

From the Editor

It is a great pleasure to introduce readers to the first issue of this new journal, originating in a project of the Linguistics and Oriental Studies Section (*Sezione di Studi Linguistici e Orientali*) of the Department of Languages, Literatures and Intercultural Studies (LILSI), University of Florence and produced by the Department's Open Access Publishing Workshop (LabOA), directed by Prof. Beatrice Tóttösy. It follows on from the *Quaderni del Dipartimento di Linguistica dell'Università di Firenze* (1990-2012), published under the direction of Prof. Leonardo M. Savoia by the Department of Linguistics, where several of the people involved in the new journal previously worked.

Our journal, issuing from the linguistic and orientalist components of LILSI, reflects their scientific and research interests. It aims to provide a forum for scholarly debate concerning the analysis of the various aspects of language, open to the community of linguists and oriental scholars in Italy and abroad, and highlighting the contributions of younger scholars whose research is being and was supervised by members of the Department. The current issue well exemplifies these general aims and the range of thematic areas that the journal covers. The article by **Prof. Giuliana Giusti** and **Dr. Iulia Zegrean** on the structure of Istro-Romanian (a variety of eastern Romance spoken in the Istrian peninsula in Croatia, also named Vlaški or Žejanski) illustrates the decades-long collaboration between some of the some of the Florence linguists, including myself and Prof. Savoia, and linguists at Venice Ca' Foscari University, recently manifested in a shared interest in minority languages and languages in contact. Another strength of Florence linguistics is phonological research, specifically on varieties of Romance. **Dr. Rosangela Lai**, currently a post-doctoral researcher in Florence, contributes an article on word-initial geminates in Sardinian. She observes that it is uncommon for languages to display phonological contrasts between simplex and geminate obstruents, though Italian does. Sardinian displays an even rarer phonological contrast of this kind in word-initial position, which Lai insightfully analyzes in terms of the CVCV Theory of phonology.

Several of the linguistics contributions illustrate another interest thriving among the scholars who have been or are associated with Florence, namely first and second language acquisition, seen in a theoretical perspective. **Prof. Elisa Di Domenico** (Università per Stranieri di Perugia), who held a temporary

position in Florence at the beginning of her career, writes on the acquisition of English as a second language. She uncovers the very intriguing fact that genitival 's and copular 's being considered one and the same morpheme by her experimental subjects leads one to reconsider their (distinct or common) status theoretically. **Giulia Bellucci** and **Paolo Lorusso**, both students following the Linguistics curriculum of the PhD Program of the Department, write on first language acquisition. Lorusso considers the acquisition of the present perfect in children's Italian, confirming that the *Aktionsart* of verbs is relevant for the productivity of early auxiliaries; more specifically, and quite interestingly, the perfective reading is maximally difficult with unergatives, while it is favoured by the presence of an internal argument (in unaccusatives and transitives). Bellucci provides experimental data concerning both *Faire-Infinitive* causatives in 3 to 6 years olds, showing that by the age of four Italian speaking children accurately comprehend and produce the structure, including *causees* introduced by the *a* preposition. Her novel insight is that one should cease seeing the latter as the ditransitive object of the complex causative verb and start seeing it as more akin to other oblique subjects.

Prof. Benedetta Baldi and **Dr. Ludovico Franco** take us to the domain where language interfaces with discourse and communication. Prof. Baldi (from the sister DILEF Department) is responsible for the Florence unit of a PRIN project concerning delegitimization, on which Dr. Franco (Universidade Nova de Lisboa) collaborates. Their study of the "austere prose" of Palmiro Togliatti focusses on three speeches delivered in the period 1947-1952, bringing to light several different discursive strategies within the (de)legitimization spectrum. **Debora Ciampi**, currently a PhD student in Linguistics at the University of Pisa, addresses film dialogue in English and as dubbed in Italian in two cult teen movies of different decades. This allows her to bring into focus the complex interplay of the two languages, highlighting instances of creativity as well as of dubious rendering in translation. Classical translation studies, also applied to modern audiovisual media, are an important research area of English Language studies within the Department, specifically by Prof. John Denton.

The journal also hosts several contributions in the field of Oriental Studies. The work of **Andrea Scibetta**, currently a PhD student at the Università per Stranieri di Siena, provides a natural bridge with several of the preceding articles, being interested in Chinese students' acquisition of L2 Italian (as is Prof. Valentina Pedone among the members of our Department). The focus of Scibetta however is not on morphosyntactic processes, but rather on the textual and meta-textual competences of his chosen category of learners. His useful contribution to the ongoing theoretical debate consists of a corpus-based cross-sectional study investigating the development of Italian L2 textual skills in Chinese university students. With **Prof. Valerio Luigi Alberizzi** (Waseda University, Tōkyō) we move into the fascinating field of Sino-Japanese

hybridization, as seen in the history of the Japanese written language – a topic which well illustrates the philological research of our Japanese scholars, Prof. Ikuko Sagiya and Prof. Francesca Fraccaro. After reviewing existing literature, Alberizzi outlines the main differences between Japanized written Chinese (*waka kanbun*) and Sino-Japanese hybrid writing (*wakan konkōbun*) and surveys textual evidence showing how an embryonic form of Sino-Japanese hybrid writing existed before the twelfth century. **Dr. Romina Vergari**, currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Strasbourg, also addresses historical evidence pertaining to the Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible. She considers the word לְצֶלֶם ‘shadow’ in Biblical Hebrew and its rendering in the Old Greek translation, considering the motivation that may have led the translators to choose the noun σκῆπη rather than σκιά. This complex investigation, requiring familiarity with the Hebrew biblical text and Greek literary and non-literary sources is a good example of the kind of work in the lexical semantics of Biblical Hebrew for which our Dept. and especially Prof. Ida Zatelli are noted.

This brief presentation can hardly do justice to the single articles – but it should provide a useful introduction to the range of interests represented by members of the LILSI Dept. and its Linguistics and Oriental Studies section, which we aim to reflect in our journal, with contributions centered on theoretical linguistics and its applied dimension, on discourse and translation studies, and on the philological study of historically attested languages. I take the occasion to thank all the people who have worked for the success of this first issue and look forward to future issues, I hope for many years to come.

M. Rita Manzini