract

AI's integration in EMI settings can transform pedagogy, learning processes, and classroom dynamics, particularly in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. By pushing the boundaries of conventional practices and accelerating trends toward digitization, AI can be used to foster a more dynamic, inclusive, and student-centred learning environment. ChatGPT, for example can have a transformative role in overcoming language barriers, fostering a confident EMI teacher identity (Tsou et al., 2024) and boosting students' learning progress (Kikuchi, 2024).

AI technologies can help with the introduction of individualized scaled solutions, the improvement of disciplinary content comprehension, and an improvement in academic success. However, these benefits bring along challenges with respect to ethical guidelines, critical evaluation skills, academic integrity of AI-assisted learning and assessment and potential digital inequality (Wanyu Ou & Malmström, 2023). Despite these premises, the interplay between AI and EMI or ICLHE contexts remains significantly underexplored in research studies as highlighted in the only existing systematic review on the topic (Bannister et al., 2023).

This seminar invites contributions that critically explore the intersection between AI and EMI or ICLHE contexts from a wide range of perspectives, including but not limited to:

- the use of generative AI tools by students and educators to enhance learning and teaching outcomes within the EMI/ICLHE framework
- the role of AI in promoting inclusivity and multilingualism in diverse EMI or ICLHE contexts
- the impact of AI on language assessment literacy and ethical considerations in EMI or ICLHE contexts
- the practical applications of AI in adjunct instruction, translanguaging practices, and disciplinary writing.

This seminar aims to open up a discussion on how AI can help in the evolution of EMI and ICLHE in higher education through both opportunities and challenges. We welcome innovative and interdisciplinary proposals that present theoretical insights, empirical findings, or practical strategies regarding the integration of AI into EMI or ICLHE practices.

References

- Bannister, P., Santamaría Urbieto, A., & Alcalde Peñalver, E. (2023). A systematic review of generative AI and English medium instruction in higher education. *Aula Abierta*, 52(4), 401–409.
- Kikuchi, H. (2024). Transforming English Medium Instruction (EMI): The role of generative AI in overcoming EMI challenges and enhancing learning environments. In *EdMedia+ Innovate Learning* (pp. 1046–1051). Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE).
- Tsou, W., Lin, A. M. Y., & Chen, F. (2024). Co-journeying with ChatGPT in tertiary education: Identity transformation of EMI teachers in Taiwan. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 37(4), 529–543.
- Wanyu Ou, A. & Malmström, H. (2023): 'It becomes increasingly complex to deal with multiple channels': materialised communicative competence and digital inequality in English-medium higher education in the digital era. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 1–19.

Seminar n. 45. English Medium Instruction (EMI) as a catalyst for humane and equitable education... or not?

Convenors

Sharon Hartle (Università degli Studi di Verona) sharon.hartle@univr.it

Claudio Bendazzoli (Università degli Studi di Verona) claudio.bendazzoli@univr.it

Alessandra Molino (Università di Torino) alessandra.molino@unito.it

Abstract

While English Medium Instruction (EMI) has become a dominant strategy in higher education globally, there are critical concerns about linguistic equity, implementation policies, teacher professional development and effective language learning (Dearden, 2014; Galloway & Rose, 2021). Often seen as a globalization tool, can EMI be reimagined as a catalyst for promoting linguistic equity, sustainable global dialogue and more positive attitudes towards English and multilingualism (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009)? This seminar aims to explore EMI's potential to embody human and humane values from a critical perspective. EMI can bridge linguistic and cultural divides, promoting empathy and collaboration. Its implementation may also, however, highlight inequality, privileging those with access to English proficiency while marginalizing others. Indeed, a greater emphasis on student translanguaging and multilingual practices may be beneficial (Dalziel, 2021; Zheng & Qui, 2024). We invite scholars to present contributions to highlight these areas in relation to EMI: the question of equality, multilingualism and multiculturalism, as well as practical issues of internationalization and lecturer professional development.

References

- Dalziel, F. (2021). EMI and Translanguaging: Student language use in an Italian English-taught programme. In L. Mastellotto, R. Zanin (Eds.), *EMI and beyond: Internationalising higher education curricula in Italy* (pp. 193–214). Bu,press.
- Dearden, J. (2014). *English as a medium of instruction – A growing global phenomenon*. British Council.
- Galloway, N., & Rose, H. (2021). English medium instruction and the English language practitioner. *ELT Journal*, 75(1), 33–41.
- Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (2009). Language attitudes in CLIL and Traditional EFL classes. *International CLIL Research Journal*, 1(2), 4–17.
- Zheng, Y. & Qui, Y. (2024). Epistemic (in)justice in English medium instruction: Transnational teachers' and students' negotiation of knowledge participation through translanguaging. *Language and Education*, 38(1), 97–117.

Seminar n. 46. English language teaching and learning in the digital era: Exploring challenges, opportunities and ethical concerns

Convenors

Antonella Luporini (Università di Bologna) antonella.luporini@unibo.it

Antonella Giacosa (Università di Torino) antonellamaria.giacosa@unito.it

Abstract

The “Law of Accelerating Returns” posits that technological progress shows an exponential, rather than linear, growth rate (Kurzweil, 2004). Such an increasingly ‘smart’ world is opening up new horizons for English language teaching (ELT) and learning, blurring the boundaries between what is human(e) and what is not (Kohnke *et al.*, 2023). In this emerging context, language educators and students must develop complex skills such as digital literacy/fluency – combining digital and critical skills to evaluate AI tools for their real benefits and ethical concerns (UNESCO, 2025).

We invite scholars, practitioners and experts to explore with us the complex intersections of Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (Kumaravadivelu, 1999), educational linguistics, ELT and technological progress, by examining key themes including:

- challenges and opportunities for teachers, learners and institutions in the digital turn of ELT
- best practices resulting from empirical investigations into new digital literacies
- ethical issues concerning brand new technological developments in educational environments and their *fair use*
- the impact of digital tools on quality education, social justice, inclusion and well-being
- metaphorical representations of AI emerging from, e.g., classroom discourse analysis, questionnaires and interviews, which can impact on the way AI is perceived and conceptualized by teachers and/or students.

The seminar will foster collaborative discussions merging theoretical and practical insights with critical perspectives, to increase awareness of the fast-evolving landscape of language education in the digital era.

References

- Kohnke, L., Moorhouse, B., & Zhou, D. (2023). ChatGPT for language teaching and learning. *RELC Journal*, 54(2), 1–14.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (1999). Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 33(3), 453–484.
- Kurzweil, R. (2004). The Law of Accelerating Returns. In C. Teuscher (Ed.), *Alan Turing: Life and Legacy of a Great Thinker* (pp. 381–416). Springer.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2025, January 20). *Artificial intelligence in education: UNESCO advances key competencies for teachers and learners*.
<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/artificial-intelligence-education-unesco-advances-key-competencies-teachers-and-learners>

Seminar n. 47. AI and English as a foreign language: Bridging classroom practice and research

Convenors

Adriano Ferraresi (Università di Bologna) adriano.ferraresi@unibo.it

Francesca Vigo (Università di Catania) vigof@unict.it

Anna Mongibello (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale) amongibello@unior.it

Abstract

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly adopted across various fields of education and research, revolutionizing how knowledge is created, shared, and applied (Chen et al., 2020; European Commission, 2023). Within the specific domain of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), a growing body of work has shown the potential of tools like ChatGPT and other Large Language Models for diverse applications, including writing assistance, automated assessment and creation of language exercises (Khonke et al., 2023). Existing studies have demonstrated substantial positive effects of AI-based tools in controlled settings, focusing on cognitive and behavioural outcomes such as improvements of students' language competence (Bibauw et al., 2022) and motivation to learn (Fryer et al., 2020). Another line of research has relied on surveys among students and lecturers, shedding light on the pedagogical affordances of these tools (Slamet, 2024). However, significant theoretical and methodological gaps remain to be addressed. These include the need to establish more precise definitions of the very notions of AI and AI-based tools, to conduct empirical studies bridging AI research with practical EFL teaching applications, and to further explore the impact of AI use on learners, educators and the broader contexts in which they are immersed (Hockly, 2023). Against this backdrop, the seminar invites theoretical and empirical contributions that explore topics including, but not limited to:

- Using AI in the EFL classroom: applications of AI and digital technologies to EFL teaching, including (creative) writing; tutoring; time planning
- The human factor: students' and/or teachers' attitudes towards technology in learning/teaching; digital literacy of students and/or teachers
- AI and EFL linguistic data: explorations of learners' language, AI-generated language and learner-AI interactions, e.g. drawing on corpus and/or experimental methods
- AI, EFL, and normative discourses: explorations of normative discourses in AI output, including assumptions about language proficiency, correctness, and underlying biases
- Digital technologies, EFL and sustainability: EFL teaching/learning and ecological issues, e.g. with reference to mobility and distance reduction and/or waste of energy provision.

References

- Bibauw, S., Van den Noortgate, W., François, T., & Desmet, P. (2022). Dialogue systems for language learning: A meta-analysis. *Language Learning & Technology*, 26(1), 1–24.
- Chen, L., Chen, P., & Lin, Z. (2020). Artificial intelligence in education: A review. *IEEE Access*, 8, 75264–75278.
- European Commission. (2023). *Digital education action plan 2021–2027 – Improving the provision of digital skills in education and training*. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/149764>
- Fryer, L. K., Thompson, A., Nakao, K., Howarth, M., & Gallacher, A. (2020). Supporting self-efficacy beliefs and interest as educational inputs and outcomes: Framing AI and human partnered task experiences. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 80, Article 101850.
- Kohnke, L., Moorhouse, B. L., & Zou, D. (2023). ChatGPT for language teaching and learning. *RELC Journal*, 54(2), 367–371.
- Hockly, N. (2023). Artificial intelligence in English language teaching: The good, the bad, and the ugly. *RELC Journal*, 54(2), 445–451.
- Slamet, J. (2024). Potential of ChatGPT as a digital language learning assistant: EFL teachers' and students' perceptions. *Discover Artificial Intelligence*, 4, 46.

Seminar n. 48. In contact with English: Informal language learning practices and processes in Italy

Convenors

Erik Castello (Università degli Studi di Padova) erik.castello@unipd.it

Maria Pavesi (Università di Pavia) maria.pavesi@unipv.it

Raffaele Zago (Università di Catania) raffaele.zago@unict.it

Abstract

Nowadays, technology, globalization, mobility and multilingualism have brought about a scenario in which English language learning is moving beyond the classroom, propelled by informal, uninstructed practices ‘in the wild’ (Dressman & Sadler, 2020; Toffoli et al., 2023). This shift reflects a transformation in the contemporary linguistic landscape, where contact with English is increasingly embedded in real-life experiences, driven by entertainment, social and information-seeking purposes. English-language media and digital tools now serve as linguistic models and sources of authentic input, forming part of the complex web of online and offline interactions that shape present-day communicative practices (Benson, 2021). In these multimodal, immersive and fluid environments, second language acquisition (SLA) develops naturally as a ‘by-product’ of informal contact with English. An up-to-date ecological paradigm is thus needed to explain the dynamic and multifaceted nature of SLA in today’s media-saturated cultures, in which learner-users can attain high levels of proficiency in English without crossing geographical borders or having extensive contact with native speakers.

Inspired by the results of the 2020 PRIN project “The Informalization of English Language Learning through the Media” (Pavesi & Bianchi, 2024), this Seminar explores the evolving, but largely uncharted, patterns of learner-users’ informal contact with English in Italy. It welcomes contributions that investigate how informal exposure to English is reshaping SLA in the contemporary digital age. Topics for discussion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Types, modes and degrees of media-based exposure to English outside of the classroom;
- Longitudinal studies of media-related/digitally-induced, out-of-class SLA, along such parameters as complexity, accuracy and fluency;
- Emic perspectives on learner-users’ experiences with English in informal contexts;
- Role of media and digital tools in the development of English language proficiency at the level of grammar, lexis, pragmatics, register awareness, etc.;
- Informal and formal English language learning against the background of the digital turn in education.

References

- Benson, P. (2021). *Language learning environments. Spatial perspectives on SLA*. Multilingual Matters.
- Berns, M., de Bot, K., & Hasebrink, U. (2007). *In the presence of English: Media and European youth*. Springer.
- Dressman, M., & Sadler, R. W. (Eds.). (2020). *The handbook of informal language learning*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Pavesi, M., & Bianchi, F. (Eds.). (2024). ‘In the presence of English’: Informal English language learning in Italy. Special Issue of *Lingue e Linguaggi*, 66.
- Toffoli, D., Sockett, G., & Kusyk, M. (Eds.). (2023). *Language learning and leisure. Informal language learning in the digital age*. De Gruyter Mouton.

Seminar n. 49. Human connections in growing online communities: Redefining English teaching and learning in digital contexts

Convenors

Federico Gaspari (Università Telematica San Raffaele Roma) federico.gaspari@uniroma5.it

Roxanne Holly Padley (Università Telematica Pegaso) roxanneholly.padley@unipegaso.it

Abstract

The use of new technologies, generative AI and digital approaches to online English teaching and learning is constantly evolving, with variable degrees of success and satisfaction for lecturers and students (e.g., Padley, 2020 and Luppi, 2022). Despite enduring stigma and skepticism (Formiconi, 2016), English has been taught and learned through online platforms for several years at Italy's digital universities, offering exclusively distance learning programmes in a variety of subjects to increasing numbers of students, along with recent recruitment of English teaching staff at unprecedented rates (Minerva et al., 2024).

The seminar intends to encourage an open and bias-free debate on the issues, opportunities and challenges involved in teaching and learning English online at Italy's universities, be they traditional or digital. We invite theoretical, methodological, pedagogical and applied contributions, case studies and position papers with a strong research component that examine fully digital, hybrid and blended courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level, including Masters' and doctoral programmes, and those delivered online in English (Campagna and Pulcini, 2014).

Topics of particular interest to be addressed in relation to teaching and learning English online in Italian academia include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Innovative curriculum and syllabus design
- Revisiting methodologies such as peer education, cooperative learning, group work, task-oriented learning, project- and portfolio-based activities, etc.
- Technologies, tools, apps, platforms, virtual environments, immersive and augmented reality
- Gamification approaches
- (Generative) AI, Large (and Small) Language Models, Chatbots
- Standard varieties, world Englishes and ELF/EFL/L2 varieties in relation to speaking (including pronunciation) and writing
- Digital genres, online language use and multimodality
- The role of (audiovisual and multimedia) translation from and/or into English
- Promoting inter- and cross-cultural competence
- Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL)
- Protocols and applications of ELFtextualization
- Optimizing the benefits of synchronous and asynchronous online lectures
- Accessibility and inclusion strategies for students with disabilities and special educational and learning needs
- Developing learners' autonomy, self-assessment skills and reflexivity
- Informal learning outside the (digital) classroom
- Rethinking University Language Centres for digital universities
- Formative and summative evaluation, assessment, testing and feedback
- Monitoring the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning

References

- Campagna, S., & Pulcini, V. (2014). English as a Medium of Instruction in Italian Universities: Linguistic Policies, Pedagogical Implications. *Textus* 27(1), 173–190.
- Formiconi, A. R. (2016). La tortuosa via della didattica online nell'università. *Studi sulla Formazione* 19(1), 105–132.
- Luppi, F. (2022). Tools and models for distance teaching in an English Language and Culture university course: the flipped classroom and cooperative learning in a digital environment. *Altre Modernità* 27, 181–195.
- Minerva, T., De Santis, A., Bellini, C. & Sannicandro, K. (2024). Students in Italian online universities: enrollments time series analysis from 2005 to 2021. *Journal of E-Learning and Knowledge Society* 19(4), 50–75.
- Padley, R. H. (2020). Italian Coronavirus Teaching Emergency: A comparative analysis of university student motivation and performance – online vs face-to-face English Language Learning. *Journal of Applied Languages and Linguistics* 2(2), 38–52.

Seminar n. 50. English Linguistics for Academicians and Professionals (ELAP): New paths and updated trends in specialized discourse and communication

Convenors

Giulia Adriana Pennisi (Università degli Studi di Palermo) giuliaadriana.pennisi@unipa.it

Laura Pinnavaia (Università degli Studi di Milano) laura.pinnavaia@unimi.it

Annalisa Zanola (Università degli Studi di Brescia) annalisa.zanola@unibs.it

Abstract

This seminar will provide a forum for discussion on a new and innovative area, identified with the acronym ELAP, which is conceived as a place between Higher Education and the professions. For many decades, English has been the primary medium for the dissemination of specialized and non-specialized knowledge as well as a prerequisite for personal and professional fulfillment in all non-English speaking countries, including Italy (see, for instance, Boggio & Molino, 2018). Notwithstanding the extensive emphasis on the significance of English in both academic and professional domains, there persists a notable absence of scientifically validated resources that empower trainers and learners in academia and the workplace to access linguistic study with confidence. This seminar will therefore focus on collecting the theoretical and applied aspects of studies and best practices, thus facilitating a multifaceted examination of the fundamental principles of specific disciplines and providing a comprehensive analysis of English language communication in academic and professional contexts worldwide. The aim will be to embrace a broad spectrum of exemplars of ESPP (*English for Scientific and Professional Purposes*, Zanola, 2023), and not only. The overarching goal of this interdisciplinary approach will be to provide a nuanced and holistic understanding of the context(s), the users, the objectives and the techniques associated with domains such as medicine, economics, engineering, and law (see, among others, Huhta et al., 2013; Pennisi, 2024). Proposals should be clearly and constructively designed, either in terms of theoretical and methodological discussion or in terms of experience and professional genres and contexts.

References

- Boggio, C., & Molino, A. (2018). *English in Italy. Linguistic, Educational and Professional Challenges*. Franco Angeli.
- Huhta, M., Vogt, K., Johnson, E., & Tulkki H. (2013). *Needs Analysis for Language Course Design. A Holistic Approach to ESP*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pennisi, G. A. (2024). *A Linguistic Insight into Legislative Drafting. Tradition and Change in the UK Legislation*. Peter Lang.
- Zanola, A. (2023). *La lingua inglese per la comunicazione scientifica e professionale*, Carocci.

Seminar n. 51. Language uses and languaging users in video games

Convenors

Giuseppina Di Gregorio (Università di Catania) g.digregorio@unict.it

Pietro Luigi Iaia (Università del Salento) pietroluigi.iaia@unisalento.it

Silvia Pettini (Università degli Studi Roma Tre) silvia.pettini@uniroma3.it

Abstract

As a uniquely human trait, language plays a fundamental role in human-computer interaction and computer-mediated communication forms like gaming. Indeed, although video games are procedural and interactive media which must be played rather than simply read, watched, or listened to, they are essentially textual in nature, and their underlying rules and features are articulated semiotically, both verbally and non-verbally. To explore the functions and effects of language(s) in this global cultural phenomenon, this seminar welcomes papers discussing theoretically and/or empirically one (or more) of the following themes: the multilayered nature of video game discourse (Ensslin & Balteiro, 2019); natural languages and their varieties in the production, localization, and transmediation of game texts (Bernal-Merino, 2015; Pettini, 2022); the language of gender (Heritage, 2021); gamers' languaging online (Iaia, 2021); automatic/machine translation and gaming (Hansen & Houlmot, 2022); the nature of paratexts (Burwell & Miller, 2016) and constructed languages (Bell & Ryan, 2019) in game worlds.

References

- Bell, A., & Ryan, M. L. (Eds.). (2019). *Possible Worlds Theory and Contemporary Narratology*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Bernal-Merino, M. (2015). *Translation and Localization in Video Games: Making Entertainment Software Global*. Routledge.
- Burwell, C., & Miller, T. (2016). Let's Play: Exploring Literary Practices in an Emerging Videogame Paratext. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, 13(3-4), 109-125.
- Ensslin, A., & Balteiro, I. (Eds.). (2019). *Approaches to Videogame Discourse: Lexis, Interaction, Textuality*. Bloomsbury.
- Hansen, D., & Houlmot, P. Y. (2022). A Snapshot into the Possibility of Video Game Machine Translation. In J. Campbell et al. (Eds.). *Proceedings of the 15th Biennial Conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas* (Volume 2, pp. 257-269). Association for Machine Translation in the Americas.
- Heritage, F. (2021). *Language, Gender and Video Games: Using Corpora to Analyze the Representation of Gender in Fantasy Video Games*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Iaia, P. L. (2021). Towards a 'COOPING' Model for the Investigation of Gamers' Online Conversations in English. *Iperstoria*, 17, 222-240.
- Pettini, S. (2022). *The Translation of Realia and Irrealia in Game Localization: Culture-Specificity between Realism and Fictionality*. Routledge.

Seminar n. 52. Memory landscapes and heritage storytelling: Human voices and their digital representations

Convenors

Nicoletta Vasta (Università degli Studi di Udine) nicoletta.vasta@uniud.it
Mariavita Cambria (Università degli Studi di Messina) mariavita.cambria@unime.it
Francesca Cocchetta (Università Ca' Foscari Venezia) francesca.cocchetta@unive.it

Abstract

Commemorating the past and reconnecting it with the present in tourism and cultural heritage branding has become a way of integrating different personal and collective timescales (Lemke 2009, 2023) into digital storytelling. This includes multimodal strategies to create 'memory landscapes' in (cross-)digital genres and texts in English – e.g. promotional videos and institutional websites, travel diaries/blogs, web-based accounts of migration and diaspora, etc. – that reconstruct and relive individual and collective journeys through time and space, exploiting master narratives to navigate the global and local worlds. The seminar will investigate humanity and the humane within multidimensional, transmedial forms of tourism and cultural heritage (e.g. Vasta & Manzella, 2024; Cocchetta, 2024), also in a cross-cultural perspective: the focus will thus be on how memory landscapes and cultural heritage are transformed through remediation (Grusin & Bolter, 1999) and resemiotization (Iedema, 2003) in digital texts receptive to such storytelling. Contributions are invited which undertake critical multimodal discourse analyses that (dis-)articulate heritage voices of communities in the English-speaking world, including those using English as a Lingua Franca.

References

- Bolter, J. D., & Grusin, R. (1999). *(Re)mediation. Understanding New Media*. MIT Press.
- Cambria, M. (2021). "A War to End All Wars": Re-enacting and Re-embodying War Discourse. A Multimodal Analysis of Agency at WWI Galleries. In I. Moschini, & M.G. Sindoni (Eds.), *Mediation and Multimodal Meaning Making in Digital Environments* (pp. 50–65). Routledge.
- Cocchetta, F. (2024). Analysing Thematic Continuities and Discontinuities in ECoC Videos. In N. Vasta, & P. Manzella (Eds.), *Multimodal Promotional Strategies in Place and Cultural Heritage Branding. LiSpeTT*, 2 (pp. 45–61). University of Salento.
- Iedema, R. (2003). Multimodality, Resemiotization. *Visual Communication*, 2(1), 29–57.
- Lemke, J. (2009). Multimodality, Identity, and Time. In C. Jewitt (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Multimodal Analysis* (pp. 140–150). Routledge.
- Lemke, J. (2023). Transmedia Identities. Critical analysis and new media. In C. R. Caldas-Coulthard & M. Coulthard (Eds.), *Texts and Practices Revisited* (pp. 43–59). Routledge.
- Vasta, N., & Manzella, P. (Eds.) (2024). *Multimodal Promotional Strategies in Place and Cultural Heritage Branding. LiSpeTT*, 2. University of Salento.

Seminar n. 53. Communicating with migrants: Languages, policies and (human) ethics

Convenors

Amalia Amato (Università di Bologna) amalia.amato@unibo.it

Fabrizio Gallai (Università IULM Milano) fabrizio.gallai@iulm.it

Abstract

In the last four decades, Italy has gone from a country of origin to a destination for migrants. As of October 2024, 55,049 migrants arrived in Italy, most of them coming from Africa and the Middle East (Ministero dell'Interno, 2024). The process of refugee status determination for asylum seekers, and of reception and inclusion of migrants in general, involves a large number of people and is fraught with drawbacks. There is an intra-personal variability in assuming (or being given) roles, which highlights the need for more in-depth knowledge of communication mechanisms and dynamics for all participants (Barsky 1994). The same applies to awareness about sociocultural differences, which should not be emphasized nor minimized, but rather drawn near to create a common background for mutual understanding and knowledge (the basis for integration). In particular, cultural differences are seen as barriers to more humane participation in the asylum proceedings, and therefore raise important questions of fair legal outcomes for members of vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers (Blommaert 2001; Maryns, 2006; Pöllabauer, 2004; Sorgoni, 2013; Veglio, 2024).

This seminar aims to explore the issues of cross-cultural and cross-language communication needs of migrants, in their efforts to establish themselves as deserving of protection and well-integrated into society. In particular, we welcome contributions that discuss:

- discourse and representation, such as asylum narratives during the status determination procedure; issues of applicants' agency in interpreter-mediated asylum hearings; ethics, empathy and compassion in public service settings involving migrants
- structural and institutional challenges, such as new forms of enslavements in Italy and in transit countries (including human trafficking, forced labour, debt bondage, exploitation and servitude); activism and new forms of agency of migrants as crisis managers.

Doing justice to language and culture may ultimately lead to social justice, and small actions taken by properly informed and empowered stakeholders may redress the deep-seated imbalances in power relations in this setting.

References

Barsky, R. F. (1994) *Constructing a Productive Other*. John Benjamins.

Blommaert, J. (2001). Investigating narrative inequality: African asylum seekers' stories in Belgium. *Discourse & Society*, 12(4), 413–449.

Maryns, K. (2006). *The Asylum Speaker: Language in the Belgian Asylum Procedure*. St. Jerome.

Ministero dell'Interno (2024) *Cruscotto statistico giornaliero*. Accessed on 10 February 2025 at [cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_27-12-2024.pdf](https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2024-10/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_27-12-2024.pdf) https://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/2024-10/cruscotto_statistico_giornaliero_30-10-2024.pdf

Pöllabauer, Sonja (2004) Interpreting in asylum hearings: Issues of role, responsibility and power. *Interpreting*, 6(2), 143–180.

Sorgoni, B. (2013). Chiedere asilo. Racconti, traduzioni, trascrizioni. In B. Pinelli (Ed.), *Migrazioni e asilo politico*, Special issue of *Antropologia*, 13(15), 131–151.

Veglio, M. (2024). Linguistic and epistemic discrimination against migrants in Italian asylum procedures. In E. Monzó-Nebot & M. Lomeña-Galiano (Eds.), *Toward inclusion and social justice in institutional translation and interpreting: Revealing hidden practices of exclusion* (pp. 47–76). Routledge.

Seminar n. 54. Worlds beyond words: Lines of enquiry about language, metaphysics and spirituality.

Convenors

Cristina Pennarola (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) cpennaro@unina.it

Francesca Ditifeci (Università degli Studi di Firenze) francesca.ditifeci@unifi.it

Abstract

Technological advances and scientific progress have ensured a high quality of life and an unparalleled level of comfort, especially in the Western world (OECD, 2024) to the extent that our contemporary society seems obsessed with material possessions and physical well-being. However, in contrast to the spread of a consumerist ethos and utilitarian philosophy of mind, recent scholarly studies have shown that new forms of spirituality are taking over, and people's beliefs and sense of religious affiliation still bear considerable social significance (Norris & Inglehart, 2004; Pennarola, 2019 among others). Studies of spirituality are largely based on a Western-centred and Anglophone vantage point (Lomas, 2018), and consequently can benefit from a cross-cultural perspective widening the angle of analysis and showing the differences, commonalities and contaminations between traditions distant in time and space, made available by translations and informative materials (for example, see Marks et al. on the Buddhist origins and evolution of mindfulness in the Western world).

According to the Greek philosophers Heraclitus and Socrates, language (i.e., *logos*) belongs to the metaphysical as a trace and a reflection of the eternal principles shaping the world of all transient things and mortal beings (Colli, 1980). Human understanding, however, fails to grasp the essence of reality and the ideal world contemplated by philosophers, saints and ordinary people alike. In Plato's *Phaedo* the eternal *logos* prophesied remains obscure, while in the Prologue to John's Gospel, the Verb or word of God is embodied, rejected and apparently vilified (John 1:1-11). The tension between different versions of divine and human *logos* has fed a metaphysical discourse that lies deep in mystery, despite the widespread tendency to downplay the area of uncertainty and oversimplify (Ditifeci & Kantzas, 2021). Besides a philosophical approach to *logos*, words can also relieve the feelings of loneliness and nurture other human beings in need of a more rewarding humane identity, as shown by the pioneering experience of the London Alexandra pub (<https://www.swlondoner.co.uk/news/15012018-popular-merton-pub-opens-its-doors-to-offer-companionship-for-the-lonely>)

Taking the cue from David Crystal's advocacy of theolinguistics (2018), this seminar aims to shed light on the interrelationships between language, metaphysics and spirituality, and explore how language both reflects and shapes one's metaphysical, spiritual and/or religious identity in a never-ending quest for authenticity and meaningfulness. Lines of enquiry could include but are not limited to the following:

- universal or culture-bound dimensions of spirituality
- individual and collective religious identities
- prayer encoding and the dialogue with the divine
- the representation of the divine
- Western vs Eastern forms of cognition and spirituality
- ethnographic investigations of beliefs and believing communities
- verbal and multimodal representation of mystical/transcendental experiences
- allegiance with and subversion of religious doctrine(s)
- the pragmatics of faith-based social networks
- philosophical and theological approaches to spirituality

In line with the complexity and multifacetedness of this object of study, this seminar aims to encourage a wide variety of empirical and theoretical approaches.

References

Colli, G. (1980). *La sapienza greca*. Adelphi.

Crystal, D. (2018). Whatever Happened to Theolinguistics? In P. Chilton & M. Kopytowska (Eds.), *Religion, Language, and the Human Mind* (pp. 3–18). Oxford University Press.

Ditifeci, F., & Kantzas, I. E. D. (2021). Lost Identity in the Bible. *TOKEN: A Journal of English Linguistics*, 12, 209–230.

Lomas, T. (2018). The dynamics of Spirituality: A cross-cultural lexical analysis. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 11(2), 131–140.

Norris, P., & Inglehart, R. (2004). *Sacred and secular: Religion and politics worldwide*. Cambridge University Press.

- OECD (2024, November). *How's Life? 2024: Well-being and Resilience in Times of Crisis*, OECD Publishing, https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2024/11/how-s-life-2024_bdcf2f9f.html.
- Pennarola, C. (2019). Tales of conversion in the British press: the body and soul paradigm. *European Journal of English Studies*, 23(1), 73–96.
- Williams, G. M. J. & Kabat-Zinn, J. (Eds.) (2011). Mindfulness: diverse perspectives on its meaning, origins, and multiple applications at the intersection of science and dharma. *Contemporary Buddhism*, 12(1).

Seminar n. 55. English multimodal pragmatics in the digital era

Convenors

Aoife Beville (Università degli Studi di Napoli L'Orientale) abeville@unior.it

Fabio Ciambella (Università di Roma Sapienza) fabio.ciambella@uniroma1.it

Abstract

The digital era has revolutionized how we communicate, transforming traditional language use and meaning-making boundaries. In this context, multimodal pragmatics – the study of how meaning is constructed and interpreted through multiple modes (e.g., linguistic, visual, auditory, and spatial) – has gained unprecedented significance, although specific research is still quite scant. English, as a global lingua franca, plays a pivotal role in shaping and being shaped by these multimodal practices in diverse digital landscapes.

This seminar seeks to bring together scholars and practitioners to explore the intersections of English language use, multimodal communication, and digital technologies. We aim to foster a vibrant discussion on how multimodal pragmatics operates in digital contexts, encompassing social media, virtual reality, online gaming, digital storytelling, audiovisual products – and audiovisual translation – and other forms of digital communication.

We invite contributions that address (but are not limited to) the following themes:

- Multimodal meaning-making in English digital communication: How do text, images, emojis, GIFs, memes, and videos work together to create meaning in English-mediated digital spaces?
- Pragmatic strategies in digital English: How are politeness, humour, irony, or persuasion achieved through multimodal means in online interactions?
- Global Englishes and multimodality: How do users from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds employ multimodal resources to adapt and transform English in digital settings?
- Multimodal pragmatics in emerging technologies: What roles do Artificial Intelligence (AI), augmented reality, and virtual reality play in evolving multimodal English communication?
- Pedagogical implications: How can educators address the challenges and opportunities of teaching English multimodal pragmatics in the digital age?
- Ethical and social dimensions: How do issues of accessibility, inclusivity, and power manifest in English multimodal pragmatics online?

References

- Beltrán-Planques, V. & Querol-Julián, M. (2018). English language learners' spoken interaction: What a multimodal perspective reveals about pragmatic competence. *System*, 77, 80–90.
- Dicerto, S. (2018). *Multimodal pragmatics and translation: A new model for source text analysis*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Haryanti, P., Saddhono, K., & Anindyarini, A. (2023). Multimodal as a new perspective in pragmatics in the digital era: Literature review. *ICHSS*, 3, 494–501.
- Indarti, D. (2024). Multimodalities and conversational implicature in cross-cultural pragmatic context: A systematic review. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, 7(12), 9271–9280.
- Mubenga, K. S. (2009). Towards a multimodal pragmatic analysis of film discourse in audiovisual translation. *META*, 54(3), 466–484.
- O'Halloran, K. L., Tan, S., & Marissa, K. (2014). Multimodal pragmatics. In K. P. Schneider & A. Barron (Eds.), *Pragmatics of discourse* (pp. 239–268). Mouton de Gruyter.
- Santonocito, C. S. & Polli, C. (2023). An experimental critical multimodal discourse study to the AI-driven sentiment analysis of online crisis communication. *Lingue e Linguaggi*, 59, 333–349.
- Xin-yu, L. (2022). The new transformations and prospects of speech act research from the multimodal perspective. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 12(6), 653–660.

Seminar n. 56. Multilingual/multimodal text-types and language learning in the Early Modern English context (1500–1750)

Convenors

Donatella Montini (Università di Roma Sapienza) donatella.montini@uniroma1.it

Marco Bagli (Università per Stranieri di Perugia) marco.bagli@unistrapg.it

Abstract

In the early modern period, while vernacular languages underwent processes of development, enrichment, and standardization – driven by the pursuit of linguistic and national homogeneity – polyglossia remained a fundamental feature of the historical trajectory of the English language. (Bennett & Cattaneo, 2022; Bistuè, 2013; Burke, 2004). Multilingual encounters thrived, shaped by dynamic practices of learning, translation, and linguistic borrowing. After all, this was the age of mediators, travellers, translators, missionaries, and merchants.

To put it in the terms of Roman Jakobson's definition of translation (Jakobson 1959), the interaction between interlinguistic and intersemiotic forms of translation will be the focus of the panel with respect to language learning and teaching practices (Gallagher, 2019; Montini, forth.), and with particular attention to the visual dimension that emerges from the coexistence of multiple languages (Kress, 2010; Sindoni, 2023). The session aims to provide a forum for the exploration of linguistic and methodological perspectives, focusing on the circulation of English when it was not a *lingua franca*, in dialogue and confrontation with Latin and with other national vernaculars.

We invite abstracts that examine linguistic and visual features in non-literary specialized discourse, with a focus on text types such as grammars, dictionaries, conversation manuals, illustrated marginalia, multilingual parallel texts, language teaching manuals, emblems, and letters – sources that offer valuable insights into interlingual and intercultural exchanges.

Potential areas of inquiry include, but are not limited to:

- interlingual and intersemiotic forms of translation in a didactic context (grammars, dictionaries, conversation manuals, illustrated marginalia, multilingual parallel texts, language teaching manuals, emblems, and letters)
- translingual communication and language learning
- didactic use of illustrations, typographic variations, marginalia, structured page layouts
- theoretical aspects, methodological challenges and results of empirical research in multilingual non-literary discourse
- stylistic and multimodal strategies of dissemination
- metalinguistic awareness and its development through time
- contact and change: linguistic and cultural mediation
- dissemination to specific groups and networks.

References

Bennett, K., and A. Cattaneo, (Eds.) (2022). *Language Dynamics in the Early Modern Period, Multilingualism, Lingua Franca and Translation*. Routledge.

Bistuè, B. (2013). *Collaborative Translation and Multi-Version Texts in Early Modern Europe*. Ashgate.

Burke, P. (2004). *Languages and Communities in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Gallagher, J. (2019). *Learning Languages in Early Modern England*. Oxford University Press.

Jakobson R. (1959). On linguistic aspects of translation. In R. A. Browen (Ed.). *On translation* (pp. 232–239). Harvard University Press.

Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. Routledge.

Montini, D. (forth.). Teaching Latin in Boxes, Columns and Rows: Joseph Webbe's Children's Talk (1627). In *Polyglossia, Teaching and Contact across Early Modern Europe, Asia and the Americas*.

Sindoni, M. G. (2023). Traiettorie della multimodalità: gli snodi teorici e i modelli applicativi, *Italiano LinguaDue*, 2, 19–46.

Seminar n. 57. The metalanguage of linguistics in English through history: human knowledge and computational methods

Convenors

Angela Andreani (Università degli Studi di Milano) angela.andreani@unimi.it

Daniel Russo (Università degli Studi dell'Insubria) daniel.russo@uninsubria.it

Abstract

English premodern linguistics and terminology have been treated in a piecemeal manner in the fields of ESP/LSP, general linguistics and the history of ideas. The marginal place of premodern English is evident in seminal collections on the metalanguage of linguistics (Colombat & Savelli, 2001; Orioles, Bombi, & Brazzo, 2012), and in the *International Handbook of Special-Language and Terminology Research*, where only one of three essays on premodern English addresses linguistics. While Walmsley revisits grammatical terminology historically (2022), a broader understanding of the development of English linguistic metalanguage remains lacking.

Despite the role of English in premodern linguistic thought may seem trifling compared to the French, German, Italian and Latin-Greek traditions, early and late modern English sources abound in language-related debates. Alston's *Bibliography of the English Language* highlights the ubiquity of linguistic discourse throughout the history of English and the cross-fertilization of the sciences and humanities in a period predating the establishment of modern disciplinary boundaries.

The seminar intends to study how English itself served as a tool for discussing language across a variety of fields of knowledge, integrating philological and computational methods. In particular, it seeks to explore:

- methods to collect and analyse the metalinguistic terminology in English historical sources
- forms and functions of the English metalanguage of linguistics in historical perspective, focusing on terminology, lexicalization, variation, and semantic change
- English text-types involved in the circulation of linguistic knowledge and practice
- epistemic transfers shaping linguistic knowledge in early and late modern England.

Within the broader framework of Digital Humanities, the seminar will address its potential to bridge historical linguistics with digital practices for the analysis of historical texts (McGillivray, 2020). In exploring English linguistic metalanguage, it will also consider how such language reflects and shapes human/humane values within linguistic discourse. This seminar is supported by the PRIN2022 state funded project "MetaLing Corpus: Creating a corpus of English linguistics metalanguage from the 16th to the 18th century" at the University of Milan and University of Insubria.

References

- Alston, R. C. (1965–2011). *A bibliography of the English language from the invention of printing to the year 1800*. Scholar press.
- Colombat, B. et M. Savelli. (2001). *Métalangage et terminologie linguistique: actes du colloque international de Grenoble*. Peeters.
- McGillivray, B. (2020). Computational Methods for Semantic Analysis of Historical Texts. In K. Schuster and S. Dunn (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in Digital Humanities* (pp. 305–324) Routledge.
- Orioles, V., R. Bombi e M. Brazzo. (2012). *Proceedings of the first workshop on the metalanguage of linguistics*. Il Calamo.
- Walmsley, J. (2022). Language turned back on itself. Growth and structure of the English metalanguage. In S. Coffey (Ed.), *The History of Grammar in Foreign Language Teaching* (pp. 173–190), Amsterdam University Press.

Seminar n. 58. Linguistic landscapes: Exploring language variation and change in language users' space

Convenors

Siria Guzzo (Università degli Studi di Salerno) sguzzo@unisa.it

Marianna Lya Zummo (Università degli Studi di Palermo) mariannalya.zummo@unipa.it

Abstract

The world is becoming increasingly interconnected and the way language is used by humans in different contexts within diverse *spaces* reflects the deep sociopolitical, cultural, and ideological shifts in human communication. Space may be understood through three distinct orders of spatiality: the physical-material, social, and mental spaces (Britain, 2013). The physical-material order encompasses geodesic surfaces, distances, and various location levels. In contrast, the social order refers to the structures of interactions. Lastly, the mental order involves the attitudes and beliefs that shape how people perceive and interpret their environments and geographical realities. As the physical-material, social, and mental spaces become more multicultural and interconnected, the interaction of various languages is evident at different levels of language production (Britain, 2013; Kim, 2001).

This seminar focuses on how the concept of linguistic landscape intended as “the general language situation or linguistic diversity” (Gorter, 2013: 191) and encompassing the concept of language choices, contact, and variation is rendered, navigated, and developed across time and space in human communication (Labov & Cohen, 1967; Gorter, 2013). With the broad usage of English, digital platforms and physical spaces have become an extension of social and mental spaces, mirroring broader sociocultural transformations and humane values. In such complex composition, language variation reflects the linguistic vitality of English at the macro level, and either 1) contribute in the creation of segregated LLs or 2) enrich melting tendencies at the micro level (Ng & Deng, 2017; Yao & Gruba, 2022).

This seminar invites the scientific community to explore theoretically and empirically language variation and change as fundamental aspects of human and humane practices, where power relations, resilience, and identity formation are reflected. Contributions to the seminar are expected to explore language variation within the physical-material, the social, and the mental orders of spatiality, and/or indicate how language changes maintain/neglect existing dominance in (sexist, ageist, hate) discourses.

References

- Britain, D. (2013). Space, diffusion and mobility. In J. K. Chambers, P. Trudgill, and N. Schilling-Estes (Eds.), *The handbook of language variation and change* (pp. 469–500). Wiley-Blackwell.
- Gorter, D. (2013). Linguistic landscapes in a multilingual world. *Annual review of applied linguistics*, 33, 190–212.
- Kim, Y. Y. (2001). *Becoming intercultural: An integrative theory of communication and cross-cultural adaptation*. Sage.
- Labov, W. & Cohen, P. (1967). Systematic relations of standard and non-standard rules in the grammar of Negro speakers. *Project Literacy Reports* (8), 66–84. Cornell University.
- Ng, S., and Deng, F. (2017). Language and Power. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*.
- Yao, X., & Gruba, P. (2022). Power through the semiotic landscape. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 43(5), 373–386.

Seminar n. 59. Linguistic perspectives on Caribbean Englishes and English-lexified Caribbean creoles

Convenors

Cristiano Furiassi (Università di Torino) cristiano.furiassi@unito.it

Renato Tomei (Università per Stranieri di Perugia) renato.tomei@unistrapg.it

Abstract

The varieties of English and the English-lexified creoles spoken across the Caribbean are the outcome of complex creative interplay between the English superstratum and various West African substrata, which have been in contact for over four hundred years within the social vacuum forcibly created by early colonizers. Although the “Afric” (Allsopp 2004: xiv) component is obviously of paramount importance for their onset, “translanguaging” (García & Wei 2014: 137) and “polyglossing” (Král 2019: 836) practices are widespread across speech communities throughout the Anglophone Caribbean.

As a consequence, this part of the Anglosphere stands out as uniquely “fragmented” (Holm, 1986: 1) – historically, geographically, politically and hence linguistically – by the “colonial lag” but concomitantly united by “Pan-Caribbean tendencies” (Gramley 2001: 82), as shown by the authoritative lexicographic works compiled by Richard Allsopp, that is the *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* (1996/2003), the *New Register of Caribbean English Usage* (2010) and *A Book of Afric Caribbean Proverbs* (2004).

Accordingly, this seminar aims to bring together scholars interested in exploring language variation and change in such a culturally diverse conglomerate from various linguistic perspectives, namely lexicological, phraseological, paremiological and metaphorical, by also considering attendant representations of identity and ethnicity. Potential topics focusing on Caribbean Englishes and/or English-lexified Caribbean Creoles may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lexicology and lexicography
- Phraseology/phraseography and Paremiology/paremiography
- Oral traditions
- Translanguaging and multilingual practices
- Decreolization
- Metaphors and conceptual framing
- Digital and audiovisual communication

References

Allsopp, R. (1996). *Dictionary of Caribbean English usage*. Oxford University Press.

Allsopp, R. (2003). *Dictionary of Caribbean English usage*, 2nd imp. University of the West Indies Press.

Allsopp, R. (2004). *A book of Afric Caribbean proverbs*. Arawak Publications.

Allsopp, R. (2010). *New register of Caribbean English usage*. University of the West Indies Press.

García, O. & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Gramley, S. (2001). *The vocabulary of world English*. Arnold.

Holm, J. A. (1986). The spread of English in the Caribbean area. In M. Görlach & J. A. Holm (Eds.), *Focus on the Caribbean* (pp. 1–22). John Benjamins.

Král, F. (2019). Polyglossing in English: The diasporic trajectories of the English language. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*, 55(6), 836–849.