ICHoLS XV - Workshop 5

The meaningful communicative exchange from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment

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ABSTRACTS

ICHOLS 2021 – Workshop 5: *The meaningful communicative exchange from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment*

Luca Alfieri

The genesis of the adjective as an independent part of speech

in the *Speculative Grammar*

Hockett (1954) divides the history of linguistics into two phases: "traditional linguistics", from the Middle Ages to American Structuralism, and "modern linguistics", from Sapir onwards. The reason why Hockett lets start traditional linguistics from the Middle Ages rather than from Greek-Latin grammar can be imagined: the parts of speech (PoS) theory accepted from the Middle Ages onwards strongly differ from the Greek-Latin one. While Medieval grammars by and large show a tripartite division between the noun meaning substances, the verb meaning actions and the adjective meaning qualities, the Greek-Latin PoS theory is based on a bipartition between two classes, the noun and the verb, plus a second-level division between nouns used as heads or as modifiers, but it does not embrace an autonomous adjective class. The main difference between the Greek-Latin PoS theory and the PoS theory of the so-called traditional linguistics, therefore, lies in the presence of the adjective as an independent PoS, but – if the partial exception in Alfieri (2014) is excluded – the topic has never been discussed specifically (see, e.g., Luthala 2005).

The present work aims to fill the gap showing that: i) the birth of the adjective class depends on the re-interpretation of the Greek-Latin PoS theory in the Middle Ages and, more specifically, in the *Speculative Grammar*; ii) the re-interpretation of the PoS theory was ultimately triggered by the re-interpretation of Aristotle's philosophy in the light of the Neo-Platonic ontology that was typical of the Middle Ages. In other words, between the Classical period and the Speculative Grammar, a PoS theory based on two major linguistic non-ontological classes plus a second-layer division between nouns used as heads and as modifiers became a largely new theory, which may appear similar to the former, but is effectively based on three major classes established on a single plane which is both linguistic and ontological. However, just as the Middle Age philosophers perceived the Medieval Aristotelianism as a simple continuation of Aristotle's original theory, the Middle Age grammarians perceived the *Modistae*'s PoS theory as a simple continuation of the PoS theory produced in Greek-Latin grammar. And this view is in fact still quite present in contemporary scholarship, since many scholars – consciously or not – tend to translate lat. *adjectivum* simply as "adjective", rather than as "epithet", although lat. *adjectivum* has not such a meaning before the *Modistae*.

For demonstrating the claim the definitions of the noun, the verb and the adjective-epithet from Plato to Port Royal's grammar will be compared. More specifically, the following

passages will be considered: Plato: *Crat*. 425a1 and *Soph*. 261e1ff. Aristotle: *Rhet*. 1407a21-6; *Poet*. 1456a6-10, 1457a27; 1405a10; 1405b21-3; 1406a10-12, 19-24, 30; 1407b31; 1408b11; *De int*. 16a19; *Metaph*. 1017a28; *Anal. Pr*. 51b12. Dionysius: *Tek*^{h}. 12, 13. Apollonius: *De constr*. I.13.1; I.107.1; I.120.1; III.149.13; I.135.1. Varro: *De ling. lat*. 8, 11. Quintilian: *Inst. or*. VIII.6.40. Charisius: GL I, 152.16, 193.12, 156.15, 163.24. Priscian: *Inst. gram*. VIII.1.1, II.5.22, II.5.28, XIII.31.4, VIII.51.15; II.5.24, II.5.27. II.8.13 and IX.2.13. Ammonius: *Comm. in Ar. de int*. §2 (Busse, 1897: 57, Arens, 1984: 162 ff.). Simplicius: Pattin (1971: 66). Scholia and glossae: GG IV.1, 105.2; I, 24.26; I, 386.27, Hunt (1980: 21ff., 55ff.). Abelard: Arens (1984: 230); Geyer (1919: 384). Sigier de Courtrai: *Sum. mod. sign*. (p. 93). Thomas Aquinas: *Sum. theol*. P.P. Q. 93, a. 3; P.P. Q. 5, a. 5. Thomas of Erfurt: *Gram. spec*. §31-2, § 118. Michel de Marbais, Sigier de Brabant and Alexandre de Villedieu: Thurot (1868: 181). Perter Helia and Robert Kilwardby: Pinborg (1967: 48ff.). William of Conches: Maierù (1972: 80). Arnauld & Lancelot: *Grammaire* (1660: 56-60).

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On the metalanguage of the first Grammar of Aymara (1603)

This paper investigates the linguistic categories adopted by the Jesuit missionary Ludovico Bertonio in his early modern European description of the Andean language of Aymara. Like other missionary grammars in the Spanish colonial world, Bertonio's linguistic work tends to impose traditional terms and classifications, familiar to Latin and Romance languages, to an indigenous language that is completely different in its typological structure from the Indo-European model and exhibits morphological and syntactic strategies that were entirely new at that time. Thus, in his description of noun declension, the missionary grammarian reduces the rich Aymara case system to only six case endings (*casos*) according to Latin morphology, assigning the leftover cases to the category of preposition (*preposicion*). On the other hand, he is able to recognize the exact meaning and role of derivational suffixes (*particulas*) that are part of the extremely rich verbal system of Aymara, without however realizing their full syntactic value in terms of subordination strategies. The subordination system of Aymara is indeed richer in morphologically bound forms, some of which are involved in a process of nominalization (*verbo substantivo*) to create different clause types (causal, relative, infinitive, temporal, conditional, purpose, etc.). In fact, Bertonio considers such nominalization process as a morphological strategy that does not belong to syntax (*construcion*).

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Antonio de Nebrija (1444?-1522) inherited his syntactic theory from a grammatical tradition which had developed in Italy in the High Middle Ages more or less independently of the speculative tradition of northern Europe. The distinctive features of this system are the

following: (1) The main verb in a sentence governs not only the oblique cases of the complements but also the nominative case of the subject. (2) Verbs are subclassified depending on the morphological cases of their nominal complements. Nebrija must have assimilated this system as a student in Italy in the 1460s

Angela Bianchi

Prospettive metalinguistiche
nella *Grammaire générale et raisonnée de Port-Royal*

La lemmatizzazione della *Grammaire générale et raisonnée de Port-Royal,* realizzata per il *Dizionario Generale plurilingue del Lessico metalinguistico* (*DLM*), offre un corpus sistematico di dati da utilizzare per la ricognizione - in prospettiva metalinguistica - della terminologia grammaticale nell'opera dei Signori di Port-Royal. La *Grammaire* è, tuttavia, il frutto di un 'raisonnement' dalla genesi complessa e articolata, che sembra trovare nei *Nouvelle methode pour apprendre facilement la langue latine* (1644) di Lancelot e *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre facilement la langue greque* (1655) di Lancelot, Arnauld e Nicole i fondamenti per le istanze che saranno sviluppate nell'opera principale.

Il duplice scopo del presente contributo è quello di verificare, da un lato, attraverso la terminologia metalinguistica, le modalità di formalizzazione delle istanze di 'sintatticità', che saranno sviluppate dalla riflessione successiva alla *Grammaire* e arriveranno fino ai giorni nostri e, dall'altro, quello di indagare sulla genesi di dette istanze nelle opere dei Signori di Port-Royal precedenti alla *Grammaire* che si pongono come lavori preparatori.

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On the first attempts for a linguistic education of the deaf

In the 17th and 18th centuries the sense of hearing, together with the voice, was often seen as a fundamental instrument of progress and psychic growth for the human being. At the same time, however, the spread of the sign method for the re-education of the so-called 'deaf-mutes' stimulated the opposite theoretical view, according to which gestures would supply the deficiencies of the voice, as the sense of sight would compensate for the lack of hearing. Thus, thanks to the use of visual-gestural signs, the semiotic 'mechanism' would be able to function.

The contribution will focus on the beginnings of the linguistic education of the deaf in Europe, between oral re-education and signing re-education.

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Speech as a "work of nature": On Dante Alighieri's philosophy of language

Abstract is missing

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Arbitrariness of language in empiricist and rationalist linguistic thought

In modern linguistics the notion of *arbitrariness* is associated with Saussure's theory of language, but the speculation on the relationship between linguistic expression and content belongs to the tradition of linguistic thought which goes back to the roots of Western philosophy (Coseriu 1967; Gambarara 1995: 282-283), in the pre-Socratic period, and reaches its apex in Plato's *Cratylus* and in different passages of Aristotle's writings (De Cuypere & Willems 2008: 308). The debate between *physei* and *thesei* involves language(s) and thought, reality and its perception, and knowledge issues.

These ideas had a strong impact on the panorama of 17th-century European pre-scientific speculation on the problems of language, especially as they are related to the multiplicity of vernaculars – including the recently discovered Amerindian and Oriental languages – used for communicating specialized as well as everyday contents (Rossi 2006; Eco 1995). The speculation on the nature of language and its capability to represent and transmit knowledge contents in an accurate and unequivocal way led also to the development of the so-called Universal Language Movement (Cram 1985). It evolved in the scholarly atmosphere of the Royal Society and John Wilkins is one of its most renowned representatives. The empiricist tradition – introduced in England by Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (1605) and *Novum Organum* (1620) – shares the cultural panorama with rationalism, established in France by Descartes and developed in the foundation of the Port Royal *Grammaire Générale et Raisonnée* (1660) and then of the *Logique ou l'art de penser* (1662). In this epoch of intellectual turmoil, linguistic speculation, philosophy and logic are closely interwoven, and the latter emerges especially in the works by Locke and Leibniz.

The different designations and conceptions of 'arbitrariness' will be identified and analysed in the most representative texts devoted to language and knowledge issues produced in and around the 17th century. They will be considered also in the light of the notions more strongly related to this topic, among which we may highlight the concepts of 'naturalness', 'convention', and

'artificiality'. These terms represent focal aspects throughout the history of linguistic speculation. This study aims at detecting the diverse interpretations that can be identified for the notion of 'arbitrariness' and the network of the concepts related to it, as they characterize different traditions and approaches to the analysis of the nature of language, its origins and possible problems. Indeed, the substantial homogeneity of the designations in use actually rests on different views of the nature of language and its relation to knowledge, which depend on a naturalist or a conventionalist view, intertwined with the rationalist/empiricist dichotomy. The speculations under analysis led to a prolific and multifarious production of linguistic works, ranging from the creation of a philosophical language to the elaboration of logico-mathematical rules for a calculus of thought, or a reformulation of an improved grammar for a natural language.

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The linguistic education of deaf people between XVIIth and XVIIIth century and its consequence on the idea of language

The education of deaf people starts in XVIth century in Spain, with the method (*Doctrina para los mudos-sordos*, 1566, a book today lost) invented by Pedro Ponce De León for the linguistic instruction of the deaf children of a Spanish aristocratic family. After this experience, both the religious and scientific world turn to the deaf people as a special field where a new theory of communication and deep investigation of peculiarities of vocal language, and, of course, its acquisition, could be improved.

The studies of the way of communication used by deaf people during the XVIIIth century link together with the experience in the rescue and rehabilitation in language and social life of the so-called "wild children", in particular with Victor, the most famous case of savage child studied directly by the doctor Jean Itard, that worked in strictly collaboration with Roch-Ambroise Sicard, director of the free school for the young deaf founded by Charles-Michel de l'Épée in Paris and member of the Académie Française.

In this scientific milieu, the value of gesture as a linguistic sign in communication, examined in such a real laboratory, reveals his importance for a theory of the origins, nature and shaping of human language.

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A missing link in the canonic history of linguistics: The perspective of the Company of Jesus

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During the Renaissance, linguistic topics have been dealt by the Company of Jesus within a threefold purpose. The first one concerns the rhetorical strategy resulting into the persuasive presentation of the evangelical message. This main point was a common deal made up by an innovative "inculturative method" issued as the programm elaborated by Fr. Valignano and Fr. Acosta. The second outcome had its target in the "inventio" for a language specific communicative approach, in which translating and a Western centered vision were banned. The third aim was an important contribution to the contemporary linguistic speculations. This paper therefore will underline a) The anthropological aspects we can trace in the literature produced by the Company; b) The fieldworks applications; c) The principles related to a general theory of language.

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Aures sunt in oculis
Teaching language to the deaf in John Wallis and Johann K. Amman's thought

Abstract

In *De la formation de la voix de l'homme* (1741), Antoine Ferrein presented his research on the apparatus of phonation, by comparing it to a string instrument, rather than, as traditionally happened, to an air one. In that treatise he used for the first time the term *cordes* to refer precisely to the vocal folds, thus proposing a revolutionary model of the anatomy of the apparatus itself. A few years later, he was a member of the evaluation commission of Jakobo Pereire, a Franco-Spanish pedagogist who taught French to a deaf boy by means of the oralist method, that is the method which does not allow a child to sign and focuses only on teaching her to speak.

The link between both anatomical and articulatory knowledge and their applications in teaching speech to deaf people had some important precedents. The Aristotelian theoretical system concerning communication and cognition of the animated beings, became a model for those who engaged philosophical and medical studies related to the phonic-acoustic channel and its role in cognitive development. One of the most important interpreter of the Aristotelian tradition was an anatomist from the *School of Padua*, Girolamo Fabrici d'Acquapendente, who put forward a deep analysis of speech, taking into account both its physical-articulatory features and its specific role in animal and human life.

These issues contributed to a deep change in the philosophical approaches to language: the research on the anatomy of the apparatus of phonation allowed a new paradigm (naturalism) to emerge and called into question the old one (conventionalism).

The works by John Wallis (*De loquela sive sonorum formatione*, 1653) and Johann K. Amman (*Dissertatio de loquela,* 1700) can be placed in this wide and complex context. They conceived and practiced two different educational methods, which were discussed and evaluated not only by Ferrein but also by other learned people.

In this presentation I will give an account of some of the issues related to the different teaching methods, by paying particular attention to the epistemology of senses (and their hierarchy) and to the role of speech, reading, writing and gesture in the education of deaf people.

Keywords: John Wallis, Johann K. Amman, oralism, gesture

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Aures sunt in oculis
L'educazione dei sordi nell'opera di John Wallis e Johann K. Amman

Abstract

Nel 1741 Antoine Ferrein, nel *De la formation de la voix de l'homme*, presenta i risultati delle ricerche condotte sull'apparato di fonazione e, paragonandolo a uno strumento sia a corde sia ad aria, piuttosto che soltanto ad aria come tradizionalmente avveniva, introduce il termine *cordes* per riferirsi appunto alle corde vocali, proponendo in tal modo un modello rivoluzionario nella concezione dell'anatomia dell'apparato di fonazione. Pochi anni più tardi, lo stesso Ferrein farà parte della commissione di valutazione di Jakobo Pereire, un pedagogista franco-

spagnolo che aveva istruito un ragazzo sordo nella pronuncia del francese impiegando il metodo oralista, quel metodo cioè che escludeva (ed esclude) ogni ricorso alla modalità gestuale nel processo di educazione dei sordi.

Il nesso tra le conoscenze anatomiche e le loro applicazioni nella pratica 'logopedica' aveva dei precedenti: il sistema aristotelico relativo alle modalità espressive proprie degli esseri animati, e le suggestioni presenti nelle sue opere biologiche, avevano costituito un riferimento per quanti si erano successivamente dedicati a studi di tipo filosofico, medico e zoologico in relazione alla modalità fonico-acustica. I temi anatomici rappresentavano, infatti, un punto di forza della tradizione medica della scuola di Padova, nell'ambito della quale l'anatomista Girolamo Fabrici d'Acquapendente, uno dei principali interpreti dell'Aristotele naturalista, aveva operato, istruendo giovani studiosi provenienti da tutta Europa.

Tali temi contribuirono a un mutamento interno alla tradizione filosofico-linguistica: attraverso la ricerca sull'anatomia degli organi del linguaggio si andava infatti configurando un nuovo paradigma che metteva in discussione quello convenzionalista dominante. In questo più ampio contesto si colloca la riflessione di John Wallis e Johann Konrad Amman, che idearono (e praticarono), i metodi educativi che Ferrein si trovò decenni dopo a valutare.

Nel presentare le opere principali dei due autori (Amman, *Dissertatio de loquela,* 1700 e Wallis, *De loquela sive sonorum formatione*, 1653), si discuteranno le principali questioni teoriche che ruotavano attorno all'elaborazione dei metodi educativi, con particolare attenzione all'epistemologia dei sensi (e relativa gerarchia) e al rapporto tra oralità, scrittura e gestualità nei processi di apprendimento della lingua e di sviluppo delle facoltà cognitive dei ragazzi sordi.

Parole chiave: John Wallis, Johann K. Amman, metodo oralista, gestualità

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