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Theoretical approaches to grammaticography in the history of linguistics

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— **ABSTRACTS** —

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Varro philosopher of language?

The philosophical background of *De lingua Latina*'s grammatical reflection

The aim of this contribution is to refocus philosophical attention on Varro's linguistic thought, restoring its philosophical depth. In 1974, during a presentation on Varro's Theory of language, the linguist Belardi (1976) emphasized the modernity of certain aspects of Varro's *De lingua Latina* (*Ling. Lat.* VIII), connecting them to contemporary linguistic theories, such as Martinet's principle of economy (Martinet 1960; cf. De Mauro 2004). In the same year Taylor (1974) published a study on Varro's linguistic theory. More recently, the classical philologist Oniga (2022) has underscored some similarities between *De lingua Latina* and Saussurean linguistics (Saussure 2009), stressing the importance of reconsidering Varro's work.

However, a long-standing tendency to regard *De Lingua Latina* as a grammatical treatise has led historians of the philosophy of language to underestimate Varro's contribution to linguistic debates. This perspective fails to acknowledge that Varro's work encompasses centuries of linguistic reflection, including not only grammatical but also philosophical considerations (cf. Dahlmann 1997; Lazzerini 2021). The present contribution aims to analyse several crucial passages of *De lingua Latina* from a philosophical-linguistic perspective, showing the philosophical background that underlies Varro's grammatical reflection. Particular attention will be given to *De lingua Latina* VI 36; VIII 3–5; X 76–78, where Varro addresses issues that remain central to contemporary philosophy of language, demonstrating remarkable foresight in his understanding of linguistic mechanisms, such as the relationship between nature and convention, linguistic usage, and the problem of meaning.

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Reflection on Grammar during Byzantium

Byzantine authors and scholars considered grammar from a variety of angles, given the inherited ancient Greek philological and grammatical tradition, as well as their concern to comment on and interpret both ancient Greek and Biblical texts. First of all, as the primary crucial stage of the 'enkýkios paideía', grammar is treated as the absolutely necessary apparatus that can assist in accessing higher levels of

knowledge, such as rhetoric and philosophy. Furthermore, grammar is especially appreciated for providing readers with the ability to comprehend the Word of God and the Scriptures, taken into account that those texts were not written in vernacular language. In addition, treatments of etymology convey ancient theoretical linguistic discussions and, finally, grammar is also valued for connecting Byzantine Greeks with the glorious Hellenic past, revealing them the contents, myths, allegories of earlier texts, a connection that becomes urgent especially in view of the Ottoman occupation.

Byzantine reflection on grammar regards its conception as a *téchnē* / science (*epistēme*), as a tool for achieving linguistic expertise, in terms of its precise purposes, character, usefulness, as a concept in its own right, in the multi-cultural and multi-lingual Byzantine *milieu*. Grammar was both linked with the ancient Greek tradition and with the access to the Word of God in the Orthodox Church, in its liturgical practice (hymnography, hagiography) and biblical exegesis, as well as in the frame of the flourishing Byzantine scholarship.

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Sónia Coelho, Susana Fontes (Vila Real; Portugal)

Female Voices in German Language Teaching.

The Role of Three Philologists in Adapting the “Gaspey-Otto-Sauer Method” in Portugal

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the teaching of foreign languages in Portugal evolved significantly in response to increased international trade and the growing demand for modern language learning resources. A notable example is the *Nova Grammatica Allemã Theorica e Pratica* (1887), based on the “Gaspey-Otto-Sauer method” and initially adapted into Portuguese by José Prévôt. From its third edition in 1907 onward, this foreign language manual featured the collaboration of three prominent Germanophone philologists: Ana Luísa Rodrigues de Freitas, Luise Ey, and Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos. At a time when women faced significant barriers to formal education, these female scholars played a crucial role in revising and enhancing the manual, contributing to the pedagogical quality and dissemination of German language instruction in Portugal. This paper aims to highlight the importance that these women had in the cultural scene of the time, their participation in the editorial series published by the publishing house of Julius Groos (Heidelberg), examining their involvement in this work. This study also emphasizes the need to acknowledge the often-overlooked contributions of women to the development of language teaching methodologies and educational materials.

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Grammars and the building of a nation — the case of Greece and Italy in the XIXth century

In 1827 Greece obtained its independence and became a nation. The Greek language played a central role in federating people in order to find the national feeling which led to the *epanástasis*. As Greek became a national language, it was necessary to define precisely what kind of language had to be chosen : so grammars had to be adapted in order to describe a language which could be a purist one, avoiding loan-words from Turkish and in search of the connection with ancient Greek.

The XIXth century was also the time when Italy struggled to become a nation. During the *Risorgimento* several theories were exposed in order to define which language, among the different dialects spoken in Italy, had to be chosen as the national one. After the unification, in 1861, the problem of creating grammars teaching the same Italian idiom in the whole country was a central problem for creating a national feeling.

This paper aims to show to which extent the theories of creating a national language in both countries were similar to each other or which differences can be observed in the grammatical definition of that official idiom. We will focus on the Greek grammars written during the second half of the XIXth century (mainly Sofianos' Grammar but also other contributions) on the Greek side and on the debates about the choice of the Florentine dialect as a national language (Manzoni vs. Ascoli) and the grammaticography in the period following the Italian unification (e.g. Fornaciari).

Paola Cotticelli-Kurras (Verona; Italien)

Grammatikographie der Volkssprachen.

Die italienische Syntax und ihre Metasprache in den ersten Grammatiken der Renaissance die ersten Grammatiken des 'volgare italiano'¹

Die Grammatikographie der Volkssprachen erlebte in der Renaissance eine entscheidende Entwicklungsphase, insbesondere in Italien, wo erstmals systematische Beschreibungen der italienischen Syntax entstanden. Während die lateinische Grammatik über eine lange Tradition und eine etablierte Metasprache verfügte, mussten die frühen Grammatiker des Italienischen eine angemessene Terminologie und methodische Ansätze für die Analyse und Beschreibung der Volkssprache entwickeln.

Ein zentraler Aspekt dieser Untersuchung ist die Spannung zwischen Tradition und Innovation: Während einige Grammatiker an der klassischen lateinischen Syntax orientierte Beschreibungen bevorzugten, versuchten andere, die Eigenständigkeit der italienischen Sprache zu betonen. Diese Entwicklungen hatten langfristige Auswirkungen auf die spätere Grammatikographie und die Normierung des Italienischen.

Die Analyse der ersten italienischen Grammatiken bietet somit wertvolle Einblicke in die Entstehung einer wissenschaftlichen Metasprache für die Volkssprachen. Es verdeutlicht einerseits die Herausforderungen, mit denen sich Grammatiker bei der Beschreibung nicht-lateinischer Sprachen konfrontiert sahen, andererseits aber auch sowohl die gegenseitigen Beziehungen innerhalb der unterschiedlichen Traditionen (siehe Giambullari und Linacre) und ihr Tribut zur Grammatiktheorie der Modisten.

¹ Die Untersuchung gehört zum Forschungsplan der PRIN2022_COTTICELLI PNRR per la Missione 4, Componente 2, investimento 1.1, finanziato dall'Unione Europea – NextGenerationEU PRIN 2022 – CUP B53D230 14930006 "European and extra-European metalanguage and grammars: syntactic theories towards the concept of language awareness".

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Methodology of morphological and syntactic analysis in ancient grammarians.

Analogy and other linguistic criteria in Apollonius Dyscolus' approach to the Homeric dialect

In the literature discussing the method of Apollonius Dyscolus, the latter is presented as the predominantly analogical grammarian of the Alexandrian scholarship. The criteria on which he bases his theory and the perspectives he adopts, when examining various morphological and syntactic phenomena, vary considerably. Analogy, together with etymological research, examination of dialectal forms and consideration of literary usages, provides the basic criterion for evaluating a form as grammatically accepted (*ἐλληνισμός*). Among the preceding, Homeric usage, which Apollonius frequently invokes, occupies a special place.

This paper is based on the data and conclusions of the master's thesis «Aspects of the Homeric grammar in antiquity: Apollonius Dyscolus on the article and the pronoun in Homer» (2023, repository *Pergamos*, N.K.U.A.), in which an attempt was made to investigate the morphology and syntax of the elements which, according to the grammarian, belong to the classes of articles and pronouns and, more specifically, the application of his theory of articles and pronouns to Homeric poetry was examined.

The aim of the present paper is, through the examination of passages where the grammarian investigates the formation and inflection of the Homeric articles and pronouns, as well as their syntactic behavior, to draw conclusions about the method he used to deal with issues of inflectional and derivational morphology and to examine the criteria he used for the evaluation of the grammaticality (*καταλληλότης*) of various syntactic structures.

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The Weight of Tradition.

How Apollonius Dyscolus Makes Something New out of the Old

Apollonius Dyscolus is regarded as the “pioneer of Western grammar” (A. Kemp), credited with the establishment of grammar as an independent science. The seemingly absolute nature of this assertion makes a particularly striking fact all the more puzzling: it appears that Apollonius is not the inventor of any concept. In fact, not a single grammatical notion, nor any technical term with a new and specific meaning, can be attributed to him. Should this be regarded as a contradiction? Not necessarily: Apollonius is not a reformer, nor does he claim (was he even aware of it?) to be founding a science. Eminently conservative, he acts as a faithful disciple of a multi-century tradition (traced back to Aristarchus, ὁ γραμματικώτατος), a tradition to which he seeks to provide a rational foundation. We shall offer a few examples that illustrate this somewhat particular stance of the grammarian — how Apollonius employs an entire lexicon of the common language, sometimes in a technical sense, sometimes in an informal one, or how, conversely, he appropriates certain terms from an existing technical vocabulary, smoothing out their meaning. We will then attempt to demonstrate the extremes to which this approach sometimes leads, shedding light on some remarkable situations: for instance, in the realm of lexical derivation (*παράγωγη*), Apollonius uses the same term — to the point of confusion — to refer to phenomena that are nonetheless identified and described as fundamentally distinct. In some cases, moreover, the grammarian does not hesitate to push the argument to its furthest limits in order to rationally legitimise what, in all reason, escapes any attempt at legitimisation.

Susana Fontes, Sónia Coelho (Vila Real; Portugal)

From Archive to Open Access.

Creating a Digital Project on the Michaëlis–Ey Correspondence

Linguistic historiography has evolved significantly, shifting from a traditional focus on canonical works — such as grammars, dictionaries, and orthographies — toward a more inclusive perspective. This evolution is closely tied to the development of epihistoriography, a field that examines the agents, contexts, and materials involved in the production of linguistic knowledge (Swiggers, 2010). Within this

broader framework, previously marginalized sources — such as prologues, footnotes, the press, and especially correspondence between intellectuals — are now recognized for their historiographic value, offering deeper insight into the linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical thought of their time.

This talk introduces a research project dedicated to editing the correspondence exchanged between Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos and Luise Ey, two prominent figures in Portuguese philology at the turn of the 20th century. Their extensive epistolary exchange reveals a profound intellectual partnership, encompassing reflections on literature, academic initiatives, grammar, and the role of women in society. More than a record of personal connection, this corpus exemplifies the scientific and historiographic potential of correspondence, calling for its recognition as a primary source in the history of linguistic ideas.

The project aims to create an open-access digital platform to preserve and disseminate these mostly unpublished and difficult-to-access letters. Digitization will ensure the conservation of this archival material while enabling new analytical approaches through digital tools. In parallel with the online edition, the project will undertake a critical transcription and annotation of the letters, focusing on the linguistic, pedagogical, and cultural dimensions they reflect. This presentation will outline the project's goals, methodology, expected outcomes, and current progress.

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Thanasis Giannaris (Athen; Griechenland)

Reflections of the Port-Royal linguistic thought in the grammars of the Greek Enlightenment

In contrast to the extensive scholarly literature on Ancient and Hellenistic Greek grammarians and grammatical writing, the works of Medieval and Modern Greek grammarians have received considerably less attention from a historiographic perspective (e.g., Manolessou 2012; Delveroudi 2019). This paper aims to examine the linguistic views of two of the most prominent intellectuals of the Greek Enlightenment, Adamantios Korais (1748–1833) and Dimitrios Katartzis (1730–1807), as articulated in the grammars of Modern Greek compiled by them in the late 18th century (ed. Dimaras 1970; Damalas 1888, respectively).

These grammars reflect the authors' divergent linguistic ideologies. Korais refers to Modern Greek as *Graikiki*, portraying it as a “daughter” of Ancient Greek, yet markedly altered by centuries of foreign domination. His approach is marked by a strong classicist orientation and a conviction that written Greek must be purified and corrected in accordance with ancient linguistic norms. Katartzis, by contrast, is noted for his advocacy of the “natural” language, which he calls *Romeic*, and which he views as fundamentally distinct from Ancient Greek. Despite their ideological differences, the paper highlights shared aspects of their grammatical practice, particularly the convergence of two grammatical traditions: (a) the Classical framework of Dionysius Thrax and (b) the General and Rationalist Grammar of Port-Royal. The latter, rooted in Early Modernity and the rise of vernaculars, arguably influenced both thinkers in their construction of Modern Greek as a language autonomous from its ancient antecedents — a view further reflected in their differing naming choices (*Graikiki* vs. *Romeic*). In this light, both Katartzis and Korais can be seen as forerunners in the process of Modern Greek standardization.

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Giannoula Giannouloupoulou (Athen; Griechenland)

The Modern Greek Grammar by Andreas Kalvos (1819)

The aim of the present paper is to present and analyze from a linguistic point of view a grammatical text known as “Modern Greek Grammar” that was written by the famous Greek poet Andreas Kalvos (cf. Giannouloupoulou 2020). Previous philological research (Sofroniou 1960, Savvidis 1993) has suggested that this work, although anonymous, is written by Kalvos and is announced in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* (1818).

The work will be examined in the context of the general work “Harmonical Grammar of the Principal Ancient and Modern Languages” (author: Frederick Nolan, editor: Samuel Bagster, 1822), to which it belongs. “Harmonical Grammar” is part of the process of compiling Grammar textbooks, noted in the 18th century (Rodriguez-Gil & Yanez-Bouza 2010). By the beginning of the 19th century a strong grammatical tradition had already been developed in Europe.

“Harmonical Grammar” aimed at functioning as a grammar for teaching and learning languages. Its general theoretical profile was influenced by Plato’s ideas, as indicated by the passage by Plato in the book cover: «δεσμός γὰρ πεφυκός πάντων τούτων εἰς αναφανήσεται διανοουμένοις» (“a natural bond will be shown in the intellectuals, a bond that connects all phenomena”, my translation). Consequently, all languages dealt with in the Grammar, both ancient and modern, are presented in a uniform way. The Grammar for each language includes four chapters, corresponding to the basic categories of linguistic analysis: “pronunciation, inflexion, syntax and prosody” (sic).

Modern Greek (or Neo-Greek) is analyzed by Andeas Kalvos as a *dialect* of Ancient Greek. In Modern Greek data words of the vernacular are included (e.g. *η αλεπού* ‘fox’, genitive plural *των αλεπούδων* ‘of the foxes’, the genitive plural *ολωνών* ‘of all’ of the pronoun *όλος*), which, however, come in contrast both with the dominating archaistic ideas of the time and the archaistic language used by Kalvos in his poetry.

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Nicolas Gignac (Freiburg i.Br.; Deutschland)

Bedeutungsvielfalt in der deutschen Sprachwissenschaft des 19. Jahrhunderts — Vergessene Fäden einer Forschungstradition

Die Erforschung der historischen Entwicklung linguistischer Begriffe mithilfe **moderner digitaler Methoden** in Kombination mit **qualitativen Analysen** eröffnet neue Perspektiven auf die Zirkulation und Etablierung zentraler Konzepte. Michel Bréal wird oft als Begründer des Begriffs “**polysémie**” angesehen – ein Konzept (und später ein linguistischer Forschungsgegenstand), das schließlich in verschiedenen theoretischen Rahmen zentral wurde (Mazaleyrat, 2010; Nerlich & Clarke, 2003; Rastier & Valette, 2009; Ravin & Leacock, 2002). Allerdings erwähnt Bréal in seinem *Essai de sémantique* (1897) nur beiläufig eine bereits bestehende deutschsprachige Forschungstradition, die sich intensiv mit **Bedeutungsvielfalt** auseinandergesetzt hatte.

Die heutige Forschung zur Geschichte der Semantik konzentriert sich vor allem auf die Polysemie als **linguistisches Forschungsgegenstand**. Den früheren konzeptuellen Auffassungen von Bedeutungsvielfalt (als **linguistisches Phänomen**) wird hingegen weniger Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt. Schon zu Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts beschäftigten sich aber deutsche Gelehrte systematisch mit der Mehrdeutigkeit sprachlicher Zeichen. Neuere Studien (z. B. Courbon, 2020; Gignac, 2024) haben begonnen, diese wenig beachtete Forschungsgeschichte nachzuzeichnen, doch viele Aspekte bleiben unerforscht.

Dieser Beitrag untersucht, wie deutsche Gelehrte des 19. Jahrhunderts Bedeutungsvielfalt konzeptualisierten, bevor sich der Begriff der Polysemie im formalisierten linguistischen Diskurs etablierte. Grundlage der Analyse ist ein digitalisiertes Korpus von sechzehn deutschsprachigen Autoren des 19. Jahrhunderts. Die Untersuchung kombiniert **automatisierte Begriffsextraktion** mit qualitativen **semantischen** und **metalinguistischen Analysen**, um terminologische Muster und konzeptuelle Entwicklungen sichtbar zu machen.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass bereits vor Bréal ein stabiles, aber flexibles Verständnis von Bedeutungsvielfalt existierte. Eine genauere Untersuchung dieser frühen Perspektiven kann dazu beitragen, die historische Entwicklung der Ideen rund um das Phänomen der semantischen Vielfalt besser zu verstehen, die aktuelle Forschung in der Semantik zu informieren und einen offeneren sowie flexibleren Umgang mit Bedeutungsvielfalt zu fördern.

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Gerda Haßler (Potsdam; Deutschland)

“Analyse” in französischen und spanischen Grammatiken des langen 18. Jahrhunderts

In spanischen Grammatiken der 2. Hälfte des 18. und der ersten Jahrzehnte des 19. Jahrhunderts ist *análisis* einer der häufigsten Termini. Die Ursachen dafür werden in der Historiographie häufig in französischen Einflüssen gesehen, die mit dem Schlagwort Rationalismus begründet werden. Doch kam nicht alles, was *Analyse* genannt wurde aus Frankreich und war schon gar nicht rationalistisch im erkenntnistheoretischen Sinne. In dem Beitrag sollen Ansätze der logischen und der grammatischen Analyse gezeigt werden, die in Spanien selbst entstanden waren. Danach werden Einflüsse aus der französischen Grammatikographie betrachtet, die in spanischen Grammatiken und Lehrwerken zweifellos festzustellen sind. Die französischen Einflüsse wirkten jedoch nicht als Block und immer in der gleichen Richtung. Die Grammatiken von Arnauld/Lancelot, Du Marsais, Beauzée, Condillac, Destutt de Tracy etc. haben unterschiedliche theoretische Grundlagen und Zielstellungen und wirkten dementsprechend auch auf spanische Grammatiken. In Frankreich lassen sich im betrachteten Zeitraum drei verschiedene Analysekonzepte unterscheiden: (1) Die Struktur der Welt und die Anordnung der Ideen sind angeboren, und die Aufgabe der grammatikalischen Analyse besteht darin, auf diese feste Vorlage im Denken zurückzuführen (rationalistisches Analysekonzept). (2) Die Aufgabe der Analyse besteht darin, zu verstehen, wie sich Begriffe durch Zeichen bilden, was durch die Besonderheiten der einzelnen Sprachen beeinflusst wird. Die Reihenfolge der Gedanken im Denken hängt mit der Reihenfolge der Wörter zusammen (sensualistisches Konzept der Analyse). (3) Sprachen sind Analysemethoden und müssen verbessert werden, um das Denken und die wissenschaftlichen Erkenntnisse zu perfektionieren (ideologisches Konzept der Analyse). Die Entwicklung dieser drei Analysekonzepte wird zunächst anhand französischer Grammatiken gezeigt, um dann ihre Rezeption und Weiterentwicklung durch einige spanischsprachige Autoren zu betrachten.

Bernhard Hurch (Graz; Österreich)

Kumulative und separative Markierung im Baskischen: Larramendi, Astarloa und Humboldt

Neben einer Reihe von anderen Erscheinungen (z.B. Nicht-/Vorhandensein von Genus) ist der Unterschied zwischen kumulativem und separativem Markierungstyp eine grundlegende Charakteristik von flektierenden/fusionierenden und agglutinierenden Sprachen. Wissen darüber ist zwar in den ersten Jahren des 19. Jhdts. nicht gänzlich neu, es ist aber interessant, wie Humboldt in seinen erst in den letzten Jahren veröffentlichten handschriftlichen Materialien anhand der traditionellen (‘latinisierenden’) Grammatik von M. de Larramendi (1729) und den ‘moderneren’ Arbeiten von P.P. de Astarloa ein nahezu sezierendes Modell entwirft, in dem er in dem sehr spezifischen baskischen Auxiliarsystem die separativen Markierungen der einzelnen Aktanten des Satzes beschreibt. Interessanterweise ist es in diesen Manuskripten bei zwar sehr systematischen, aber dennoch skizzenhaften Darstellungen geblieben. Seine Kenntnisse gehen nicht zuletzt auf seine Baskenreise 1801 bzw. seine persönliche Bekanntschaft mit Astarloa und das Studium des ‘Plan de langues’ von Astarloa zurück. Beide Versuche Humboldts zur Abfassung einer Grammatik des Baskischen hat er dennoch jeweils bei der Darstellung des Verbalsystems abgebrochen.

Michael M. Isermann (Heidelberg; Deutschland)

The *littera* in classical orthography/grammar and orthographic thinking in the Early Modern period

I will begin with a brief sketch of the role of the *littera/letter* with its two symbolic manifestations of sound (*potestas*) and character (*figura*) in classical grammar. I will then show (rather than argue) how orthography and the doctrine of the *littera* began to transgress the disciplinary boundary of grammar in the Early Modern period, conquering ever more territory. At the end of the 17th century, orthographic thinking was so dominant and all-embracing that it had largely replaced Aristotelian metaphysics. Before the development set in towards the end of the 15th century, objects of the understanding, whether verbal or physical, were generally understood in terms of Aristotelian-Scholastic ontology. At the end of the Early Modern period, the old organization of thought had given way to one that followed the pattern of alphabetical writing. No longer were words, letters or sounds considered as substances with accidents. Instead, things and concepts were conceptualized like alphabetically written words.

The paper is a summary of one of the major lines of argument in my recent *The Alphabetisation of Thought. Orthography, Locke, and Natural Philosophy* (Leiden; Boston: Brill 2025).

Rolf Kemmler (Vila Real; Portugal)*

Eine dänische Lateingrammatik auf Abwegen.

Die *Latinsk Sproglære til Skolebrug* (1841) von Johan Nikolai Madvig und ihre Rezeption in Portugal

Im Jahr 1841 veröffentlichte der dänische klassische Philologe und Professor an der Universität Kopenhagen, Johan Nikolai Madvig (1804–1886), seine innovative Lateingrammatik *Latinsk Sproglære til Skolebrug*, das in der Erstauflage einen Umfang von VI, 488, [IV] hatte. Während das Original in dänischer Sprache mit mindestens zehn Auflagen bis 1907 in seinem Heimatland recht erfolgreich war, stellte die erstmals 1844 in Braunschweig vom Verfasser selbst in deutscher Sprache verantwortete Ausgabe der *Lateinischen Sprachlehre für Schulen* mit VIII, 481, [I] Seiten den Ausgangspunkt der internationalen Rezeption der Madvig'schen Lateingrammatik unter anderem in niederländischer (1845), englischer (1849), griechischer (1849), italienischer (1867–1869), russischer (1865) und französischer (1870) Sprache dar.

Etwas später erschien auch im portugiesischen Porto eine portugiesische Übersetzung, die dem klassischen Philologen Augusto Epifânio da Silva Dias (1841–1916) zu verdanken ist. Unter dem Titel *Grammatica Latina para uso das escolas* (1872) gab Dias auf X, 440 Seiten den Großteil des Texts der noch ungekürzten dritten Auflage von Madvig (1857a) wieder, die einen Umfang von XX, 516 Seiten hatte. Da Dias kurz darauf zudem eine deutlich reduzierte 204-seitige Schülerversion der *Grammatica Latina de J. N. Madvig* veröffentlichte, möchte ich in meinem Vortrag die beiden portugiesischen Texttraditionen von Madvigs Grammatik vorstellen.

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James McElvenny (Siegen; Deutschland)

Linguistic relativity and the crisis discourses of the 1920s and 30s

In contemporary scholarship, linguistic relativity is generally treated as a problem of individual psychology, to be investigated through experiments targeting cognitive processes inside the heads of single speakers of a language. But it is only since the mid-20th century that the individualising cognitive dimension has come to the fore and obscured other approaches. In this talk, I will look at the recent historical background to linguistic relativity with the emergence of the so-called ‘Sapir-Whorf hypothesis’. I will show how Sapir’s and Whorf’s own views were formulated outside the experimental paradigm of modern psycholinguistics and could not be construed as a ‘hypothesis’. Instead, their views were part of ‘crisis’ discourses of the 1920s and 30s that addressed both academic concerns arising through the formation of the modern disciplines of psychology and linguistics, and more general social and political concerns surrounding truth and propaganda. The coining of the term ‘Sapir-Whorf hypothesis’ in the 1950s represents the definitive shift to the modern experimental paradigm and quiet resolution of the crisis discourses.

Maria Chiara Pozzoni (Rom; Italien)

Every Human Being is a Legislator —

Antonio Gramsci and Lombardo Radice on Grammar, Law, and Pedagogy

This paper examines Antonio Gramsci’s theorisation of grammar in relation to juridical-legislative structures, highlighting the analogical and dialectical relationship between two conceptual triads in the *Prison Notebooks*:

- 1) written normative grammar, unwritten normative grammar, and immanent grammar;
- 2) written law, regulation, and juridical folklore.

These series align with the broader categories of domination, hegemony, and spontaneity, demonstrating how linguistic and legal normativity are historically constructed and socially mediated rather than purely prescriptive or immanent.

Gramsci’s reflections on grammar and law are further examined through his engagement with the pedagogical thought of Giuseppe Lombardo Radice. Lombardo Radice’s conception of discipline as a process in which the educator embodies a living, operative law while the learner simultaneously assimilates and creatively re-elaborates grammatical norms resonates with Gramsci’s idea that normativity is internalised as both constraint and active participation. This perspective informs Gramsci’s assertion that “every human being is a legislator” just as “every human being is a philosopher,” precisely insofar as they speak and thus contribute to the continuous re-creation of a language, which in turn embeds and sustains a specific conception of the world.

By drawing connections between linguistic normativity, legal structures, and pedagogical theories, this paper underscores the relevance of Gramsci’s thought for contemporary debates on the interplay between grammar and social normativity in general.

Eleonora Saracino (Rom; Italien)

“Τέχνη Γραμματική” by Dionysius Thrax — sources, text, studies

This presentation explores the significance of Dionysius Thrax’s *Art of Grammar* (Τέχνη Γραμματική), the earliest known comprehensive work on Greek grammar, with particular attention to his approach to grammaticography. After some bibliographical information and the writings attributed to Dionysius Thrax, the contribution will be divided into three fundamental parts, of mostly theoretical and philological nature.

The first concerns problems and perspectives of the indirect tradition of the work: thus, the pair τέχνη-ἐμπειρία, the ἀναλογία and the general inductive method starting from the speculations of Plato (in *Gorgias*, *Cratylus*, *Phaedo*, *Timaeus*, *Laws*) and Aristotle (in *Metaphysics A*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Poetics*, *Topics*), the Stoic influence, the formation under Aristarchus of Samothrace and some evidence offered by Apollonius Dyscolus.

The second part presents the style, structure and contents of the Τέχνη Γραμματική accompanied by the reading of selected passages, a brief presentation of the organisation of the material in the codices, and the fortune the work had with Manuel Moscopulo and Manuel Crisolora in Italian Humanism.

The third and final part aims to give a brief history of the major modern studies on the work between the 19th and 20th centuries, both for the authorship of the text and for more doctrinal and/or grammatical questions and, consequently, any subdivisions of the work made by critics (consider for example Barwick 1922; Di Benedetto 1958–9, 2000; Pfeiffer 1973; Swiggers-Wouters 1995, 2000; Ildefonse 1997; Matthaios 1999, 2002; Hummel 2007).

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“Deixis” in allgemein-philosophischen Grammatiken

Auroux (1986) untersucht “deiktische” Pronominal- und Adverbialelemente in verschiedenen französischen allgemein-philosophischen Grammatiken. Er kommt zu dem Schluss, dass es “absurd wäre“, diese Grammatiker als “Vorläufer der zeitgenössischen Entwicklung einer allgemeinen Äußerungstheorie” zu betrachten, auch wenn sie einige relevante Aspekte erwähnen. Der Grund dafür wäre, dass ihr grundlegendes Postulat, wonach Sprache als Werkzeug zur Übersetzung von Ideen fungiert, es ihnen nicht erlaubt, Performativität und Sui-Referenz zu berücksichtigen: *Ich* wäre hier demnach die “Bezeichnung” der Person, die spricht, und nicht Ausdruck der Person, die “Ich” sagt und sich damit als Sprecher und Bezugspunkt der Rede identifiziert. Auroux (1986: 116–117) erklärt daher, dass “die enunziative Revolution, die wir in den letzten zwanzig Jahren [d.h. also seit Ende der 1960er Jahre, FSD] erlebt haben, eine beispiellose Revolution in der Geschichte unserer semantischen Vorstellungen ist.”

Ich möchte in meinem Vortrag die Behandlung der Deixis in allgemeingrammatischen Texten neu beleuchten, indem ich die allgemeinen Grammatiken von Nicolas Beauzée, ebenfalls von Auroux behandelt, und von Karl Ferdinand Becker (1841) untersuche. Ich werde zu zeigen versuchen, dass beide Grammatiker unterschiedlich, und K.F. Becker auf eine sehr umfassende Weise, zentrale Aspekte moderner Enunziationstheorien nicht nur ansprechen, sondern eingehend entwickeln, indem sie sich auf ihre spezifischen sprachtheoretischen Postulate stützen: ein sensualistischer Ansatz bei Beauzée und ein organisistisch gefasster, kantischer Ansatz bei Becker.

Diese Untersuchung ermöglicht es daher auch, die Theoriebildung von Grammatik bzw. Grammatikschreibung in einem sprachübergreifenden Bereich zu zeigen, da die behandelten Grammatiker einen universalistischen Anspruch verfolgen und ihre Inhalte und Konzepte aus ihren philosophisch-theoretischen Grundlagen entwickeln.

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Mapping *etymological passages and terminology* in the Ancient Greek GLAUx corpus

The use of metalinguistic terms throughout centuries such as ‘etymology’, ‘syntax’, ‘dialect’ requires great caution: the fact that these terms themselves have remained stable throughout the centuries can give the false impression that the concepts they represent have also remained stable. In the past decade, research into metalinguistic studies in antiquity has dissociated itself from isolated approaches: symptomatically, recent research into ancient metalinguistic intellectual activities is usually undertaken under the umbrella of ‘ancient scholarship’ rather than, e.g., “grammaticography”. This explains the need for a wider look at the source — texts, which endangers however the feasibility of research, when following conventional methods. The aim of this contribution is to examine whether we can map ‘etymological’ passages in the entire Greek corpus. Starting from a particular set of lemmas (such as ἔτυμος), I hope to transcend the level of single lemmas by making use of syntactic and collocational information as well as synonyms. In so doing, I will make use of the GLAUx corpus (glaux.be).
