

# L'ANALISI LINGUISTICA E LETTERARIA

FACOLTÀ DI LINGUE E LETTERATURE STRANIERE  
UNIVERSITÀ CATTOLICA DEL SACRO CUORE

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ANNO XVI 2008

*SPECIAL ISSUE*

Proceedings of the IADA Workshop  
*Word Meaning in Argumentative Dialogue*

Homage to Sorin Stati

VOLUME 1

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edited by G. Gobber, S. Cantarini, S. Cigada, M.C. Gatti & S. Gilardoni

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## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

The publication of the Proceedings of the I.A.D.A. Workshop 2008 *Word Meaning in Argumentative Dialogue* aims at contributing in a relevant way to the understanding of lexical phenomena from an interactional and textual point of view. In fact the conference topic covers an important crossing between three research lines at least, first of all *dialogue* as the specific interest of the Association.

Dialogue is meant in a polysemic way for referring to effective interaction analysis but also to its representations in literature and in the media, including polyphony effects in any communicative event, even in written ones. As Luisa Camaiora highlighted in her Foreword to these Proceedings, dialogue is a key-word in our multicultural social context, while “dialogue” analysis as a practice comes out to be more and more meaningful in nowadays professional, public and institutional contexts. Therefore it is also especially meaningful in the context of a modern languages Faculty as ours.

The second research line mentioned in the conference title is *argumentation*. The intersection between dialogue and argumentation selects specific practices of dialogue as a reasonable and shared application of communicative activities. As outlined by the model of critical discussion in recent years, these practices obey to general inferential rules, in spite of relevant context-boundedness. In this perspective, a considerable number of participants developed various aspects of emotional and emotive argumentation.

Third and last, the workshop title pointed to *word meaning* as the specific linguistic structure to be analyzed. This hint has been variously interpreted in the papers, as attention to be devoted to discourse markers, to specific lexical items or to translation aspects. For this last area, German and English received a specific attention during the workshop and this relevant topic appears frequently throughout the proceedings.

The perspective adopted cannot be but a pragmatic and functionalist one. Nonetheless, each scholar contributed to the conference topic with peculiar methodological and theoretical sensitivity, as is a longstanding tradition in the history of our International Association. That is the cause of great variety and so to say heterogeneity in approach and in focusing. Contributions are also collocated at very diverse scientific levels, according to the different ages and scientific experience of the participants.

As it is a tradition in I.A.D.A. working style, a rich range of natural languages is represented, as a concrete instrument of dialogue in a multicultural scientific community: English and French first of all, German as the scientific research domain of the conveners Giovanni Gobber and Sibilla Cantarini, Italian as the language spoken in the hosting region. But the specific topic of the workshop encouraged many participants to take into account specific linguistic aspects, contrastive perspectives, or translation dynamics, focusing on Russian, Spanish (also in its Latin-American varieties), Portuguese, Romanian, Persian and out of Indo-European languages, Japanese, thus contributing to deepening our knowledge of particular linguistic phenomena.

As far as research methodologies are concerned, some authors adopt a normative perspective describing so to say “how argumentation should be”. Some others start from the description of actual linguistic facts and they apply interpretation models and categories without discussing them. In general, many contributions use an assorted technique, starting from a model, comparing it with data and studying relevant implications.

Faced with this situation, the editors tried to put some (mostly arbitrary) order among the almost seventy papers they received, dividing them in ten sections all along the two volumes. Each volume opens with a series of papers presented during the conference plenary sessions. This section has been named in both volumes *Linguistic Structures and Pragmatic Functions in Argumentation*. The contributions that follow refer to the papers discussed in the parallel sessions. In the first volume, these contributions have been divided in the following sections: *Considering Argumentative Discourse in German*; *Linguistic Devices in Argumentative Dialogues*, gathering papers about micro-phenomena in different languages, and *Cross-Linguistic Perspectives*, with papers oriented towards contrastive analysis; *Theoretical Issues in Argumentation* closes the first volume offering contributions to a better understanding of methodological and theoretical problems.

The second volume opens with the second group of key-note speakers contributions (*Linguistic Structures and Pragmatic Functions in Argumentation*) followed by four sections, i.e.: *Reasonable Emotions and Argumentation*; *Argumentation in Professional Contexts* in some specific domains (politic and legal discourse; classroom discourse; economic discourse; scientific discourse). The following section gathers texts about *Argumentative Dialogue in Literature and Communication*, while the last part covers studies about argumentative strategies from a functionalist point of view with the section-title *Theoretical Issues in Argumentation*.

Book reviews, covering aspects of general linguistics as well as English, French, German and Russian linguistics, appear in the final section of each volume, as is customary in each issue of «L'analisi linguistica e letteraria» (available online at <http://www.unicatt.it/librario/all/indexUK.asp>).

The three days of the workshop represented an interesting occasion to meet colleagues from all over Europe but also from Argentina, Canada, Iran, Israel, Mexico and Russia, and to spend time together listening to each other in the enjoyable environment of our University.

The workshop was partially organized with the financial support of a National Research Project PRIN 2007, but we wish to thank all those who made the workshop possible both by economic support and by self-involvement in the conference organization: the Milan Campus Administration, in particular its international network; the Organizing Committee, with Sarah Bigi, Fabrizio Macagno and Lucia Salvato; the Scientific Committee composed by, together with the Editors, Marina Bondi, Anna Bonola, Christian Plantin, Marcello Soffritti and Margherita Ulrych.

At the end of these opening pages, we wish to remember the Founder and first President of I.A.D.A. Sorin Stati, who departed in January 2008, just a few months before the workshop took place. Apart from the important scientific role he played in the international context with his studies in the fields of philology, linguistics and argumentation theory, and apart from his irreplaceable foundational role in the International Association for Dialogue Analysis, we wish to remember him here in a very personal way, as a teacher and as a friend. Each of the Editors retains a grateful memory of his paternal encouraging approach, frank in explaining, in giving advice and even in correcting, generous in his friendship, relevant in judging and in decision making. Many thanks to Marcelo Dascal who offered his paper as a homage for Sorin Stati in the name of us all.

*Giovanni Gobber*

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*& Silvia Gilardoni*