

The Literature-Linguistics Interface - Bridging the Gap Between Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Literary Texts

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Abstract. This issue of Umanistica Digitale is devoted to the conference “Bridging Gaps, Creating Links. The Qualitative-Quantitative Interface in the Study of Literature”, which took place at the DiSLL (Department of Linguistic and Literary Studies), University of Padua, on June 7-9, 2018 and was convened by Rocco Coronato and Sara Gesuato. The conference focused on a topic that has recently raised the attention of several scholars both in linguistics and in literary studies, namely, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in the study of literature. Mixed-method approaches to the study of literary texts provide complementary insights into the formal encoding, rhetorical-narrative structure, topics and wording of various kinds of literary texts. The results obtained through such combined research methods cast light on the socio-historical themes, beliefs, ideologies and cultural constructs being conveyed. The papers of the conference, some of which appear in this special issue, showed how a mixed-method investigation can both detect patterns and themes that might otherwise go unnoticed without considering the overall content and context of literary works, and collect and systematize quantitative evidence for testing qualitative interpretations of those works.

Questo numero di Umanistica Digitale è dedicato al convegno “Bridging Gaps, Creating Links. The Qualitative-Quantitative Interface in the Study of Literature”, svoltosi presso il DiSLL (Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari) dell’Università di Padova dal 7 al 9 giugno 2018 e organizzato da Rocco Coronato e Sara Gesuato. Il convegno verteva su un argomento oggetto di grande interesse di recente da parte di studiosi di linguistica e letteratura, la combinazione di metodi quantitativi e qualitativi nello studio della letteratura. Questi approcci mixed-method allo studio dei testi letterari offrono prospettive e intuizioni complementari circa la struttura formale, retorica e narrativa, i temi e lo stile dei diversi generi letterari. I risultati conseguiti con i metodi di ricerca misti gettano luce sui temi socio-storici, le credenze, le ideologie e le credenze culturali trasmessi dai testi. Le relazioni del convegno, alcune delle quali sono raccolte in questo numero speciale, hanno mostrato come lo studio di tipo mixed-method serve sia scoprire pattern e temi che altrimenti passerebbero inosservati se non si considerassero il contenuto e il contesto generale delle opere letterarie, sia a raccogliere e sistematizzare riscontri quantitativi per una verifica della validità della loro interpretazione qualitativa.

Preface

The Conference “Bridging Gaps, Creating Links. The Qualitative-Quantitative Interface in the Study of Literature” took place at the DiSLL (Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Letterari), University of Padua, on June 7-9, 2018. It was convened by Rocco Coronato (University of Padua) and Sara Gesuato (University of Padua), thanks to the generous funding provided by the Research Funding Committee of the University of Padua and the Department of Linguistic and Literary Studies.

The aim of the conference was to bring together linguists and literary scholars who were willing to explore the depth and breadth of literary texts across languages, cultures and time periods in a true spirit of inter-disciplinary collaboration. All contributions showed how a qualitative analysis of literary texts may be enhanced by quantitative data, how a quantitative analysis of the same texts can be fruitfully informed by the insights of qualitative analysis, and how together they can provide a well-rounded description and account of the value and specificities of literary texts.

The Organising Committee of the Conference was joined by other experts whose research interests include mixed-method approaches to the study of literature.

Organising Committee

Rocco Coronato (University of Padua)

Sara Gesuato (University of Padua)

Scientific Committee

Rocco Coronato (University of Padua)

Michele Cortelazzo (University of Padua)

Sara Gesuato (University of Padua)

Aldo Nemesio (University of Turin)

Daniela Francesca Viridis (University of Cagliari)

33 submissions were received, among which 23 individual papers were selected. The submissions showed how keen all scholars were on investigating the formulation, structure, content, cultural salience and social import of literary communicative practices in a variety of languages and across time periods. There emerged a fruitful continuum rather a stark opposition between qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The conference brought together 38 scholars from 8 countries. Its programme, organized in 11 sessions, included 1 workshop, 3 plenary lectures, 1 round-table discussion, and 23 individual paper presentations on a number of topics relevant to literary criticism, stylistics and literary linguistic analysis such as: corpus-driven investigations of literary form; corpus and statistical methods for the study of literature; digital editing; computational literary history; trends and gaps in the history of literature; lexical, morpho-syntactic, stylistic-pragmatic and prosodic features of literary discourse; term mapping; point of view and character portrayal in narrative discourse; metaphor analysis and thematic description of literary texts; literary transfer; authorship attribution, genre identification and dating of literary works. All these

topics were approached from a combined qualitative-quantitative perspective. This closely tight, mutually curious scientific community eagerly discussed the pros and cons of the different approaches in an exceptionally lively debate that criss-crossed all plenary lectures and papers.

The Conference opening session saw a plenary given by Nigel Fabb about the representation of literary form as statistical generalizations over literary texts and the contribution given by corpus studies.

Session II of the conference was devoted to two closely inked themes at the core of the conference: the qualitative-quantitative assessment of literature as can be seen in phonology (Valentina Colonna) and the mixed-method approach to the study of literature, analysed in the linguistic make-up of literary texts (Marina Gorlach) and in a database on translation and lyrical tradition between Italy and France (Tobia Zanoni and Sara Giovine).

Session III showcased the study of language in literary texts, for instance in Chateaubriand (Geneviève Henrot) and Camus (Iride Santoro and Liana Tronci), and as a way of reconstructing early modern syntax (Lucia Assenzi). A parallel session concerned the linguistic, stylistic and prosodic features of literary texts, with an emphasis on theme and quantification (Joseph Davis), prose rhythm (Scott Borgeson, Arto Anttila, Ryan Heuser, Paul Kyparsky), and the use of adjectives (Erik Castello).

Session IV hosted a workshop held by Arjuna Tuzzi on the use of statistical methods for the analysis of literary texts.

Session V was started by a plenary talk given by Michaela Mahlberg on the study of fiction in the digital age.

In Session VI the papers dealt with two main topics: authorship attribution and genre identification in Italian narrative (Fabio Ciotti), early modern English literature (Gabriel Egan-Paul Brown), and Spanish literary history (Daniel Gutierrez-Trapaga); and metaphor analysis, gauged through the study of megametaphorical expressions (Daniel C. Strack), the classification and description of metaphors in Dante (Gaia Tomazzoli), and the presence of metaphor in literature and the effect on translation (Christos Stavrou-Anna Chita).

Session VII included two themes: stylistics and literary transfer, with an application of corpus stylistics to a contemporary work of fiction (Francesca Coccetta-Daniela Cesiri), and corpus-driven investigations of literary form, for instance the dialogues in *Pride and Prejudice* and in two of its cinematic versions (Francesca Bianchi-Sara Gesuato), the creation and application of an interactive study platform for analytical genetic edition (Ersilia Russo-Francesca Marocco-Teresa Gargano), and anaphoric markers in literary texts (Anna Bonifazi).

Session VIII was devoted to the theme of text and context, with a study of medical terminology in Conan Doyle (Federica Vezzani-Giorgio Maria Di Nunzio-Geneviève Henrot), and the topic of reconciliation and integration of language and literature, with a study of irony from a cross-disciplinary perspective (Ines Lozano Palacio) and a survey on research practices conducted among Italian and international scholars of language and literature (Rocco Coronato-Sara Gesuato).

Session IX consisted of a plenary talk given by Jan Christoph Meister, "Phenomenology vs. empirics? From qualitative to quantitative analysis of literature - and back", and Session X of

a plenary talk given by Federica Perazzini on computational criticism and the quality of quantitative literary research.

Session XI hosted a round table discussion on the issues raised during the Conference. The discussant was Paul Brown, and the discussants were Nigel Fabb, Michaela Mahlberg, Jan Christoph Meister, Federica Perazzini, Arjuna Tuzzi.

PROGRAMME

June 7, 2018

SESSION I

10:00am-11:00am **Plenary talk** - Nigel Fabb (University of Strathclyde), *What do we know when we know a literary form? Corpus studies and weighted expectations*

SESSION II

11:00am-12:30pm (parallel sessions)

The qualitative-quantitative assessment of literature

Valentina Colonna (University of Genoa and University of Turin) *Prosodies of 'Congedo' – Comparative Analysis of Twelve Readings*

Kobie van KRIEKEN (Radboud University), *Understanding perspective in narrative: from qualitative analysis to quantitative assessment*

The mixed-method approach to the study of literature

Marina Gorlach (Metropolitan State University of Denver) *The qualitative-quantitative analysis of 'Fahrenheit 451': mapping the linguistic make-up of literary texts"*

Tobia Zanon (University of Padua), Sara Giovine (University of Padua), *The TRALYT research project: translation and lyrical tradition between Italy and France (19th-21st Century)*

SESSION III

2:00pm-3:30pm (parallel sessions)

Studying language in literary texts

Geneviève Henrot (University of Padua) *Le Nom propre modifié dans les 'Mémoires d'Outre-tombe' de Chateaubriand. Pour un système des personnages entre Mythe et (petite) Histoire*

Iride Santoro (University for Foreigners of Siena, Italy), Liana Tronci (University for Foreigners of Siena), *Les temps verbaux dans 'L'Étranger' de Camus: analyse distributionnelle et valeurs narratives*

Lucia Assenzi (University of Padua) *Quantifying auxiliary 'tun' to study 17th century German linguistic reflection?*

Linguistic, stylistic and prosodic features of literary texts

Joseph Davis (The City College of New York) *Theme and quantification in the service of linguistics*

Scott Borgeson (Stanford University), Arto Anttila (Stanford University), Ryan Heuser (Stanford University), Paul Kiparsky (Stanford University) *Prose Rhythm and Antimetricality*
Erik Castello (University of Padua) *Dickens's 'Pictures from Italy' and Murray's 'Handbook to Northern Italy': a quantitative/qualitative investigation of the use of adjectives in the two texts*

SESSION IV

4:00pm-6:00pm **Workshop** - Arjuna Tuzzi (University of Padua) *Statistical methods for the analysis of literary texts*

June 8, 2018

SESSION V

9:00am-10:00am **Plenary talk** - Michaela Mahlberg (University of Birmingham) *CLiC: studying fiction in the digital age*

SESSION VI (parallel sessions)

10:30am-12:00pm

Authorship attribution and genre identification

Fabio Ciotti (University of Rome "Tor Vergata"), *Italian narrative between Realism and Modernism: a computational analysis of verbal tenses*

Gabriel Egan (De Monfort University) - Paul Brown (De Monfort University) *N-gram Matching as a Test for Authorship, Genre, and Date-of-composition of London's Early Modern Plays*

Daniel Gutierrez-Trapaga (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) *Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Primary Sources in Spanish Literary History*

Metaphor analysis

Daniel C. Strack (University of Kitakyushu) *Pinnacles in Long-form Literary Texts: Cross-textual Evidence for the Pervasiveness of Megametaphorical Expression*

Gaia Tomazzoli (“Ca’ Foscari” University of Venice), *‘Totus poema eius ubique mirabiliter figuratus’: Identifying, Classifying and Describing Dante’s Metaphors*

Christos Stavrou (Technological Educational Institute of Epirus) - Anna Chita (Technological Educational Institute of Epirus) *The Metaphor in Literature and the Effect on Translation*

SESSION VII (parallel sessions)

1:30pm-3:00pm

Stylistics and literary transfer

Francesca Coccetta (“Ca Foscari” University of Venice) - Daniela Cesiri (“Ca’ Foscari” University of Venice) *Narrative Descriptions in Meyer’s ‘Twilight Saga’: a Corpus Stylistics Perspective*

Corpus-driven investigations of literary form

Francesca Bianchi (University of Salento) - Sara Gesuato (University of Padua) *The Adaptation of a Novel to Filmic Needs: Similarities and Differences Between the Dialogues in ‘Pride and Prejudice’ and the Subtitles of Two Cinematic Versions of the Novel*

Ersilia Russo (La Sapienza University of Rome), Francesca Marocco (La Sapienza University of Rome), Teresa Gargano (La Sapienza University of Rome) *PhiloEditor: an Interactive Study Platform for Analytical Genetic Edition*

Anna Bonifazi (University of Stuttgart) *Research on Anaphoric Markers in Literary Texts: How to Combine Qualitative and Quantitative Analyses?*

3:00pm-3:30pm Coffee Break

SESSION VIII (parallel sessions)

3:30pm-4:30pm

Text and context

Federica Vezzani (University of Padua) - Giorgio Maria Di Nunzio (University of Padua) - Geneviève Henrot (University of Padua) *(Not so) Elementary, my Dear Watson! A Different Perspective on Medical Terminology*

Reconciling and integrating language and literature

Ines Lozano Palacio (University of La Rioja) *Irony from a Cross-disciplinary Perspective: Towards an Integrated Account*

Rocco Coronato (University of Padua) - Sara Gesuato (University of Padua) *Out of One’s Comfort Zone into an Uncharted Territory: a Survey*

SESSION IX

5:00pm-6:00pm **Plenary talk** - Jan Christoph Meister (University of Hamburg), *Phenomenology vs. Empirics? From Qualitative to Quantitative Analysis of Literature - and Back*

6:00pm-6:30pm Poetry reading by Josh Lonsdale

June 9, 2018

SESSION X

9:00am-10:00am **Plenary talk** - Federica Perazzini ("La Sapienza" University of Rome), *The Figure in the Discourse: Computational Criticism and the Quality of Quantitative Literary Research*

SESSION XI

10.30am-12.00pm **Round table discussion** "Nihil est in litteris humanioribus quod prius non fuerit in lingua" - Discussant: Paul Brown (De Montfort University); participants: Nigel Fabb (University of Strathclyde), Michaela Mahlberg (University of Birmingham), Jan Christoph Meister (University of Hamburg), Federica Perazzini (La Sapienza University of Rome), Arjuna Tuzzi (University of Padua)

12.00pm-12.30pm Concluding remarks