Conference on Historical News Discourse

CHINED 2007

Zurich, Switzerland

August 31 – September 1, 2007

The conference will take place
at the Kartause Ittingen
(near Frauenfeld), Switzerland

The Kartause Ittingen, a former monastery, provides excellent conference facilities in the middle of a beautiful countryside.

Conference Program

Friday, August 31, 2007

14:15	Opening
14:30-15:00	**Irma Taavitsainen**: "Joyful News out of the Newfound World": Medical news reports in Early Modern England
15:00-15:30	**Ellen Valle**: An imperial disease – and a colonial remedy: The 'Jesuits' bark' in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English periodical press
15:30-16:00	**Lilo Moessner**: News filtering processes in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*
16:00	Coffee
16:30-17:00	**Valerie Wainwright**: "The gingling bells of science": Speech issues at the mid-eighteenth century
17:00-17:30	**Elisabetta Cecconi**: Comparing seventeenth-century news broadsides and pamphlets: Interrelatedness in news reporting
17:30-18:00	**Allesandra Levorato**: 'From you, my Lord, professions are but words – they are so much bait for fools to catch on': Impoliteness strategies in the Act of Union debate
19:00	Dinner

Saturday, September 1, 2007

09:30-10:00	**Nicholas Brownlees**: "alwayes in te Orbe of honest Mirth, and next to Truth": Parody and factuality in the Welch mercury
10:00-10:30	**Thomas Kohnen**: Religious language in early English newspapers?
10:30-11:00	**Claudia Claridge**: The use of comparisons in news publications
11:00	Coffee
11:30-12:00	**Laura Wright**: The linguistic conventions of late eighteenth-century want ads
12:00-12:30	**Susan Kermas**: A journey through time: A sociolinguistic survey of advertising past and present
12:30-14:00	Lunch
14:00-14:30	**Mirella Billi**: Theatre goers' comments in eighteenth-century serial publications: The rise of a critical language
14:30-15:00	**Birte Bös**: *Place yer bets* – "Personal sentences" in the Rostock newspaper corpus
15:00-15:30	**Patrick Studer**: Historical corpus stylistics and early news discourse
15.30	Coffee
16:00-17:00	**Udo Fries, Plenary**: Crime and punishment
18:00	Dinner

Travel Information

Arrival at Zurich airport

There are direct trains connecting Zurich airport with Frauenfeld, the nearest town and train station to the conference venue. Within Zurich airport the train station is located at the lower level, directions towards it are given throughout the airport. Before descending to the platforms you will have to buy your train ticket at the ground level either at one of the ticket vending machines or over one of the counters. At the latter, ask for a round trip to Frauenfeld (26.80 Swiss Francs) giving the vendor your travel dates. At the former, you may find it easier to purchase a one-way ticket (13.40 Swiss Francs) for the day and a second one on the day of your return journey to the airport.

Direct trains to Frauenfeld run every half hour at the following times (or earlier) from platform 1:

11:48h
12:18h
12:48h
13:18h

The journey to Frauenfeld takes you 28 min. You will be picked up at the train station in Frauenfeld by Prof. Andreas H. Jucker or Prof. Udo Fries by car. The former monastery, Kartause Ittingen, is situated in the countryside at about 4.5km from Frauenfeld. In case there is nobody there to meet you, please contact Prof. Andreas H. Jucker under the following number: +41 79 2701632.

Abstracts

Mirella Billi
University of Tuscia, Italy
Email: mirbilli@libero.it

Theatre-goers' comments in eighteenth-century serial publications: The rise of a critical language

In the eighteenth century, the theatres occupied a more prominent and important place particularly in the social life of London than at any other time. Comments by theatre-goers, generally in the form of letters, and "accounts" of plays of more professional writers (the authors of unsigned articles, often defined "correspondents"), started to appear early in the numerous daily and weekly newspapers and monthly magazines (such as *Daily Courant*, *Defoe's Weekly Review*, *Town-Talk*, *The London Post*, *The London Gazette*, *The British Merchant*, *The Critical Review*, *The Examiner*).

Though only based on the performances of plays (the texts being the object of interest to the more respectable and cloistered dramatic critic, often dissociated from the experience in the theatre) and mixed up with gossip, personal attacks (particularly on actors), remarks on fashion, political debate, and moral considerations, these early comments, besides showing the extraordinary vitality and variety of the theatre of the time, influenced dramatists and critics, oriented the taste of the public, and determined, to a considerable extent, especially between 1730 and 1750, important developments in the theatre itself and in the history of theatrical criticism.

In the letters from correspondents regularly published in *The British Journal*, or *The Traveller*, *The Weekly Register*, *Grub Street Journal*, *The Ledger*, in the "accounts" on plays in *The Universal Museum*, *The Court Miscellany*, *Fortnight's Register*, and in the later articles by essayists and critics, such as Aaron Hill (who contributed to *The Prompter*), and Oliver Goldsmith, who wrote for the *Morning Chronicle* and whose seminal article on comedy appeared in *Westminster Magazine*, basic questions about the stage, both theoretical and practical, emerged and were discussed.

Journals and pamphlets contributed not only to critical opinion, but fulfilled in their initial, often haphazard, way the same function which the later newspapers and magazines were to develop in a more regular and organized manner, also in keeping not only with the evolution of literary criticism, but the important transformations in eighteenth-century culture from Neo-Classicism to Romanticism.

The practice of regular theatrical reviewing became definitely established in the newspapers and periodicals of the second half of the century, when barely one of the larger newspapers failed to publish paragraphs on the performances. Old and new plays received regular comments in the public press, where readable and significant reviews appeared. Particularly the new papers gave considerable space to theatrical criticism, to which two periodical publications *Dramatic Censor* and *Macaroni and Theatrical Magazine* were exclusively dedicated. Meanwhile the dailies, the widely-read *Morning Chronicle* and *Morning Post*, were edited by men particularly interested in the theatre. Most of the critics were no longer anonymous: John Potter, editor of the "Theatrical Review" in *Public Ledger*, William Woodfall, George Steevens, Charles Este, and William Kenrick, were extremely influential and important in establishing new attitudes toward the theatre and for the formation of a new critical language with their editing and writing for the most important magazines of the time, such as *St. James's Chronicle*, *Morning Chronicle*, *Public Advertiser*, *London Magazine* and *Westminster Magazine*. With James Boaden's essays for the press the "closet" criticism based on dramatic texts was reconciled with popular judgment and the new language for theatrical criticism was definitely established.

Birte Bös
University of Rostock, Germany
Email: birte.boes@uni-rostock.de

Place yer bets – "Personal sentences" in the Rostock Newspaper Corpus (RNC)

The umbrella term 'personal sentences' conveniently subsumes stylistic devices such as quotations, interrogatives, imperatives, exclamatives, and personal comments of various kinds. Their importance for the attractiveness and readability of newspaper texts has not only been pointed out by Flesch, who coined the term in the middle of the last century, but is regularly emphasized in style manuals and media research.

By employing a simplified model of newspaper communication, we can assume a tripartite structure including the author/editor, the informants/referents of the article, and the general readership. The relationship of author/editor and general readership, as will be illustrated later, is particularly interesting with respect to personal sentences. Research on the RNC (a compilation of popular and quality newspapers from 1700 to the present) has shown that British newspapers addressed their readers directly as early as the 18th century. However, the

range of means used and their frequency have tremendously increased since then.

It does not come as a surprise that in the 18th-century samples, reader address was mainly put into practise as part of the personal correspondence style of early news reports (cf. Schneider's observations on the use of the pronouns 'you' and 'I' in the RNC). The first interrogatives, which were found in the samples of the 1760 corpus, were already trying to encourage readers' participation, their rhetorical effect being strengthened by the occasional use of the inclusive 'we'. The use of questions explicitly directed to the reader as well as their extension into imitated question-answer sequences are apparently phenomena of the 20th century, as are the use of directives. Another development of more recent times is that readers are given a voice by simulating direct speech. All these devices contribute to the involvement of the reader and the establishment of common ground, important assets in newspapers' competition for customers. These strategies and their effects will be discussed with the help of selected examples from the RNC.

REFERENCES
- Flesch, Rudolf (1949/1974), *The Art of Readable Writing*, New York, etc: Harper&Row, Publishers.
- Schneider, Kristina (2002): *The Development of Popular Journalism in England from 1700 to the Present*. Rostock: PhD thesis.

Nicholas Brownlees
University of Florence, Italy
Email: nicholas.brownlees@unifi.it

"alwayes in te Orbe of honest Mirth, and next to Truth": Parody and factuality in the Welch mercury

17th-century periodical news publications range in style from the formal and impersonal to the interactive and oral (Raymond 2003, Brownlees 2006). At the time of the English Revolution, during the 1640s and 1650s, printed weekly news provided an exceptionally wide stylistic range. One of the most linguistically distinctive of these newsbooks, as these weekly publications were then called, was the Welch Mercury. This was not just markedly oral in its discourse but frequently contained explicit non-standard English. For example, the following two passages are from the second number of 28 October – 3 November 1643:

"Her bee informed from Plimouth, that awle te Souldiers was come out of te Towne, and was make creat Posterities and issues on the enemy that besiege them [...]"
"Her doe understand that 300 Papists, and a creat many other Malignants are got into Dudley Castle, upon the edge of Shropshire, which is pigger than any of her Welch Villages, and pigge houses in Wales [...]"

What the pro-Parliament writer is doing is parodying Welsh English. However, apart from satirising this regional variety, and thereby ridiculing the cultural ignorance and political folly of the generally Royalist-supporting Welsh, the news writer also has a secondary purpose. In the fourth number of the publication he says that while his newsbook lies "alwayes in te Orbe of honest Mirth", it is also "next to Truth, for though her seem sometimes merry, yet her may be true and serious in her Resolutions" (11 November – 20 November 1643).

My intention in this paper is therefore to begin by examining some of the marked characteristics of the writer's representation of Welsh English. I shall consider the communicative significance of those passages in Welsh English and determine how far the extended representation of this regional dialect in the newsbook both conforms to and diverges from its printed representation in other texts. In so far as it diverges, it will be interesting to analyse which constructions are parodied and why.

Following this examination of regional variety and metalinguistic comment, I shall then consider the discourse strategies the writer adopts in order to convince his readers that rather than being just simple, merry parody his newsbook also provides factual accuracy and journalistic "Truth". One of these strategies again includes metalinguistic reflection.

REFERENCES

- Brownlees, Nicholas. 2005. Spoken discourse in early English newspapers. In Raymond, Joad (ed.). *News Networks in Early Modern Britain and Europe*. London: Routledge. 67-84.
- Raymond, Joad. 2003. *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elisabetta Cecconi
University of Florence, Italy
Email: elisabetta.cecconi2@virgilio.it

Comparing seventeenth-century news broadsides and pamphlets: Interrelatedness in news reporting

Broadside ballads and pamphlets were two main sources of domestic news transmission in the XVII century and circulated side by side within a wide audience range (Watt 1991; Raymond 2003). Although the co-presence of the two genres in the print market was a matter of fact, the assumption that broadsides and pamphlets ran on two parallel but distinct tracks turns out to be quite misleading when comparing the texts.

In this paper I shall investigate the different degrees of interrelatedness between news broadsides and pamphlets and I shall highlight similarities and differences in their structural and rhetorical organisation of the reported event. Particular attention will be drawn to the way in

which the Puritan ideology of the time permeates the telling of the story so as to create a direct bond between the news and its effect on people's own lives.

In both the genres the task to inform and moralise is carried out by an evaluative voice which exploits features of orality in order to establish an interpersonal contact with the audience. In the course of my enquiry I shall inspect to what extent broadsides and pamphlets adopt a sort of proto-editorial style and I shall speculate on its functions in the context of the reported event. The comparative analysis will provide evidence of Fox's claim that in the early modern period " 'oral' and 'literate' form a dynamic continuum each feeding in and out of the other to the development and nourishment of both" (2000:50).

Finally the interrelatedness between the two genres will be systematically scrutinised in relation to the tenor of discourse. Although news broadsides and pamphlets presumably shared more or less the same audience (Watt 1991), the first were mainly written to be sung, while the latter were intended to be read either privately or collectively. This obviously affected their degree of formality making it necessary to inspect their stylistic contamination in light of their preserved discourse specificity.

REFERENCES

- Bell, A. (1991) *The Language of News Media,* Oxford: Blackwell
- Fox, A. (2000) *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700*, Oxford: Oxford U.P.
- Raymond, J. (2003) *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge U.P.
- Watt, T. (1991) *Cheap Print and Popular Piety,* Cambridge: Cambridge U.P.

Claudia Claridge
University of Kiel, Germany
Email: claridge@anglistik.uni-kiel.de

The use of comparisons in news publications

Comparison is both a common cognitive process serving as an 'aid' to perception and comprehension, and, under the name of simile, a familiar and frequent stylistic device. The paper aims at investigating the syntactic realisations and the use of comparative structures in earlier news writing, using the ZEN and parts of the Rostock Newspaper Corpus. The forms to be looked at include as (/so… as), as if, as though, like and than. The main emphasis will lie on the question of why writers employ comparative structures and what effect they may have on newspaper readers. Comparisons can be of the explanatory kind, as when an animal in a foreign country is described as being "as big as an English horse", making the description for the writer and the understanding for the reader easier by linking with common knowledge.

Comparative structures can also be used to emphasize certain points, as in "the arrival of no less than 26 of their ships", and thus to increase their noteworthiness and interest value for the reader. In this use and also when used to convey evaluations (e.g. "the Judges have, like a dozen of monstrous Patagonian giants, … swallowed … law and gospel") or to highlight the greater importance of one point over another (e.g. "a bloodier resistance than ever the Romans, Saxons, or Normans found"), comparisons can play a role in argumentative and persuasive newspaper texts. In any of these functions, it will also be important to look at how accessible the comparison may be for the general reader (e.g. literal vs. figurative forms), including also how much background knowledge is needed for comprehension (cf. the cultural embedding of similes) and how effective the comparison potentially is (e.g. conventional vs. innovative comparisons).

Udo Fries
University of Zurich, Switzerland
Email: ufries@es.uzh.ch

Crime and punishment

Most texts collected in *ZEN, The Zurich English Newspaper Corpus*, are either home news or foreign news. In addition there are some 'minor' text classes, such as births, weddings, and deaths, but we have also identified ship news, essays, letters, proclamations, and announcements. Among the home news, and occasionally, foreign news, we have tagged accidents and crime separately, in order to be able to show the development of these text classes over 120 years.

In this paper I want to take a closer look at the text class *crime.*

We hear from Winkley, three Miles from this Town, that Mr. Robert Brough, a very honest Farmer and great Graisier, being a Man of a very good Estate was barbarously murdered by his own Servant coming from the Market, where he had been selling Cattle, and had receiv'd a considerable Sum of Money.

After a definition of what belongs (or should belong) to this text class, I want to show their relative importance for 18th-century newspapers, and give a full text-linguistic description of the text class, concentrating on two kinds of crime: murder and robbery. Has information on crime changed at all during the 18th century?

In the absence of headlines, how do these texts begin and which elements occur in which order? Do we have short narratives or can we observe a more complicated structure? What is

the vocabulary used, what are stereotypical phrases (e.g. *broke open and robbed*), what is the use of active and passive in this text class, and how complex are the individual sentences?

And what were the ways to express punishment?

He was hanged on Thursday, and his body delivered for dissection.

Susan Kermas
Università del Salento, Italy
Email: s.kermas@inwind.it, susan.kermas@ateneo.unile.it

A journey through time: A sociolinguistic survey of advertising past and present

Many historical linguists have concentrated on the development of advertising in recent decades. Leech gives a brief synopsis in his overview of modern advertising (1966: 165-174); Gieszinger (2001) analyses how persuasive and informative functions have evolved in the last 200 years and numerous shorter studies have focused on rhetorical devices in advertisements in specific periods (cf. Görlach 2002; Gotti 2005) and on specific themes (Doherty 1992; Fries 1997). The same persuasive and informative functions have also been noted in herbals where such strategies were already incorporated as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Kermas 2006).

My intention in this paper is to demonstrate the role of advertisements as a key to understanding changing society on the one hand and the socio-cultural impact on the development of the text type itself on the other. My key-word search will focus on references to flowers in advertisements covering a wide range of products and uses and a wide span of time from the seventeenth century to the twenty first. This search is part of an ongoing lexicological and lexicographical survey exploring the effects of an ever-changing society on the connotative value of lexis and phraseology from the plant domain but also aims at contributing to historical discourse analysis by demonstrating the effects of increasing literacy and growth of circulation of newspapers and – more recently – technological innovations leading to language change at the discourse level (cf. Jucker 2005:9).

REFERENCES

- Doherty, Francis 1992. *A Study in Eighteenth-Century Advertising Methods. The Anodyne Necklace*. Lewiston, Edwin Mellen.
- Fries, Udo 1997. 'Electuarium Mirabile: praise in 18th-century medical advertisements' in J. Aarts et al (eds.), *Studies in English Language and Teaching*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, pp. 57-73.
- Gieszinger, Sabine 2001. *The History of Advertising Language: The Advertisements in* The Times *from 1788 to 1996*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang.
- Görlach, Manfred 2002. 'A linguistic history of advertising, 1700-1890' in T. Fanego et al (eds.), *Sounds, Words, Texts and Change,* Amsterdam, Benjamins, pp. 83-104.

- Gotti 2005. 'Advertising discourse in eighteenth-century English newspapers' in J. Skaffari et al (eds.), *Opening Windows on Texts and Discourse of the Past,* Amsterdam, Benjamins, pp. 23-37.
- Jucker, Andreas H. 2005. 'Mass media communication from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century', in J. Skaffari et al (eds.), *Opening Windows on Texts and Discourse of the Past,* Amsterdam, Benjamins, pp. 7-21.
- Kermas, Susan 2006. 'From Herbal to Advert', in N. Brownlees (ed.), *News Discourse in Early Modern Britain,* Bern, Peter Lang, pp. 175-197.
- Leech, Patrick 1966. *English in Advertising.* London, Longman.

Thomas Kohnen
University of Cologne, Germany
Email: thomas.kohnen@uni-koeln.de

Religious language in early English newspapers?

Religious language is often seen as a conservative, archaic and even unintelligible register in contemporary English. Apart from the functions in its proper religious domain, its use in contemporary English is mostly limited to literary or humorous purposes (see Crystal and Davy 1969). This "archaic peculiarity" of religious language is mostly due to features which can be traced to the Early Modern English period, when the basic patterns of a vernacular religious language were created. These features seem to have been retained during the following centuries.

But has religious discourse always been felt to be "archaic"? Where and how originated the humorous and literate uses of religious discourse? One way of finding an answer to these questions is to look at religious language in a different genre in a period which is close enough to the Early Modern period but distant enough from contemporary English.

In my paper I will investigate typical patterns of religious language (or what is left of it) in the early English newspapers contained in the *ZEN*-corpus (covering the period from 1661 till 1791). The patterns and typical phrases are taken from a corpus of prayers which is part of the *Corpus of English Religious Prose* and which covers the 16th and the first decades of the 17th century.

My primary aim will be to discover which patterns can still be found (with what frequency) and whether any changes in meaning and usage can be detected.

REFERENCES

- Crystal, David and Derek Davy. 1969. *Investigating English Style*. Harlow: Longman.
- Fries, Udo, and Peter Schneider. "*ZEN*: Preparing the *Zurich English Newspaper Corpus*." *English Media Texts - Past and Present. Language and Textual Structure*. Ed. Friedrich Ungerer. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: Benjamins, 2000. 3-24.
- Kohnen, Thomas. 2006. "Historical Corpus Linguistics: Perspectives on English diachronic corpora". *Anglistik* 17 (2): 73-91.

Alessandra Levorato
University of Florence, Italy
E-mail: alessandra.levorato@unifi.it

'From you, my Lord, professions are but words – they are so much bait for fools to catch on': Impoliteness strategies in the Act of Union debate

This paper will examine the role politeness phenomena play in the argumentative strategies of the pamphlets that were written about the prospect of a Union between Ireland and England in the years that preceded its implementation in 1801. Special reference will be made to the communicative strategies intentionally employed to attack the opponent's face and kindle social conflict, while at the same time create and/or reinforce in-group social relationships. For the aim of the present study, a selection of pamphlets has been chosen, which has been further divided into two relatively equivalent corpora composed of anti- and pro-union pamphlets respectively.

Moving on from the view that impoliteness is not simply derivable from politeness as a secondary phenomenon (Culpeper 1996, 2003, Kienpointer 1997), I will primarily deal with what Kienpointer calls 'inter-group rudeness' occurring both in face-to-face interaction between in-group and out-group members, as well as when out-group members are being talked about. This latter case is particularly interesting in that it can be used as a means of social self-defence and political criticism.

Starting from Culpeper's impoliteness superstragies and taking up Kienpointer's distinction between cooperative and non-cooperative rudeness, I will look at possibilities for the linguistic realization of disagreement (Locher 2004, Kryk-Kastovsky 2006), focusing on aspects such as impositions, abusive language, questioning strategies, forms of address and other literal uses of negative terms. The paper will probe the role of important contextual factors - such as the social distance of the interlocutors, their stance and their attitude to one another – and how this affects the choice of particular argumentative strategies. The paper will therefore address whether and how pro- and anti-union writers differ in the strategies they make use of to gain their reader's support, and create social relationships between participants.

REFERENCES

- Bousfield, D, Culpeper, J. & Wichmann, A. 2003. Impoliteness revisited: with special reference to dynamic and prosodic aspects. *Journal of Pragmatics* 35, 1545-1579.
- Culpeper, J 1996. Towards an anatomy of impoliteness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 25 (3), 349-367
- Kienpointner, M. 1997. Varieties of rudeness: types and functions of impolite utterances. *Functions of Language*, 4, 251-87.

- Kryk-Kastovsky, B. 2006. Impoliteness in Early Modern English Courtroom discourse. *Journal of Historical Pragmatics*, 7:2, 213-243.
- Locher, M.A. 2004. *Power and Politeness in Action: Disagreements in Oral Communication*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Lilo Moessner
RWTH Aachen, Germany
Email: moessner@anglistik2.rwth-aachen.de

News filtering processes in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*

The *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (PTRS) have become a popular object of sociolinguistic and pragmatic studies. Since they cover such a long timespan, they were used in long-term diachronic studies (Atkinson 1999; Bazerman 1988), and since they were considered an appropriate universe of texts of the register 'science', a random sample of the PTRS served as input for this register in ARCHER (Biber/Finegatn/Atkinson 1994). Different aspects of the PTRS as a news disseminating device were foregrounded in the articles by Gotti and Valle in the volume of CHINED 2004.

I propose to supplement these studies with a microlevel analysis of the 73 items in volume 10 of the PTRS. This volume contains numbers 112-122 of the journal and covers the period from March 1675 to February 1776. At that time the PTRS were still Oldenburg's enterprise, and he was its publisher and editor-in-chief. Although each issue had to be licensed by the council of the RS and some reviewing procedures were envisaged (Birch 1756/1968 II: 18), Oldenburg as the secretary of the RS certainly acted as a filtering voice "as he selected and focused attention on those aspects he thought his readers might find most newsworthy" (Bazerman 1988: 131). In this paper I will present several manifestations of the filtering process and the means to discover them.

Manifestations of the filtering process range from the decision on which topics to include, the choice of the language in which the articles were to be published (the vernacular of the original contributor, Latin, or an English translation of the original text), the selection of reviewers and the presentation of their reviews, to positive or (much more rarely) negative comments on authors and their work. These manifestations represent the simple types deletion, translation, and addition; repetitions or combinations of these types yield complex types of filtering.

Close reading of the texts themselves will be shown as the most rewarding means of detection of news filtering, but this strategy will be supplemented by the exploitation of information given in Birch's *History of the Royal Society*.

PRIMARY SOURCE

- *The Royal Society of London. Philosophical Transactions*. Volume 10. 1675. Reprint 1963. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation/Kraus Reprint Corporation.

REFERENCES

- Atkinson, Dwight. 1999. *Scientific Discourse in Sociohistorical Context. The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, 1675-1975*. London/Mahwah, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum.
- Bazerman, Charles. 1988. *Shaping written knowledge*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Biber, Douglas, Edward Finegan, and Dwight Atkinson. 1994. "ARCHER and its challenges: Compiling and exploring A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers". *In Creating and using English language corpora*, Fries, Udo, Gunnel Tottie, and Peter Schneider (eds.), 1-14. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Birch, Thomas. 1576 [1968]. *The History of the Royal Society of London for Improving of Natural Knowledge*, 4 vols. London: Millar [facsimile reprint Hildesheim: Olms]
- Gotti, Maurizio. 2006. "Disseminating Early Modern Science: Specialized News Discourse in the *Philosophical Transactions*". In *News Discourse in Early Modern Britain. Selected Papers of CHINED 2004*, Nicholas Brownlees (ed.), 41-70. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Valle, Ellen. 2006. "Reporting the Doings of the Curious: Authors and Editors in the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society of London". In *News Discourse in Early Modern Britain. Selected Papers of CHINED 2004*, Nicholas Brownlees (ed.), 71-90. Bern: Peter Lang.

Patrick Studer
University of Berne, Switzerland
Email: patrick.studer@localtrans.net

Historical corpus stylistics and early news discourse

This paper is intended to outline the perspective of historical corpus stylistics and to relate it to the study of news discourse. Historical corpus stylistics is concerned with mechanisms, trajectories and the diffusion of stylistic change in the diachronic study of non-literary texts. This paper reviews some of the core concepts of this fresh approach and aims to present a tentative research agenda for future activities in the area. The core areas of historical corpus stylistics can be illustrated along the lines of four research dimensions. These dimensions include historical-philological considerations, the interface between technology and media style, the role of social constellations in the production of news discourse as well as the role of the news event itself. The paper will argue that historical corpus stylistic study has explanatory potential as an empirical research method in describing stylistic change by combining the above dimensions for analysis.

REFERENCE

Studer, Patrick (in press). *Historical corpus stylistics: media, technology and change*. London/New York: Continuum.

Irma Taavitsainen
University of Helsinki, Finland
Email: taavitsa@mappi.helsinki.fi

"Joyful News out of the Newfound World": Medical news reports in Early Modern England

News from the widening world included descriptions of new healing plants and accounts of new medicines, but also reports of new diseases. Knowledge disseminated through translations of Spanish and Portuguese texts in printed books and pamphlets in the sixteenth century. A century later, the new scientific journal, *The Philosophical Transactions* (1665-), published news items in the form of letters and reports. In my talk, I shall first give a brief overview of the category of news in early scientific writing. Next, I shall analyse the structure of these reports and narratives with focus on writing conventions, text type features, and scientific thought-styles. In contrast to inherited wisdom of scholasticism, descriptions of new medicinal plants were based on observations of nature. Thus they contributed to the growing disbelief in ancient authorities and changing thought-styles in Early Modern England. My material comes from *The Corpus of Early Modern Medical Texts* (Taavitsainen et al., forthcoming).

REFERENCE
Taavitsainen, Irma, Päivi Pahta, Turo Hiltunen, Ville Marttila, Martti Mäkinen, Maura Ratia, Carla Suhr & Jukka Tyrkkö (compilers). *Early Modern English Medical Texts 1500-1700*. In preparation.

Ellen Valle
University of Turku, Finland
Email: elvalle@utu.fi

An imperial disease – and a colonial remedy: The 'Jesuits' bark' in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English periodical press

The present-day concept of 'scientific journalism' can be defined as a form of popular science aimed at a mass (or at least non-specialized) audience and published in the print media – popular science magazines and the 'science pages' of the daily newspapers – whose function it is to disseminate new scientific findings considered 'newsworthy'. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a specialized and professional scientific community was just beginning to evolve, and the boundary between professional and lay/popular discourses was blurred. The early *Philosophical Transactions* contained on the one hand fairly abstruse articles, fully

accessible only to the specialist; on the other hand they contained numerous reports of what can only be called 'news', aimed at the general community of educated men ('curious' in both the contemporary sense and the present-day one) who attended meetings of the Royal Society and read the *Transactions*.

During these early years, there were two subjects in particular which were 'newsworthy', both having to do with the prevention of a deadly disease: 1) smallpox inoculation, and 2) information about new plants, discovered in the colonies, which offered a cure or prevention for new, 'colonial' diseases. Among the most important of these was the so-called 'Jesuits' bark' or 'Peruvian bark' (Linnæus's C*inchona*), known to Europeans from the early seventeenth century onward. This bark is now known to contain quinine; its historical importance is due to the fact that it allowed Europeans to expand their empires into the tropics without dying of malaria. Information about the bark and its miraculous powers circulated in books, in journals like the *Philosophical Transactions*, and in general newspapers and magazines (including advertisements).

Malaria was a disease which was endemic in Europe in low-lying, marshy areas; its primary importance, however, was in the tropics. The fact that it was considered newsworthy reflects the expansionist, empire-building drive which at this time was gaining power in Britain, along with a number of other European nations. In my paper I discuss the reporting and discussion of the Peruvian bark in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century British periodical press, both scientific and general. Of particular interest are references to the social, cultural and political implications of the new discovery, which can be seen as the construction of an early 'Imperial' discourse. Yet another perspective has to do with the European expropriation of local, 'native' knowledge, which is a common thread running through European natural history for the last four centuries.

Valerie Wainwright
University of Florence, Italy
Email: wainwright@interfree.it

"The gingling bells of science": Speech issues at the mid-eighteenth century

Underlying a great many treatises on language use written during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is a prime concern with the social implications of modes of speech. Interest in the question of what constitutes refined speech has been linked to a broader

cultural preoccupation with the status markers of gentility or civility (Bryson, 1998). By the 1760s a reviewer in the *Critical* became satirical when faced with one more performance dealing with the "ornamental parts" of speech or strategies for speaking with "grace and propriety". Another review registered a critic's dismay at the "disgusting dryness" of a study examining the names and definitions of rhetorical schemes. He queried the usefulness at such a time of a work dedicated to the techniques of persuasion.

A survey of articles in the *Critical Review* from the mid-eighteenth century gives us a fairly good idea of the state of language studies, of old and new directions and topics. But one work did not gain the recognition it would seem to deserve. James Burgh's book *The Art of Speaking* of 1761, was criticised for its style and deemed to be muddled. Lacking in philosophical rigour and techniques of classification it certainly is, yet the work reveals an unusual way of writing about discourse. Burgh claims to be interested above all in "manner" rather than "matter", in the practice of elocution; an aspect of his work which has been discussed by Mary Hurley Moran (1994). However, his concern with effective communication is displayed in a close attention to both the business of delivery (comprehending gesture, looks and command of voice), and to understanding what exactly is being conveyed. In Part Two of his study, Burgh provides in his Lessons an analysis of sentences which points out various aspects or functions of discourse. What is interesting is that although in his text Burgh stresses the importance of recognizing the "principal passions and humours" that are expressed through certain types of discourse, his analysis reveals that items of spoken language can also have the character of actions. In this case the instances of speech he selects are conceived as representing the performance of a specific kind of action.

In brief, in this paper I shall be identifying the speech issues of greatest interest to the *Critical's* reviewers in the mid-eighteenth century, and commenting in particular on the work of James Burgh, discussing his endeavour to identify the primary point or facet of speech in various species of sentences.

REFERENCES

- Anna Bryson 1998. "The Civility of Speech and Writing", in *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press.
- Mary Hurley Moran 1994. "James Burgh", in Michael G.Moran (ed.) *Eighteenth-Century British and American Rhetorics and Rhetoricians*. Greenwood Press: Westport.

Laura Wright
University of Cambridge, U.K.
Email: lc.wright@ukonline.co.uk

The linguistic conventions of late eighteenth-century want ads

The study of historical pragmatics pays attention to textual and social contexts, and nowhere is this more apparent than in reading old want ads (see *OED* want n^2 9. comb., *want ad*, first attested 1897). The present paper looks at want ads from persons seeking employment in editions of the London newspaper *The Morning Herald* of the 1780s, and notes some formulae peculiar to that text-type that may need glossing for present-day readers. A few of these are either not treated in *OED* in a want ad context, or not treated at all.

The present paper takes as its inspiration a short article by C. T. Onions (1931), who demonstrated that the phrase 'distance no object', 'rent no object', etc., developed in the context of eighteenth-century want ads from persons seeking employment whereby the principal object was to have a genteel situation, not the salary. Salary was at first stated to be "not an object", then "no object". Then, the phrase was extended to include other terms like *rent* or *distance*.

Why are want ads so formulaic? The constraint of expense means that advertisers usually try to confine their advertisements to as few words as possible, and many of them seek the same thing: a job, in a congenial workplace, with sufficient emolument. They do not seek to create original compositions. The most-used phrases and clauses evolved informally, with advertisers simply copying previous advertisers' concise phrasings, rather than obeying any official editorial policy on the matter, so far as I can discover. Consider present-day lonely-hearts advertisements which make use of abbreviations that have come to be conventionalised, such as *GSOH* ('good sense of humour') and *ALAWP* ('all letters answered with photo'). Job advertisements of the mid-twentieth century might contain the conventionalised phrase *girl Friday* (*OED* Girl Friday 'a resourceful young woman assistant (to a man)', first attested 1940). This term was previously common but is rarely met with nowadays, the term *P.A.* ('personal assistant') having replaced it. (It is hard to say when the term *P.A.* was first attested in the specific sense of 'a secretarial administrator who works in an office setting', as *OED* lists it without illustration or definition under *P.*) The change is probably due to late-twentieth century distaste for the term *girl* to refer to women in the workplace. These examples are given to illustrate the fact that such formulae may well be opaque to those not experienced in reading such advertisements, to the extent that a gloss is needed. Similarly, some eighteenth-century conventionalised phrases need contextualising if the advertisement is to be decoded, and examples will be treated in the paper.

REFERENCE

- Onions, C. T. 1931. 'Distance No Object', *Society for Pure English Tract* 36, 531-534.

List of participants and accompanying persons

Benucci, Francesca

Billi, Mirella

Bös, Birte

Brownlees, Nicholas

Cecconi, Elisabetta

Claridge, Claudia

Facchinetti, Roberta

Fischer, Andreas

Fries, Liane

Fries, Udo

Jucker, Andreas H.

Jucker, Ursula

Kermas, Susan

Kohnen, Petra

Kohnen, Thomas

Levorato, Allesandra

Moessner, Lilo

Schreier, Daniel

Schmidt, Christa

Studer, Patrick

Taavitsainen, Irma

Valle, Ellen

Wainwright, Valerie

Wright, Laura