English and Technology

The I/internet   Web 2.0

Techspeak   Blogspeak

Wikispeak   Twitterspeak

EFL   ELT   ESP   CMC   TELL

Corpora   e-Learning

Affectivity   Politeness   Humour

Hypertext   Multimodality   Textualities

Blending   Remixability   Hybridity

Modularity   Digital Recombination

Diaspora   Communities   Identities

Politics of Language

Multilingualism   Globalisation

Cover design:
Jocelyne Vincent

Editor for this issue
Jocelyne Vincent
with the contribution of
Gianfranco Porcelli

Jocelyne Vincent

English and Technology: an introductory essay

Introduction

This thematic issue of *Anglistica* explores various interfaces between English and Technology, the 'and' covering for different relationships between various separate facets of English and of Technology.

To begin with, what is happening to English *in* technology, *because of* technology; not only the English *of* technology, the lexical, structural, discourse characteristics of English in technical domains, to wit aspects of ESP, or how technological advances are reflected in language, for example, in new terminology, but also what is happening to communication and to English on the discourse and textual levels when digital technologies, in particular, provide the *medium in* and *through which* English *is used*, in different contexts, for interpersonal communication in CMC and/or on websites, in blogs and in collaborative writing platforms such as Wikipedia, or in text messaging.

Technology *for* English, was also an obvious and important relationship – how technology can help *do things for* English – understood in its uses for *researching about* English(es) (for instance, through the affordances of corpus linguistics, using digitalised language data-banks or corpora), and for *acquiring, learning* and/or *teaching* EFL/ESL (from the various types of web resources for English for Foreign or Second Language learners, to e-learning and teacher training platforms for TEFL/TESL).[1]

---

[1] Other possible types or applications of technologies *for* English or language, not covered, could have been, for example, automatic and/or computer aided translation, speech recognition and subtitling software, etc., but would have implied branching out

The interest of a focus on 'English' may perhaps bear some spelling out too. In the popular imagination, at least, English and Technology are inextricably connected – as if Language and Technology meant English, in the first instance. This needed to be critically addressed, as did also what can be *done with* English when using, or through, technologies. English is (still) the major language used on the internet and the web for intercultural communication. Although the use of other major languages is increasing rapidly within social networks and forums and in the blogosphere (in countries such as China, Japan, Brazil, India, Hispano-America, as well as Italy, France), English is still the most widely present language on the net,[2] taking together CMC, websites, blogs, and the newer social networking platforms, etc. This is because of its combined use not only by native speakers of various varieties of English, or by speakers of English as a second or intra-national language, but also for its use for intercultural communication between native and non-native speakers, or as a lingua franca between non-native speakers, and, not least, because most websites with wider audience targets have parallel English version web pages as well as those in their local languages.

In the background, or indeed foreground, hovers the question of what the combination of English and Technology is *doing to* other languages. One of the main and pervading issues to do with English and Technology, essentially a political issue, concerns, indeed, the purported threat by English to other languages, in the ICT domain and elsewhere.[3] However, it is no longer taken for granted by all commentators that English is threatening other languages, at least not *because of* the web; on the contrary, indeed, the internet may be enabling and promoting multilingualism. At any rate, "a multilingual web", especially since the growth of blogs and social

---

further from our main focus on English, not to mention taking up more space.

[2] See at: http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats7.htm, accessed during the last update of this introduction in September 2009.

[3] Another aspect, would have been the more common issue of loan words, calques, etc. into other languages from technical English(es), including ICT. This aspect is amply discussed elsewhere by others , but is briefly touched upon, and put into perspective, in Bruna Di Sabato's article "ELT and the Internet: A New Approach to ESP" in this volume.

networking, is becoming a reality, and commentators are beginning to perceive it, or at least explicitly address and debate the issue.[4]

By 'Technology', apart from its wider sense encompassing specialist technical fields, addressed for example in the ESP of technical Englishes, or the English(es) of Technology(ies), we have taken on board that it has inevitably come to be mainly seen as digital technologies, enabled by computers, in particular Information and Communication Technologies, or in our case English when using ICTs. Moreover, an important connection between English and Technology, here, beyond that of technologies for interpersonal communication (which would also include mobile technologies), concerns the affordances of the new (and older) multimedia and digital media resources for information gathering, archiving, presenting and exploring, and for artistic expression and/or cultural identity representation or construction. There are new and specific modes of textuality developing in and thanks to the digital media; and the new textualities and modes of communication, afforded by ICT have cultural, societal and intercultural implications.

From the outset our perspective on English and Technology, though principally from the multiple approaches taken by the various disciplines from within linguistics in its widest sense, was inter- and multidisciplinary interfacing with Cultural Studies – the characterising perspective of *Anglistica* – and with sociology and new media studies (without, naturally, intending or expecting our finished collection to be an encyclopaedic handbook covering all fields of interest nor all combinations of English and Technology).

---

[4] See, for instance, Nunberg's 1996 talk 'The Whole World Wired ' (published in print in *Anglistica* 3.1,1999, 229-231), who already very clearly saw the potential benefit for local languages on the internet; see also Lovink's article in this volume. Bloggers, too, notably from other languages/cultures, are discussing it, see for eg., the post by Christian Kreuz (a political scientist and knowledge activist) at http://www.crisscrossed.net/2007/12/17/not-english-but-a-multilingual-social-web-is-the-key-for-collaboration; scholars, such as Dor (2004) "From Englishization to multiligualism", discussed also in Colin Gardner's chapter "English and New Media" in Sharon Goodman et al. *Redesigning English*, (London: Routledge, 2007), 207, have recently also finally noted this trend.

The papers, thus, range from descriptive works, based on empirical investigations, with methodological implications (characteristically from the contributors with linguistics training), while others, with more explicitly theoretical or speculative approaches, come from media and cultural theorists, where language, and English in particular, is still pertinent. Furthermore, in the tradition of *Anglistica* again, the volume also brings together contributions by a range of young, and established local and far flung authors.[5]

The section headings group together, thus, aspects of the different ways of envisaging the interface between English and Technology mentioned above, further complemented and supplemented by our 'squiblogs', review essays and reviews, which often touch on other facets some of which are new growths or have undergone an exponential evolution and could no longer be granted more extensive treatment in this printed issue.

The following is an attempt not only to present the single specific papers, but also to place them in the context of current debates and to draw out and identify what can be considered common themes among them as well as to suggest some of their significant implications.

English *in* Technology

The English in Technology section groups papers with mainly a descriptive linguistic approach, and consequent methodological issues, focussing mainly on what is happening to English and communication because of technology and/or because of how it is used in various ICT media.

Maria Silvia **Attianese** and Gianfranco **Porcelli**'s papers examine, among other things, various aspects of so-called technical English.

In "Between Technology and Post-Purchase Publicity: The Translation of Instruction Manuals", Maria Silvia **Attianese,** offers

---

[5] The idea for the issue was indeed born in a local research project on English and Technology, coordinated by the present writer and Maresa Sanniti di Baja (connected also to our English courses for students following the *Linguaggi multimediali e informatica umanistica* curriculum at the "Orientale"), which gathered momentum as colleagues from neighbouring Campanian universities and elsewhere joined, or answered our call for papers or our invitation to visit and deliver talks.

a rare interlinguistic and contrastive rhetorical focus on technical instruction manual genres (specifically, for home-appliances in English and Italian). She emphasises the need to not underestimate their importance, nor, crucially, that of their appropriate translation, as manufacturers consistently and short-sightedly appear to do, judging by the too frequent evidence of poorly, literally or even automatically translated manuals. Instruction Manuals have multiple functions, ranging from avoiding the danger of incorrectly following safety norms, legal issues regarding conditions for suing for damages, to those of ensuring customer satisfaction, brand-image and thus brand-fidelity. Thus Instruction Manuals for home-appliances display rhetorical "hybridity [where] there is a tension between technical and advertising requirements", where the "Post-Purchase Publicity Factor" is important alongside that of clarity and factual accuracy. The consequent challenge to, and professionality needed by, the translator should be adequately recognised, and less blind faith put in automatic translation, for example, as if technology could solve everything: "investing more attention and money in this area […] less in technology and more in people, would be a more sensible choice" for manufacturers.

In his "The Language of Technology: the Lighter Side", taking the lead from E. Tenner's *Techspeak, or How to Talk High Tech,* where, among other things, jargon and obfuscating and/or self-engrandising technical jargon (in technology, government and business) is playfully unmasked, Gianfranco **Porcelli** explores (light-heartedly but not light-headedly) the ways scientists and technologists develop or construct their language and gives us an insight into the important issue of the relationships between general intelligibility, plain English, subject-knowledge, technical jargon and ESP, as well as the crucial issue of contextual appropriateness/ justification of techspeak. When must a spade be called "a spade", "a geomorphical modification instrument" or "a material sectioning tool (MST) consisting of a ferrous-alloy invasive plane (FIP) and a metacarpal power-grip anchor (MPA)" ?

Mikaela **Cordisco** and Antonella **Elia's** articles can be seen as part of an emerging paradigm of linguistic inquiry to see whether new cyber- or digital text (sub-)genres or diamesic varieties of English can be seen to be emerging on the internet. While

examining usage in two now familiar Web 2.0 interactive types of platform, respectively the web blog and the wiki (specifically in Wikipedia), they critically address the question of whether any systematic consistencies may be discerned to warrant identifying distinct genres or varieties, and how to tease these out of the data, thus providing both overviews of the literatures and still rare and thus valuable, detailed macro- and micro-linguistic focuses on the characteristics of English usage in these specific contexts (rather than assuming, moreover, that they simply share all the features of what has generally been termed 'Netspeak').[6]

In "Blogspeak: Blogal English in the Global Era", Mikaela **Cordisco,** examines her data in terms of the interconnected dimensions of *linguistic features, style* and *domain,* thus going well beyond the popular search for an in-group jargon or even that of an ESP seen as a restrictive 'microlanguage' (such as, e.g., 'Airspeak').[7] We can note that 'blogabulary' turns out to be metalinguistic, i.e. to involve terminology for blog actions and actors; specific terminology indeed, but which does not constitute as such a specific blogger style or special usage when actually writing blogs. Addressing front-on the still often taken-for-granted and general statement that web writing is "written speech",[8] and systematically comparing paradigmatic features of oral and written genre features with those found in blog writing,[9] she shows in what specific respects it may

---

[6] D. Crystal in *Language and the Internet*, (Cambridge: C.U.P., 2001) while devoting a systematic linguistic investigation of the notion and on the perceptions of its common characteristics (ibid., 17-61), warns against seeing what he terms 'Netspeak' (ibid., 17), as a single undifferentiated variety. He suggests the various contexts or 'Internet-using situations' (as of 2001: email, chat groups, virtual worlds, the World Wide Web) which one would expect to, and do, display distinctive linguistic characteristics and thus differences among them (ibid., 6-17).

[7] On the *'–speak'* 'suffix' and its history of associations, the Italian reader may also perhaps see the present author's "*Talk –speak.* Gioco e ideologia nei logonimi inglese" J. Vincent in C. Vallini (ed.) *Le parole per le parole. I logonimi nel linguaggio e nel metalinguaggio* (Roma: Il Calamo, 2000), 701-738.

[8] For the tradition of the earlier debate on the genre characteristics of e-mails, for example, see also, for example, Naomi Baron's "Why email looks like speech: proof reading, pedagogy and social face" in J. Aitchison and D. Lewis, eds., *New Media Language* (London: Routledge, 2003), 85-94.

[9] Thus extending to blogs Crystal's (ibid., 25-48) examination along these lines for

often indeed be considered a hybrid, displaying properties of both. Among the important insights we also gain from her analysis is that there are many forms or types of blog, and therefore a great variety of styles to be found, where the distinctions between public and private, monologue and dialogue, and along the continuum of formality and informality, are variously blurred. This also contributes to the difficulty of identifying specific genre features, though indicators of informality are evident across the board (not least, also because blog writing is "naked", free from the "interference" of professional editorial norms). Cordisco also considers the fit of blog entries with the Gricean categories of conversational maxims, as did Crystal for other types of Netspeak (ibid., 48-61), reporting how blogs often do not respect them. Although blogspeak English cannot easily be defined in terms of genre, there *are* evident shared features discernible across blogs, nonetheless, which suggests also that writing technologies may have an influence on the shape a language takes.

Before turning to Antonella Elia's specific focus, it might be useful to note that this theme of the influence of the medium on message form (on various levels) permeates, implicitly and explicitly, many of the articles and squiblogs throughout the volume.

However, it is also worth noting that to suggest the influence of the medium is not to exclude the agency of users in shaping and appropriating media and technologies to their purposes, and moreover, that one might also, more generally, link the trends discernible in many of the various types of Netspeak to the *general* trend towards informalisation of discourse or style (as hinted at also in Cordisco's article above and therefore worth drawing out explicitly). One could indeed point to a mix of issues interconnected to the new writing technologies and to democratisation: the accessibility of new writing technologies to a wide (variously literate) public, the absence of editorial 'control', and also the growing recognition of the validity of oral as well as written communication, the relaxing of the wide and rigid differentiation between speech/informal - writing/formal, and, not least, to social change, in particular, i.e. to trends towards

the five 'situations' of Netspeak mentioned above.

democratisation as discussed, for example, by Norman Fairclough in 1992,[10] thus already in place before the ICT era. One could take it further and also link it perhaps to the even earlier trends and preferences for 'plain language', the preference for 'non-stuffiness' and straightforwardness, particularly in the English-speaking world.[11]

Antonella **Elia's** paper "Online Encyclopaedia@s: the Case of Wikipedia and WikiSpeak" is another still rare empirical investigation into the linguistic characteristics of a Web 2.0 site type, the open content collaborative writing Wikipedia project, to see to what extent they may have been influenced by these aspects. With the aid of Concordancer software and other statistical tools to interrogate the corpora compiled from her sources, Elia investigates, on the one hand, what she terms WikiLanguage, that of the Wikipedians in writing the articles, and on the other, WikiSpeak, as used in their backstage community forum. WikiLanguage characteristics are systematically compared to those of *Britannica*, on various recognised measures of formality/informality, with the outcome that in the Wikipedia "document mode pages, the linguistic and stylistic features show a formal and standardised level very similar to that found in Britannica" imputable to the role of the agency of very active and socially-approved members of the community enforcing convergent writing norms by imitation and by post-production editorial 'control'. In the WikiSpeak of the backstage interactions, on the other hand, she finds similar features of informality, with due differences between the synchronous and asynchronous channels, to those of Netspeak in general (but with differences imputable to 'Wikiquette' recommendations - showing again some central social control). The lexical features of WikiSpeak are indeed,

---

[10] See, e.g, in Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), 200-224.

[11] See, for example, S. Greenbaum (ed.), *The English Language Today*, (Oxford: Pergamon, 1985) 125: "Plain English means writing that is straightforward, that reads as if it were spoken […] Plain English is clear, direct and simple.", and for the long preference in Anglo cultures, see among others, Deborah Cameron's *Verbal Hygiene,* (London: Routledge, 1995), and J. Vincent "Netiquette Rules OK!...OK?: Speculating on Rhetorical Cleansing and English Linguistic and Cultural Imperialsim through Email Netiquette Style Guides" in M. Bertuccelli Papi, A. Bertacca and S. Bruti (eds.) *Threads in the Complex Fabric of Language* (Pisa: Felici Editore 2008), 409-443.

and naturally, most distinctive, and as in blogabulary noted earlier, mainly concerning specific technical operations (wiki- ones, in this case). Initiating too a useful comparison of the frequency of occurrence of different word-formation types with General English, Elia urges the need for further and more thorough identification of possible distinctive features in WikiSpeak by comparing it systematically both with corpora of General English and from other contexts of Netspeak.

We might note in summary that while both WikiSpeak and Blogspeak display trends towards informality (as do many other online encyclopaedias according to Elia), the WikiLanguage of Wikipedia entries still retains a more formal style, more obviously faithful, or subservient to the *Britannica* style, as Nunberg also hints in "A Wiki's as good as a nod" in this volume.

Whatever is emerging stylistically on the internet in general or, in particular, on the world wide web (in these cases Web 2.0), we might remember again, would arguably be the result of exploiting and contextually adapting not only to the medium but also to all the usual sociolinguistic parameters involving perceptions and projections of interpersonal relationships and of different genre appropriateness (though certainly also as afforded by the specific media). Medium affects message, but so do other factors. Informality and formality, for example, and the development of special terminology or of other features of community identity, are just as much related to people's feelings of what is appropriate in a given context and to a given purpose, not simply to the medium (except, perhaps, in the flush of excitement when that medium is novel and first appropriated by a young, informal, pioneer group). It cannot be stressed enough that usage and style in the new media, just as the use of techspeak noted earlier in Porcelli, also varies contextually and appropriately.[12] There is still a mistaken general

---

[12] That the Web also hosts formal styles would be surprising only to those who still perceive all writing on the internet as always informal. Crystal (2001) *Internet,* had already indicated web writing as more formal than writing in the other 'internet-using situations' he explored; and in general he stressed the stylistic variability of Netspeak, as found in any other medium. The Internet may well generate new linguistic varieties but these will follow the general rule of creative adaptation to medium and all the other parameters of variation; see e.g. ibid., 7, 77, 79, 128, 242.

feeling that anything goes on the Net, that extreme informality, as seen in some forms of CMC, teenage forums, IRC and texting are extendible and extended in all contexts on the Net.

The article "'Twixt twitalk and tweespeak (not to mention trouble) on Twitter: a flutter with affectivity", by Jocelyne **Vincent,** the present writer, concerning a further exemplar of a Web 2.0 social network platform, the 'micro-blogging' service Twitter, re-echoes some of the above-mentioned themes and aspects touched upon in Mikaela Cordisco's paper on blogs. However, the extreme 140-character limit on individual posts or "tweets", as they are called, the specific brief or guide to provide 'status' updates or information on 'what' is happening, and the effects of the name taken on by the service itself, bring about important specific characteristics and suggest a different focus. The focus is indeed specifically on how *affectivity,* emotions, interactional social grooming small talk, rapport talk or comity, as well as language *attitudes*, are reflected in aspects of what Vincent calls Twitter Talk and Twitterspeak, respectively, tweeted contents and word choices, and specific Twitter terminology or twitterisms. Affectivity and 'ideological' language attitudes also strongly emerge in observers' (usually critical) comments[13] on some of these aspects (defining them derisively as pointless babble, the talk of twits, laughably twee, etc.) and thus essentially also revealing some prescriptive or 'verbal hygiene' assumptions that serious, informational efficiency is superior. The brevity aspect itself, is also an interesting nexus of observers' comments. Alongside those who see it as valuable in teaching writing (to help reduce unnecessary verbiage and concentrate thoughts), it is criticised by many more who see in it the peril[14] of encouraging superficiality and triviality (as if the brevity is what had determined the pointless babble). This is somewhat surprising in view of the otherwise prevalent Anglo-

---

[13] As in many of the papers in this section and the next, the remarks in the paper are based on data collected by observation (in this case from blogged comments, online articles, twictionaries and tweets themselves) and presented to support or indeed to lead the points made, these then providing input to methodological or theoretical speculation.

[14] Worry about purported dire effects that short messages could have on writing in general (as is typical when talking of SMS texting – see Nunberg's squib "All Thumbs") is, curiously, not saliently present as a criticism of tweet writing, though it often also displays contractions and acronyms which evolved in SMS texting.

discourse ethos valuing brevity. It is even more interesting, and surprising perhaps, that affectivity emerges in Twitter Talk despite the limited space and the brief to simply provide information (though naturally the fact that it is a social network, also undoubtedly prompts many twitterers' social redefinition or 'appropriation' of the service). The affectivity strongly present in Twitterspeak should be less surprising, in any case. The light-heartedness, playfulness and even silliness reflected in twitterisms is typical of early Netspeak, and indeed of early ICT techspeak, although it is undoubtedly magnified and led by the implied invitation to frivolity and levity inherent in that of the "Twitter" metaphor and its phonology (and phonaesthesia). Vincent's tentative analysis of the structure and word formation processes at work in twitterisms is more fully within the more traditional linguistic attention to lexical morphology, though it reveals arguably more than usual highly creative and complex processes combining blending and punning and especially the function of the iconic or phonaesthesia-led connotative aspects of /twi-/.

Other implications of the findings of the presence of affectivity in Twitter talk suggest again that the influence of a medium on message form and contents is not strongly deterministic, that the agency of users is at least as strong. The affordances of Web 2.0 applications, such as embedded wiki, and blogging, however, in the various 'twictionaries' which allow for collaborative compiling and comment on suggested twitterisms, for instance are highly supportive affordances by the medium to the agency of the users. The interfacing of Twitter with mobile technology is also highly influential.

One further aspect speculated upon in the article is the statistically slightly higher presence of women twitterers, which contrasts with other ICT user statistics (see Di Martino's paper) and the tentative correlation this may have to a higher incidence of 'rapport talk' than 'report talk' on Twitter.

In another vein, Antongiuseppe **Di Dio** and Maresa **Sanniti di Baja** focus on two other different computer mediated communication (CMC) contexts, providing data from specific case studies, both with a special focus on discourse politeness and interpersonal relationships and a significant, though also still relatively rare, attention to cross-cultural issues.

Antongiuseppe **Di Dio**'s report, "Computer Mediated Communication and Identity Construction in Teenagers: some preliminary cross-cultural observations" discusses the results of face-to-face interviews, preliminary to further work examining exchanges in forums and in IRC for which he provides the methodological background, and focuses on the construction of communities of practice and identity among teenagers and their use of different technologies for interpersonal communications (distinguishing between male and female subjects and with respect to adults). This study also further, thus, involves the recognition of contextually adapted usage on the Net, by different types of users.

Maresa **Sanniti di Baja**'s study "Forwarding e-mails in an academic context: a small-scale study on language and politeness in intercultural English" examines email forwarding in intercultural interaction in an unequal power situation, specifically by English native speaker language assistants in an Italian university setting, further complicated by the potentially face-threatening nature of the act and its contents (passing on a complaint by a student to a senior Italian colleague – the author herself), providing thus a rare empirical investigation of intercultural emailing, and, not least, contributing empirically to contrastive politeness studies, where, among other things the issue of formality/informality also naturally comes into play.

The focus on English *in* technology, which can be seen to be common to the above cited articles, is found too, as we shall see later, to varying degrees, among the squiblogs, by Matthews and Nunberg, and touched upon in the reviews by Barone, Cordisco and by Roy and Luisa Boardman of influential books by David Crystal and by David Graddol.

Technology *for* English

This section groups contributions mainly of a methodological applied linguistic nature, anchored also in empirical investigations, with a common nucleus of interest in what technologies can, and do, do both for research on English and for English language learning, teaching and teacher training.

Rita **Calabrese**, Maria **De Santo** and Bruna **Di Sabato** can all be seen to be exploring among other things, and to differing degrees, the issue of Data Driven Learning, Discovery Learning and learner awareness training, through the aid of technologies. In the case of Calabrese and Di Sabato, this is through the use of language corpora available in digitalised form, whether formal organised corpora or that found informally on the web itself as an extensive live informal corpus or resource, while in that of De Santo through self-access resources of various types. Margaret **Rasulo**'s study on e-learning has, in common with De Santo and with Di Sabato, attention to uses of the internet in learning/teaching.

From Rita **Calabrese's** "Trends in ELT Methodology: Exploring a Computer Learner Corpus" one gets a very useful picture of the range of types of digitalised language corpora and of their various possible uses in English language teaching and learning. Corpora of *native* speaker texts can be investigated by descriptive linguistics researchers, by language teachers in the classroom, and can be explored by language learners, to gain insights on various aspects of English structure and usage. Corpora of *non-native* and/or of *learners'* English can be studied and used, again by a similar range of different types of user: by researchers of SLA (second language acquisition) and of specific groups of learners' *interlanguage*, by ELT (English language teaching) methodologists, by teachers in the classroom, and by learners themselves (guided by teachers) to gain critical language and learning awareness. Calabrese's own specific focus, exploring the use of an in-house corpus of learners' English by EFL learners, provides insight, indeed, on the links this has with the development of critical and "deeper" language learning: through discovery, based on exposition to authentic data, the learner learns inductively, autonomously and personally, and thus more effectively.

Maria **De Santo** in "TELL @ SAC: Enhancing English learning through ICT in a Self-Access Centre", indeed, critically addresses the appropriate ways in which Technology Enhanced Language Learning, in particular through ICT, can be employed by learners and facilitators to fully exploit its enormous potential and be truly effective as language learning enhancers and resources in independent or autonomous learning environments. Presenting the

results of an investigation in a university Self-Access Centre (that of the Naples "Orientale" University) she thus also crucially brings in the learner's perspective, preferences, expectations and attitudes, gained through a questionnaire (provided in her appendix). De Santo further practically enhances her contribution on these issues with her overview and selection of Internet resources for EFL learners in the reviews section.

One could never, indeed, over-stress the presence of a humanistic, methodologically learner-centred approach to the use of technology. Far from propounding the complete or extreme technologisation of language teaching or learning – as if teachers were replaceable by technology. The ELT methodologist today sees technology as an *aid*, e.g., helping teachers put real data at the disposal of the learner, whether through corpora, satellite television, CDs, DVDs, the internet, etc., by extending and simulating natural exposure to real language data and the natural process of learning by immersion and/or inductively, alongside other more deductive rule-based moments of systematic teaching with or without technology. Technology, in the ELT field today, is intended to complement, indeed, to *enhance, not* to *replace* other forms of exposure to language or to teachers, as can be seen also in other contributions in this section.

The theme of what technology can do *for* English combines with the previous theme of what is happening to English (ESP in this case) *because of* Technology, in Bruna **Di Sabato**'s paper "ELT and the Internet: A New Approach to ESP". ESP, of e-commerce specifically in her study, is affected by technology, however, not only because of being about technology, but also as a consequence of being used through information and communications technology: in particular, because of the expanded universe of users and functions afforded by the internet. Relating her experiences/experimentation in a University of Salerno workshop with doctoral students, she explores how the internet provides increased exposure to ESP and how the web can, or should, be exploited in learning and teaching ESPs. The methodological implications she suggests are wider-reaching, however, touching on the relationship between ESP and General English, and in syllabi for non-native speakers. With a new angle on the question of how English is no longer the exclusive

property of the native speaker,[15] she suggests indeed how ESP in particular, is being changed, and to some degree hybridised: by its use by the wide general non-specialist public, by simplification by specialists to make it more generally accessible, by its use as a lingua franca between and among natives of different varieties and, most significantly for Di Sabato, by and with non-native speaker users. Among the interesting aspects of the trend one could point out seems to be how specialist terminology is now generated more through the addition of new, specialist, meanings to existing lexical items, rather than by the coining of new specialist terms. Her main methodological suggestion is that in ELT there is often an excessive shift towards the 'special side' of the language, that this may not be productive or useful, and that a *blended* approach which combines ESP and EGP, must be adopted which recognises and raises learners' awareness of the emerging hybrid characteristics of ESP.

Margaret **Rasulo's** article "Making the Move from Conventional to Online Educational Training", also both methodological and empirical, critically examines the characteristics of e-learning and its various forms or types. These range from informal, self-paced, leader-led to performance support tools[16] (while their sub-types involve, for example, combinations of synchronous and a-synchronous channels and interaction), as well as to hybrid types, known as blended models, combining online and face-to-face sessions or workshops, but also for example, an online forum community and virtual classrooms. From the point of view of the educational methodologist, she stresses, among other things, that "information is not instruction", exposure to the large amounts of information without learner support can be overwhelming and useless: "the goals of the e-educator is to avoid the danger of this 'online anything' and foster online purposeful learning by setting up a *collaborative environment and encouraging interactivity*" (emphasis added). Comparing features, strengths and weaknesses of (good) traditional and online educational training, she argues that

---

[15] Readers might see our *Anglistica* issue, 3.1, 1999: *English and the Other* (M.-H. Laforest and J. Vincent eds.), for some aspects of this.

[16] The last type corresponds to internet use as illustrated in Maria De Santo's contributions in this issue.

the main weakness of e-learning, the lack of physicality, can be compensated for by its strengths, such as, for example, providing time for reflection before responding (because of the affordances of its possible asynchronous modalities). The ideal situation would indeed appear to be a *blended* approach, which ensures 'real' contact, feedback and interactivity, as well as time for reflection, etc. Online communication and relationship development must counterbalance the otherwise overwhelming presence of technology in its implementation, if e-learning is to be seen as a viable conveyor of high-quality education, to rival traditionally delivered face-to-face approaches (implying, naturally, that this is not uncontroversial). Rasulo does not only argue abstractly for this but brings in her reflections on data from interactions in an asynchronous forum, from her own experiences as a moderator and instructor in a project involving blended e-learning for training primary school teachers of ELT. She traces the dynamics and stresses the importance of creating a caring community of practice (a learning community and community of inquiry) by collaborative action and by nurturing personal online identities, self-confidence and self-reflection. Moreover, the trainer's role is not that of "sage on the stage" but rather "guide on the side" (a common theme in the more general learner-centred approach also behind self-access resource centres). While not arguing for online is best, she does however, strongly argue that e-training can be as good as traditional face-to-face teaching/learning (when that is good), even alone, but only as long as it is properly implemented.

More generally, it is worth stressing again that the role and means of technology enhanced language learning and/or teaching in its various forms (whether in a self-access centre, through or on the internet, using digitalised corpora in the classroom or autonomously, or in e-learning environments or set-ups of various types) is not universally uncontroversial, despite nigh on three decades of theorising, experimentation and implementation. Many teachers and educational managers are still wary of using technologies, or feel threatened also by the notion of learner autonomy, or of discovery learning, or of technology (in its various forms) used for language learning, separately or in combination. Many balk at the purported, needless to say, mistaken, implication that the human touch, face-

to-face or frontal interaction with teachers is to be eliminated or seen as out-of-date. Others promote the use of technology, or of self-access, in its various forms, nominally but haphazardly, or provide ineffective access or little encouragement or learner training to promote its use/fulness, while others may promote it enthusiastically but a-critically. Too few may actually develop materials and collaborate in or even visit their local self-access centres. Self-styled practitioners of e-learning may be content to simply offer static websites, with simple combinations of archived slide presentations, text files, images, links, etc, and consider this sufficient to warrant calling them e-learning sites (while they totally lack feedback, tracking, interactivity, etc.).

Methodological awareness of technology enhanced language learning implementation, of self-access centres, of corpus linguistics, of e-learning modalities, or, in general, of learner centredness, data driven and discovery learning, albeit long taken on-board by many ELT researchers and methodologists, is, indeed, still rare enough among educators (let alone learners) to render the questions, and the need for careful investigation and discussion, ever more pertinent. This is necessary lest, on the one hand their universal acceptance be taken for granted and methodologists thus lower their guard, or on the other, they continue to be ignored, misunderstood, or opposed out of hand by teachers or educational managers.

The other contribution in this section by Emilia **Di Martino**, "Gender Equality in the Information Society: Pedagogical Implications for Italy-based ELT" explicitly combines a pedagogical focus with themes relevant both to our earlier section on language in ICT and those in this section on ICT in teaching, also to themes relevant to our next section. She brings in, alongside methodological arguments, a sociological and ideological approach to both ELT and to the question of access to and use of ICTs by addressing the gender, age and social digital divide within Italy. She also hints at the paradox of engaging in English language teaching (where teachers can be seen as accomplices of the profit-generating ELT industry helping to impose or maintain the ideology of Western liberal-capitalism). At any rate, for Di Martino, informed ELT practice and methodology calls for "principled eclecticism" to be able to respond to the complex and varied needs and motivations of

individual learners, the complexity of language, and of the learning/ teaching process itself. ICT's various affordances are particularly suited to cater for this methodologically. She sees opportunities and implications too for the ICT empowerment of women students and teachers, by giving them the opportunity to develop a non-marginalised voice within the existing ICT culture and creating new types of ICT role models for students, as well as for questioning the conservatism of the academic world, by combining ELT with ICT education and by infusing both ICT and English into other subject areas, as is beginning to happen, indeed, in Italy.

One might note, in closing here, that among these contributions there emerges, among other things, alongside the positive recommendations and arguments for implementing ICT in teaching in various ways and for various reasons – among them the need to cater for different aspects of the learning process, learning strategies, needs, etc., and the possibility of doing so thanks to ICT affordances – also a balanced non-extremist methodological view of technology in teaching (and learning), one of urging *complementarity*, *blending*, *eclecticism* rather than an either/or polarised approach which may also help in reconciling both extreme technophobes and technophiles in ELL/ELT.

Technology, Textuality and Culture

This section takes a perspective on language, textuality and technology and its cultural or social implications, on English on the web in interlinguistic and intercultural perspective, on translation and cross-cultural identity, which is not only descriptive but also more explicitly critical, further introducing ideological, political, social and historical issues.

In the cultural studies and socially engaged tradition of *Anglistica* and of local scholars of English-language-medium creative representation here at the Orientale, and fully in its spirit of interdisciplinarity, a focus on postcolonial or diasporic subjects' identity representation is found in Giuseppe **Balirano**'s "Humourless Indians? A Multidisciplinary Approach to 'Diasporic' Humour in Ethnic Media productions", a multimodal and linguistic

analysis of how hybrid Anglo-Indian (or Indo-Saxon) identity and its place in 'Britishness', was constructed, represented humorously and provocatively and thus successfully through *Goodess Gracious Me!*, a highly successful mainstream 'British' TV comedy series. The ideological and transformational power of humour and satire is strongly and convincingly demonstrated through the author's analysis of the strategies employed in the show, principal among them, the reversal of stereotypes. This subversion, a 'diasporic humour', according to Balirano, draws attention to and subverts power differences, tends to release anxiety of each other's Other or reversed Self, and fashions a hybrid post-nation, where the concept of mainstream is both weakened and amplified. The media thus can be seen to have a strong cultural role and potential for social transformation: "Technologies mediate between reality and representations relating to wider social transformations"; since "the transnational migration of images and sounds, and peoples, reshapes national identities and moulds mutual belonging into new hybrid" entities, "the discourse on media should reflect on the multicultural symbiotic transformation that television, cinema, the internet and new media operate on their mass audiences".

The role and affordances of technologies for post-colonial identity construction or self-definition, and representation[17] is also relevant in Serena **Guarracino**'s paper on Indo-English writer Suniti Namjoshi's hypertextual novel and interactive website *Building Babel*. Her paper "Building Sites: Suniti Namjoshi's Hypertextual Babel" illustrates Namjoshi's underlying feminist project and view of how (cultural and gendered) hybrid identity and reality can be collaboratively deconstructed, re-constructed and represented thanks to the affordances of a hypertextual website, in her case – also thus engaged in the theoretical elaboration of the language, textuality and cultural construction view. Hinging on Namjoshi's reworking of meme theory, with Babel as both object and metaphor, as Guarracino argues: "Namjoshi turns memes into a tool of hybridization, which enables both Writer and Reader to

---

[17] The question of the *cross*-linguistic representation of hybrid identity is touched upon in Guarracino's review in this issue of Paola Splendore's Italian translation of 'Desi' writer Sujata Bhatt's poetry in English.

endlessly create and deconstruct story after story, in an attempt at a mythic yet fragmentary reconstruction of Babel. Being "a novel with interactive hypertext links" […], *Building Babel* not only describes, but enacts the proliferation and dissemination of memes through their choice pool, the World Wide Web". The fact that this is done in English, the colonial *master's* voice, which carries its load of specific memes, brings in other not insignificant complexities. Memes, however, not only proliferate but also mutate and merge through the agency of Writers and Readers on the web, and on the *Building Babel* site.

This, we might note, combines metaphorically the affordances of new media hypertextuality and interactivity with both hybridity and 'remix' or re-combination, themselves proliferating and merging memes from separate (and merging) areas of recent cultural and new media theory (as we shall see with Manovich and Terranova). Nor can we fail to notice the connections with what can also be seen to be a meme, that of blending and complementarity of methodological approaches in teaching and use of technologies mentioned earlier. There appears to be a larger contemporary meme which is itself a knot of metaphors of mixing.

Information technology and its role in the evolution of new textualities is firmly and specifically the focus in Sara **Griffiths**' historically oriented paper "Technology and the Text", which provides a brief history of the specific application of various technologies to linguistic texts and a comparison of print book text technology with new emerging text forms mediated by computer technology to get a picture of what is happening to the text. It also critically discusses Technology's possible relationship or role in relation to the complex configurations of social, cultural, political, and economic events that bring change, seeing Technological change as relational to these other changes not as a cause or result of them, thus also entering into the debate of what influences what.

Foundational concepts and fundamental insights on the consequences of new media technologies and digitisation in general on textualities, open-textualities, intermedia textualities and inter-networking are provided here, in an interesting and useful complementarity, by the seminal web essays by Lev **Manovich** "Remixability and Modularity" and "What happened to Remix?"

(published together here in print as "Remix") and in the paper by
Tiziana **Terranova** "Chain Reactions: Digital Recombination and
Analogue Chaos", which we are pleased to re-publish and thus
bring to the attention of our non-specialised readers. Between them
they can be seen to explore, among other aspects, connections and
distinctions between, and consequences of, digital and analogue,
discrete and continuous information bits and/or flows, linearity and
non-linearity, and the agency of participants in internet culture.

Lev **Manovich**, in particular, reflecting on Remixability and
Web 2.0, compares types of modularity and remixing of elements
of various sorts pre- and post-computer (i.e. digitisation) and into
the Web 2.0 era, tracing a history of both and their connections, and
their present and future consequences. To mention here only a few
points: thanks to Web 2.0 micro-content units, which are not tightly
packaged and hard to take apart, there is a new kind of modularity,
one without a predefined standardised "vocabulary" and an unlimited
way these units or bits can be combined. Post-computer modularity
can produce "unlimited diversity, indeed, whereas pre-computer
modularity leads to repetition and reduction". Furthermore, while
culture has always been about remixability, and it extends well
beyond culture and the Internet, now the "remixability is available
to all participants of Internet culture". Remixability becomes,
indeed, also practically a built-in feature of the digital networked
media universe, thanks to the ease with which media objects travel
between devices and services. In addition to 'cultures' which remix
media content, such as in DJ music culture, where the term "remix"
was first applied, we also now have software which remixes data
from more than one source - the result known as "mash ups".

Apart from their ontological interest on the distinctions between
them, also well worth mentioning are Manovich's side comments
on the metaphors and terms used in various domains (music, visual
art, software, literary texts, etc.) to describe remixability of various
types (remix, appropriation, quoting, sampling, montage and
collage), alluding to their distinctions and different connotations
(positive or negative). Suffice it to say here that it is noteworthy
that context (domain) affects evaluation of the concept of remixing;
it is acceptable and expected in music, and in software and web
design, though not always openly admitted in the latter, while in

other domains it may be seen as stealing. "Appropriation" can have this connotation, while "remixing" has positive connotations, and suggests reworking; "quoting" has a different logic from remix, and is a precedent of "sampling" not of "remix". Montage and collage come from sampling; "remixing", in music at least, implies blending. As Manovich notes, no proper terms for the practice exist outside of music, and one should be careful not "to apply old terms to new technologically driven cultural practices", and vice-versa, one could add perhaps.

Tiziana **Terranova** in "Chain Reactions: Digital Recombination and Analogue Chaos", drawing on cybernetic and information theory, philosophy and literary criticism, explores further consequences of digitisation on electronic textuality and the interrelation of processes of digitisation and interconnectivity, non-linearity, interactivity, analogue dynamics, intermedia resonance and the "political potentials" of the latter. Obeying, as she says, what Lev Manovich has called the principles of 'variability' and 'modularity' of new media objects,[18] "digitised text seems to offer itself much more readily [than the printed text] to the action of transversal and recombinable modifications which also empower the reader to actively engage in the production of the textual experience". Digitisation, she suggests, however, does not simply replace and succeed analogue media; "electronic textuality should be understood as a reconfiguration of the overall relation between digital and analogue dynamics". While confirming "the observation of new media theory about the shift from analogue to digital representation entailing a shift from continuous to discrete quantities", she also sees it as "foregrounding nonlinear modes of communication", which can be described as an amplification of analogue dynamics. She thus sees the digital medium as responsible for a twofold operation: it "cuts up the analogue (the continuous qualities of semiotic fluxes); and it 'analogises' the digital by introducing into such a world of bits the nonlinearity of recursive operations". This it does either by changing the order in which texts are read (as in hyperlinked documents), or by involving the reader in adding and editing collectively produced texts (as in the case of

---

[18] In his *The Language of New Media*, Cambridge, Mass., M.I.T. Press, 2001.

wikis). There is thus, on the one hand, a "digital codification which cuts up analogue fluxes by emphasising discrete microvariations within what has been described as a 'recombinant culture' " and on the other, however, "an analogue dynamics of increasing and decreasing waves of variable lengths and power, a chaotic physics of amplifications and interference, of diffusion, turbulence and bifurcations."

To simplify somewhat, leaving the further exploration of these richly complex texts to the reader, we might say that while the consequences of digitisation focussed on by Lev Manovich here concern mainly modes of modularity and thus of modes of remixing or recombination, Tiziana Terranova focuses more on non-linearity, and both refer to participants' active involvement in reworking 'texts' and to the interconnectivity of media. Together they allow us to reach a fuller understanding of how computer technology, and the web have influenced and are transforming textualities, and of the wider cultural and "political" implications.

Worth drawing out more explicitly in general again from the last four papers mentioned and others in the English in Technology section is their implicit engagement in the debate between social constructivism of technology and technological constructivism, i.e., on what influences what. Our authors, while acknowledging the role or influence of the affordances of a medium on textualities and uses, also stress its malleability/flexibility and the agency of users in their appropriation and adaptation of the technologies to their communicative purposes.

Finally, it is in the contributions by Geert **Lovink,** "Internet, Globalisation and the Politics of Language" in this section (and in his blog post mentioned below, as well as in the contribution by Chantal Zabus in the Review Essays section, and by others among the reviews), where the politically and culturally vexed question of the relationship between English and other languages on the web (and in general) is firmly focussed on and clarified. Furnishing language statistics and reflections on the trends observable in the blogosphere, Lovink argues that rather than the disappearance of local languages, we can see the rise of national webs.[19] He calls for

---

[19] Geoff Nunberg in "A Whole World Wired" (in *Anglistica* 1999 vol. 3,1, 229-231) mentioned earlier, foresaw a similar development.

a critical reappraisal, the need to overcome the pervasive (and often envious) view of English as the language of cultural domination in order to start to go beyond the theories of globalisation and empire current in new media theory, to develop a new critical vocabulary that takes into account the rise of internet power brokers such as China and India. Though taken on board by some (as mentioned earlier), we might note that the implication is that the issue is still not uncontroversial.

Squiblogs

A squiblog is linguistically and conceptually a portmanteau blend of squib[20] and blog, coined here in the time-honoured manner of web- or Net-speak. Many blog entries, particularly, in the many linguistics blogs in existence, can often justifiably be seen indeed as "squibs". Squibs and many blog entries do seem to share genre characteristics not only of brevity, by outlining a nascent idea or a point not warranting perhaps a longer treatment, but also often of wit, not to mention informality, or failing those, at least of provocation or invitation to further thought or follow-up by others. The contributions in our section were indeed, either originally actual (serious) blog entries (Lovink), short light-hearted webpage

---

[20] A "squib" is literally and originally a small fire-cracker, sometimes used to ignite a larger pyrotecnic explosive (OED tells us that it is of unknown origin perhaps onomatopoeic "intended as imitative of an explosive sound"), its sense soon extended metaphorically to indicate a 'hit', jibe, brief satirical or witty and provocative speech or piece of writing (attested already in 1525 in this sense).
Since the 1970's, thanks mainly to its use in the journal *Linguistic Inquiry*, "squib" is applied in linguistics to a short piece outlining data or developing a minor theoretical argument "intended to ignite thinking and discourse by others". Interestingly, according to the graduate student blog http://fledgelings.blogspot.com/2009/03/squibs-linguistic-kind.html of the San Francisco State University Masters programme in linguistics, squib writing and presentation is central in their program, and they refer us to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squib_linguistics, which in turn refers us to the online linguistics journal *Snippets*, for the view of this academic written genre as "the ideal footnote: a side remark that taken on its own is not worth lengthy development but that needs to be said". The emphasis on, and desire for, brevity too is worth mentioning, and one cannot help connecting it somehow to the general (ideological?) trend found in netiquette (see, e.g. in J. Vincent, 2008 (ibid.).

pieces (Matthews),[21] or entertaining yet scholarly commentaries first delivered as short radio talks and available later on a personal web page (Nunberg), all published in print here for the first time.

The focus on English *in* technology, explored more extensively in our section of that name, is also found as anticipated earlier, here among the 'squiblogs'.

Jeff **Matthews**' piece "Shall I Compare Thee to a Stand-Alone Compression Module?" is an ironic take on the similarities of technical and poetic language; his American students' waning appreciation of poetry might be re-awakened by finding it in technical texts? (indeed, in what we can recognise as 'found poetry'). In Geoff **Nunberg**'s "All Thumbs" the question of condensed texts and the purported nefarious effect of SMS texting on English in general, is approached.[22] The linguist cannot but counter to the usual prophets of doom, that styles and jargon develop appropriately in separate media with little overlap; just as what happened in telegraphs stayed in telegraphs: "the linguistic features of the new media are sure to follow the same pattern". In his "Lowercasing the Internet", Nunberg next focuses our attention, again in his inimical style, on the question of graphical norms in the otherwise purportedly normless internet (or is it the **I**nternet?),[23] with implications both for the semiotic and social significance of typographical conventions and on the diachronic and synchronic variation in perceptions of the status of the i/Internet.

Jeff **Matthews**' entertaining piece on subtitling vs. dubbing "Hey you sound just like Marlon Brando, Robert Redford and Paul Newman!" and, in particular, on the Italian film dubbing industry's voices of Hollywood actors, can be seen, among other things, as a reflection also on aspects of cross-cultural migration and representation, and implicitly also on the technological and economic constraints, in the 'older' audiovisual medium of film.

---

[21] The web site they are taken from is maintained with his U.S. students at Maryland University), and other 'ex-pats' and visitors to Naples and Italy, in mind.

[22] On this theme, see also in A. Kessler and A. Bergs "Literacy and the New Media: vita brevis, lingua brevis" in J. Aitchison and D. M. Lewis eds. *New Media Language*, (London: Routledge, 2003), 75-84.

[23] We have tended to respect authors' choices of lower or upper case, while preferring to use the lowercase ourselves.

The technology, culture and society focus can be found most firmly here among the squiblogs in Geert **Lovink**'s 2007 "Global conversations" blog post from the floor of the 2007 conference on marginalised languages, which sheds insights, among other things, on the different takes by scholars from different disciplines on the problematic status of English as the dominant language of the coloniser. While the post-colonial perspective on language in cultural studies appears somewhat pessimistic, from the technology panel, instead, Lovink reports getting a sense of the revolutionary potential of the internet for 'marginalised languages'.[24] His final remarks on translation, code-switching, hybridity and multilingualism reflect his own stance on the strategies to be followed to make cultural and linguistic differences visible.

Geoff **Nunberg**'s "A Wiki's as good as a Nod", can be seen to address, albeit allusively and all too briefly, an important issue also relevant to technology and society, that of the quality of information found on the web in particular with respect to the collaborative open-authored Wikipedia. While acknowledging its usefulness as a first source of information, he reminds us of the project's intentional lack of a critical or engaged voice on issues and he hints in passing at the impersonality of Wikipedia's prose, and thus its consequently apparent unity of voice and its subservience to the grand illusion of the Enlightenment's encyclopaedic vision, of which however, there being no supporting unity of high culture, it ironically signals the end.

Review Essays and Reviews

We have also been careful to elicit and accept reviews of works related as far as possible to our central themes, thus providing, we hope, a thematically coherent issue and a volume with enhanced usefulness to readers with this specific interest.

Geert **Lovink's** review essay "Weizenbaum and the Society of the Query", relevant especially to the technology and culture focus,

---

[24] This was an emerging theme which we invited him to further elaborate on in his talk given at the "Orientale" in 2008, published among the articles here in the technology and culture section mentioned earlier.

addresses and critiques the implications of search engines such as Google which ranks hits according to popularity, rather than 'Truth', in the flood of disinformation available on the Internet. Alongside, but with different conclusions from Weizenbaum's, Lovink highlights the question of information management afforded by the new technologies, with an emphasis on the .problem of discernment of quality or relevance of information. He suggests that even with the rise of Web 3.0 where search queries and results will not be ranked according to popularity or sponsorship, but on semantic principles, it is still the human brain which must do the thinking. Rather than calling for editorial, professorial or professional expert control of information on the web, one should work towards the rise of critical awareness and media literacy among users, who must learn to be able to pose the right query, to distinguish 'rubbish' from non-rubbish, and, essentially, gain the capacity to scrutinise and think critically.

In the far-reaching review essay by Chantal **Zabus,** "Paradigms Lost" of Christian Mair's important volume *The Politics of English as a World Language: New Horizons in Postcolonial Cultural Studies*, the vexed question of the relationship between English and other languages, broached in the technology, textuality and culture section, is again centrally, and magisterially, addressed. Is the 'English-is- dominant' paradigm still relevant? Mair's edited volume contains thirty-five selected articles from conference proceedings on new literatures and varieties of English, from which Zabus gains, and thus gives us, an insightful panoramic view of the various positions of scholars from linguistics to literary and cultural studies on the issue of the future status of English and other languages. Zabus identifies three categories of scholars: those who make bleak predictions on linguistic genocide by English, those who respond enthusiastically to the spread of English, and those who optimistically foresee a future of 'global diglossia'. Each of these is "wrestling" with one of three types of irony: any attempt to subdue the global reach of English is done in English; many of the enthusiastic guarantors of English are themselves not always English; 'expanding circle' users of English still have to conform to the norms of 'inner circle' users.

The issue of what is happening to English, as well as its

relationship to, and its influence on other languages, *because of* technology, and/or because of its global use, is naturally also central among the **reviews** of seminal books in the field, David Crystal's *The Language Revolution* (by Linda Barone) and David Graddol's *English Next: Why Global English May Mean the End of English as a Foreign Language* (reviewed separately with slightly different takes, by Roy and Luisa Boardman and by Mikaela Cordisco).

The post-colonial cultural studies perspective, and the general question of language dominance, emerges again, as mentioned earlier, in Serena Guarracino's review of Paola Splendore's Italian translations of a collection of poems by the writer Sujata Bhatt (who moved from India to the U.S. early in life) and whose 'lost languages' nonetheless resurface in her English providing considerable challenges, among other things, for the cross-linguistic representation of cultural and linguistic hybridity and/or polyphony.

De Santo's overview of EFL/ESL web resources, relevant, instead, to our technology *for* English focus, examines methodologically, and usefully categorises types of internet and web resources for language learners of English, selecting, listing and briefly describing sites and portals of enduring presence and proven usefulness among the many thousands available on the web.

Poetastery

The volume ends playfully with some (technology related) 'poetry': some 'poetastery' to generally adopt the term Geoff Nunberg uses for his own on his web page.

The menu is composed of two tasty compositions by **Nunberg** on some social implications of ICT, in his "Cookie Monsters", on our track-able 'clicking', and "We're becoming Unwired", on mobile technology trends/trendiness. These are followed by a collaborative, anonymous and, indeed, remixed, composition "Life before the Computer",[25] circulating, in different versions, in blogs

---

[25] The first author is unknown; an image of a printed poster or card with a presumably earlier shorter version sometimes still (in 2009) continues to be posted in blogs or in Facebook, while this or slightly shorter presumably adapted versions also continue to appear. The 'poem', seems to be the result of collective, collaborative

and forwarded emails in recent years, which 'comments' on how terms have taken on new meanings in computer terminology (thus also further illustrating one of the issues mentioned in Bruna Di Sabato's paper). The menu ends – so as not to totally ignore a viral phenomenon now infecting many members of the web community more benignly, however, than spam itself – with "Spam Salad", a selection of *spoems,* to give a little taste of what can be done *with* English *found* on the internet (and *is* done by an increasing number of enthusiasts), by 'sampling' spammed English. In spoems, spam subject lines, but occasionally spam message lines too, find a rather different use and collocation from their original purposes;[26] in them, indeed, modularity, recombination or remixability find an extreme textual realisation on the web, with more than a nod too to the pre-web cut up and collage, dada-ist, and found poetry traditions, as well as to that of haiku (in the less formally strict non-Japanese form now allowed).[27] 'Poetry' will out… with or without technology.

It is thus with pleasure that we present this issue, which we trust will be found enjoyable as well as a rich resource for readers interested in some of the many key ways of envisaging the interface between English and Technology, one which provides relevant and valuable insights and hints also for continuing attention to this (very) fast-moving field.[28] By a felicitous coincidence, positioned

composition by anonymous participants, who tweak or add to it, and then post or pass it on (or by others who appropriate and thus validate it before passing it on), thus re-enacting an ancient tradition of oral folklore.

[26] Rather like Balirano's 'diasporic humour', indeed, they subvert or turn on its head arrogant hectoring or colonisation, by spammers of our email boxes in this case.

[27] Well-known spoetry sites, for example, are at www.spoems.com; www.spam.poetry.com; "Anthology of Spam Poetry" at http://poemsmadefromspam.blogspot.com/; for Haiku, see http://www.toyomasu.com/haiku/, and for the blending of spam with haiku, see http://web.mit.edu/jync/www/spam/, and also http://heathspoetry.blogspot.com/2009/03/spam-haiku-spaiku.html.

[28] Full advantage was taken productively of a pause in publishing *Anglistica* – caused by a mix of personal, bureaucratic and financial vicissitudes – delaying the publication of this issue, but also helping us realise it was time *Anglistica* should henceforth be published online. Our papers were thus continuously updated where appropriate by the authors and/or the present editor, and some additions made to our original collection to encompass further relevant emerging trends and phenomena. It is inevitable, however, that immediately after publishing a finished volume on new technologies, whether

as it is at the end of our printed era, our issue also heralds, to some degree, *Anglistica's* new online web one.

An enormous debt of gratitude must, before closing, be expressed to **Gianfranco Porcelli**, for his authoritative supervision during the earlier stages of selection and editing, and not least, for his generous moral support throughout. A special thanks must also go to 'Antonio' Di Dio, Mikaela Cordisco and to Serena Guarracino for their precious help at various stages of the editing process, and not least, to all our contributors for their trusting support and patience. Finally, we all wish to dedicate this issue to our dear friend and colleague **Maresa Sanniti di Baja**, who had helped sow the seeds of our joint project but died suddenly in late 2006 and was thus not able to see it finally bear fruit.

Jocelyne Vincent

online or in print, new developments or issues will have already emerged. Until the growth slows, if it ever does, we can only recommend keeping track of developments through posts on blogs and personal webpages where authors publish their pieces, even before these appear in edited web-based journals, not to mention before they finally appear in print.