

Josh Brown
The University of Western Australia



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SERIES IN LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

ITALIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Teaching and acquisition in higher education

Edited by
ALBERTO REGAGLILO



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Italian as a foreign language

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Alberto Regaliolo
UKSW University

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Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|--|
| * | ungrammatical or not attested |
| ¿ | doubt |
| = | cliticised to |
| A level | Advanced Level qualification |
| AS level | Advanced Subsidiary level |
| CALL | Computer-Assisted Language Learning |
| CEFR | Common European Framework of Reference |
| CEFRL | Common European Framework of Reference for Languages |
| CLA | Centro Linguistico di Ateneo |
| DOM | differential object marker |
| EFL | English as a foreign language |
| F | feminine |
| FL | foreign language |
| FUT | future |
| GCSE | General Certificate of Secondary Education |
| GER | gerund |
| HoA | Department of History of Art |
| ICT | information communications technology |
| IFL | Italian as a foreign language |
| IMP | imperative |
| INF | infinitive |
| Infl | (verbal) inflection |
| IPFV | imperfect(ive) |
| IRR | irrealis |
| It | Italian |
| L&LS | Department of Language and Linguistic Science |
| L1 | mother tongue |
| L2 | second language |

| | |
|------|-----------------------------------|
| LFA | Languages for all |
| lit. | literally |
| LSP | Languages for Specific Purposes |
| LU | learning unit |
| M | masculine |
| MALL | Mobile-Assisted Language Learning |
| Mod. | Modern |
| N | native speaker |
| N | northern |
| NEG | negator |
| NN | non-native speaker |
| O | old |
| OBL | oblique |
| PFV | perfect(ive) |
| PL | plural |
| PRO | null pronoun |
| PST | past |
| PTCP | participle |
| SCL | subject clitic |
| SG | singular |
| SLA | second language acquisition |
| SVO | Subject – verb – object |
| V2 | verb-second (syntax) |
| W | western |

Varieties

| | |
|------|---------------------|
| Abr. | Abruzzese |
| Bas. | Basilicatese |
| Bol. | Bolognese |
| BS | province of Brescia |
| Cal. | Calabrian |
| CE | province of Cuneo |

| | |
|------|--------------------------------|
| Cmp. | Campanian |
| Cos. | Cosentino |
| Crs. | Corsican |
| CS | province of Cosenza |
| Eml. | Emilian |
| FG | province of Foggia |
| Fr. | French |
| Gen. | Genoese |
| It. | Italian |
| Lat. | Latin |
| Laz. | Laziale |
| LE | province of Lecce |
| Lig. | Ligurian |
| Lmb. | Lombard |
| Mac. | Maceratese |
| Mol. | Molisano |
| MT | province of Matera |
| NA | province of Naples |
| Nap. | Neapolitan |
| Pdm. | Piedmontese |
| Pgl. | Pugliese |
| PZ | province of Potenza |
| RC | province of Reggio di Calabria |
| Rml. | Romagnol |
| Ro. | Romanian |
| Sal. | Salentino |
| Sic. | Sicilian |
| Tsc. | Tuscan |
| Umb. | Umbrian |
| Ven. | Venetan |

Contributors

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Sara Dallavalle is an Assistant Instructional Professor at the University of Chicago, where she teaches all levels of Italian and coordinates the first-year sequence. She has a laurea magistrale in Specialized Translation (IULM University, Milan) and a PhD in Italian Studies (Indiana University-Bloomington). She specializes in comics studies, and her research includes popular culture, media industry studies, publishing studies, digital humanities, and translation studies. Her doctoral dissertation, titled "Italian Auteur Comics Magazines: the case of Orient Express (1982-1985)," explored the culture of auteur comics in Italy and the phenomenon of auteur comics magazines (1960-1980). In combining traditional and digital methods, including close readings, text analysis, and data visualization, her work proposes an innovative method for studying comic magazines that can be effectively applied to other forms of periodical products. Other projects consider comics, their positioning in the publishing industry, and their impact on Italian society. Sara is also interested in exploring original pedagogical applications of comics in foreign language courses and is currently developing a course on the translation of Italian comics.

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Stefano Maranzana is an Assistant Teaching Professor of Italian at the Department of French & Italian at Emory University. His research interests focus on the acquisition of Italian grammatical gender, captioned video in listening comprehension, virtual reality in language learning and Italian American ethnicity and immigration. His latest research centres on the use of French language variations (argot and verlan) in contemporary TV shows and its implications for learners of the French language.

Leonardo Masi studied Polish language and literature at the Universities of Florence and Milan and Music at the Conservatory of Florence. He currently works at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw, where he directed the Department of Italian Studies for several years. His main research fields are the relationships between literature and music, Italian-Polish relations and translation practices. He has published works, among others, on Szymanowski, Brzozowski, Fellini, Fortini, contemporary poetry and popular music. He translates into Italian some of the most important contemporary Polish authors.

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Introduction

Starting a university course represents a choice in response to specific motivations; indeed, going to university should not be seen as a mandatory step for a student. Therefore, it is expected that deciding on the degree course to follow should be done in a mindful manner, even if young people between the ages of seventeen and eighteen sometimes do not yet have clear ideas about what they would like to do in their future.

However, this is not a problem if one pursues his/her own interests. On the one hand, motivations could be related to personal development, such as studying new subjects, opening up to new horizons, or becoming more independent, among others. On the other hand, one could enrol in a university to increase the chances of finding a good job and, therefore, having greater prospects in this area, together with a better economic and social position.

The programs offered within the various universities are different from each other, based on the curriculum chosen, on the faculty, and also on the basis of the country. Therefore, those who want to study Italian will be able to compare the different educational offers proposed by the numerous universities and choose the one that is most suited to their own perspectives and inclinations; thus, diversity manifests richness because each program will be unique of its kind and will be able to respond to the individual needs of students who have a particular interest in certain subjects rather than others.

In fact, some degree courses are more focused on the literary aspect, and others on linguistic or didactic. Sometimes, a foreign language is embedded within a specific study curriculum (such as, for example, Business, Law, and Psychology) and, therefore, the language is an additional element to the course itself.

The student who begins a course in Foreign Languages, Italian Studies, Italian Philology, or Linguistics will, therefore, in most cases, find a rich and varied curriculum. The latter will provide the basis for acquiring the Italian language while equipping the student with further knowledge and practical elements to understand the language itself, to know it more deeply, as well as analyzing the historical, literary, and artistic aspects that characterize it along with its cultural heritage. This happens because the latter and the linguistic field are strongly linked and feed each other. In consequence, in many cases, the Italian language is accompanied by other courses which - although not strictly related to it (grammar, listening, conversation, etc.) - integrate with the subject. Take, for example, the case of Dialectology, Phonetics, and History of

Art or Geography, to name just a few disciplines; these provide the student with a complete view of the Italian language and culture.

Italian as a Foreign Language: Teaching and acquisition in Higher Education aims to focus on teaching and learning the Italian language - in its broadest sense - in the university setting.

The idea for this book comes from personal reflections that have surfaced in recent years, as in the studies of language teaching, we often focus on the Italian language; however, these studies on Higher Education are still very diffident, and it is not completely clear how to propose, teach and acquire the university subjects present in the Italian curriculum abroad. One might think that one's university career, scientific research and experience in the field could also lead to knowledge of language teaching and a certain educational quality. However, university education for foreigners requires rethinking the subject in question and understanding how it should be adequate for the times and easily acquirable, all while considering the language itself as a medium for conveying new knowledge.

This book thus places emphasis on the teaching methodology, and on the tools and resources available, with the aim of prompting professionals and students to reflect on alternative teaching disciplines and proposals within the university. In fact, in the panorama of the study of foreign languages, through the research of language teaching in particular, extreme attention has been noted toward training, innovation, and the systems used to offer teaching that is in step with the times and, above all, valid.

This volume, therefore, seeks to be a point of reference for both teachers and students who deal with Linguistics, Philology, Didactics and Pedagogy in order to understand better how to present a specific discipline and what are the characteristics, the benefits, difficulties, activities, materials, and projects to facilitate teaching, understanding and acquisition.

The volume, for practical reasons, is divided into two parts: the first, Pedagogical Approaches and Methodological proposals, presents some theoretical studies with the relative proposals for their implementation. In the second part, Italian through Projects and Case-Studies, a series of insights are highlighted through different projects and the teaching and learning of the Italian language in universities through specific case studies.

Important contributions have been used in each section of the manual; in the first, Pedagogical Approaches and Methodological proposals, we have: Teaching L2 Italian phonetics and pronunciation in academic courses (Olga Broniś); Historical linguistics and Italian at university (Josh Brown); Telecollaborating in Italian (Chiapello Stefania and González Royo Carmen); Teaching Italian (with) comics (Sara Dallavalle); Teaching and understanding

Italian through the language of the press (Marta Kaliska); Teaching and learning Italian word-formation patterns (Irene Lami); Teaching Italian Dialectology (Adam Ledgeway); and Teaching and learning Italian indecent language (Alberto Regagliolo);

In the second, Italian through Projects and Case-Studies there are: Teaching specialist language skills in Italian through History of Art (Cinzia Bacilieri); For an interdisciplinary approach in language learning: Exploring the use of subtitling in the Italian language classroom (Rosalba Biasini and Francesca Raffi); Embodied and experiential immersion into transculturality: learning Italian thorough ethnography and translation (Eliana Maestri); Learning Italian with cartoons (Maranzana Stefano); Italian through geography at university level (Leonardo Masi); The teaching of Italian through Process Drama (Ilaria Salonna) and Learning from the essay (Valentina Tibaldo).

As a result, the contributions included in this work are varied and reflect the different university curricular realities. In fact, the courses offered in higher education in the specialized courses of the Italian language, as already mentioned, range considerably and embrace different areas and disciplines: historical, geographical, literary, philological, artistic, translational and linguistic, without omitting the technology, multimedia and the actuality itself, positioning themselves both as theoretical studies, but also as practical ones, because, in a globalized and digitized world, the teaching and acquisition of foreign languages and related subjects at university are essential for proposing informed, valid teaching that is functional, practical, adapted and organized.

Chapter 2

Historical linguistics and Italian at university

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Abstract: This chapter discusses various aspects of the teaching of historical linguistics in Italian Studies curricula. A brief introduction discusses the position of linguistics in Italian departments in general and the sustained interest in linguistics from scholars in Italian Studies. Since historical linguistics is rarely taught as a subject in itself, the chapter describes three different courses where knowledge of historical linguistics may be taught or be useful for students: (1) history of the Italian language; (2) Italian dialectology; (3) Romance linguistics. In each section, potential topics for inclusion in a possible curriculum are canvassed before discussing the most useful references and bibliography when teaching such courses. Some comments on pedagogical aspects are included, such as possible assessment items and the language of instruction, before the conclusion. Overall, the chapter reports that while historical linguistics can be seen to be a traditional discipline in many respects, the linguistic variety characteristic of Italy's past and present remains a source of fascination for students.

Keywords: Historical linguistics, Linguistic variety, Romance linguistics, Italian

1. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to survey some of the ways in which historical linguistics finds itself being taught in various courses traditionally housed in Italian Studies at the university level. Historical linguistics has a long history in Italian departments. In part, this is due to the strong traditions of the disciplines *linguistica storica*, *dialettologia* and *filologia* in Italy. Now, courses with a linguistic focus have been taught in Italian departments in universities in the English-speaking world for several decades. In recent years, the

‘broadening out’ of language departments to cognate areas of study and a renewed emphasis on ‘interdisciplinarity’ has seen Italian Studies become even more connected to linguistics in different ways. Part of this diversification has seen linguistics become part of the broad curricula offered. This chapter focuses on one type of linguistics in particular, historical linguistics. It looks at the different types of topics which are taught in university courses, with a focus on the author’s particular experience in Australia.

As a discipline in its own right, historical linguistics "is currently undergoing something of a renaissance" (Bowern and Evans, 2014: 1); for an overview of even more recent developments, see Boas and Pierce, (2020). The offering of linguistics in Italian departments often waxes and wanes, according to the staff profile of departments themselves, as well as the teaching and research strengths of individuals in those programmes. In this context, it is important to recognise that linguistics is now competing with a plethora of thematic or ‘elective’ courses in Italian Studies, as the discipline itself has become more interdisciplinary (Caruso and Brown, 2022; Brook, Mussgnug and Pieri, 2017; Glynn, Keen, and Pieri, 2020; Ceravolo and Finozzi, 2022) and broadened out to new areas of teaching and research. The popularity of linguistics seems to have increased only since the mid-twentieth century – in other words, after the foundation of linguistics as a discipline itself as an academic discipline. In his survey of articles published in the first half of the period since the appearance in 1937 of the journal *Italian Studies*, for example, Robey (2012) notes that only two are on linguistics. Although it is not the intention here to discuss the more general question of linguistics in Italian departments, Kinder (1996) provides an excellent overview, with comments that can still be seen as valid today. He notes how "linguistics has made a rather uncertain entry into departments of Italian" (p. 516) and that "the boundary lines between linguistic studies of Italian and literary studies of Italian need not become barricades" (p. 527). The growing presence of linguistics in Italian departments as a worldwide phenomenon can be dated, in the words of the former president of the Accademia della Crusca, Francesco Sabatini, to sometime before 1990:

Si è affermata e si va diffondendo in varie parti del mondo la figura dell’italianista linguista, mentre fino a qualche decennio fa campeggiava dappertutto isolata la figura dell’italianista “letterato” (per lo più dantista o rinascimentalista). Si tratta dunque di un vero e proprio “nuovo corso” per la nostra lingua all’estero, un evento che si spiega solo guardando all’intera realtà sociale e culturale dell’Italia odierna e all’intensità e varietà dei suoi rapporti col mondo.

(Sabatini, 1990: 260)

Given the many subdisciplines of linguistics as a social science in its own right and the varied interests of linguists (both Italian and not) who teach in such departments, all I can offer below are but a few examples of some courses which use the tools and methods from historical linguistics and show ways in which these might be helpful for whoever is considering approaching such courses in their own teaching. I have tried as much as possible to avoid using the term *filologia* and its English translation *philology*, since both terms (arguably) do not correspond to each other's present or historical reality. Confusion continues to characterise both terms, even when treated in their own linguistic traditions, whether in an Italian or Anglophone context. Nevertheless, I have referred to certain Italian publications which do adopt the term *filologia* in their title when this is taken to refer to methodologies and subjects that are clearly historical in nature. While not wishing to enter into a detailed discussion of the various ways this term (and others, such as *linguistica storica*, for example) are used across the literature, may it suffice to say that, in this chapter, I use the term 'historical linguistics' in a broad sense to refer to any course taught with a focus on the diachronic evolutions of language. Where possible, the chapter makes use of examples from recent publications (often 'manuali') that I have adopted in my own courses. I have attempted to provide details of publications in English as much as possible. However, since resources published in English are not as abundant as those published in Italian and given the nature of this particular volume for an English-speaking audience, I have referred the reader to what I believe are indispensable references also in Italian. I have also included references to the major grammars and electronic corpora, which can be used for didactic purposes. Much work has been done in recent years, and there now exist excellent teaching materials for subdisciplines of linguistics that deal with historical Italian and the 'dialects of Italy'. I have placed emphasis on those works which are seen as useful pedagogical tools for the teacher, but also introductions to historical linguistic phenomena for the student; to this end, I have made mention of some of the more general reference works on Italian and also Romance, but have deliberately avoided the most recent, research-driven monographs or theoretical treatments of particular phenomena.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows. Section 2 narrows to look at particular courses where methodologies and approaches from historical linguistics are often adopted: (1) history of the Italian language; (2) Italian dialectology; (3) Romance linguistics. In each section, potential topics for inclusion in a possible curriculum are canvassed before discussing the most useful references and bibliography when teaching such courses. I also provide a series of general reference tools and a bibliography useful for teaching and student research projects in Italian linguistics. Section 3 makes some comments surrounding pedagogical issues, including the language of instruction and

potential assessment items. Final comments about the future of historical linguistics and Italian Studies, and the appeal of historical linguistics for students, are made in the conclusion.

2. Historical linguistics in particular courses

Different types of courses exist where a general approach to historical linguistics can be introduced in Italian Studies at the university level. To my knowledge, there is no course housed in an Italian department anywhere which has as its explicit focus the general discipline of historical linguistics *per se*. Monographic courses which do focus on the broader question of language change over time are often simply termed *historical linguistics*, *language change*, *language across time* or similar, and are traditionally housed in departments of linguistics proper. What follows below are historical approaches to language that *are* taught by Italianists and which refer to the specific context of Italy or use Italian data.

2.1. History of the Italian Language

Courses on the history of the Italian language are taught around the world, often mirroring the traditional *Storia della lingua italiana* stalwart in universities in Italy. Such courses may adopt a so-called ‘external’ approach (with a focus on social, political, economic etc.) to issues surrounding the development of the language. Alternatively, they can adopt an ‘internal’ perspective (with a focus on the linguistic description and evolution of determiners, pronouns, adjectives, and so on). Typically, courses combine both approaches. In the case of the latter, excellent resources are available which help show the successive stages in the development from Latin to Italian. Courses on *History of the Italian Language* may take either a thematic or chronological approach. In Australia, teaching periods are often fixed at twelve weeks of instruction, and therefore, a one-semester course can be articulated into the following topics. I have included the subtitles and focus for each topic used in my own courses. These generalist topics can be adapted according to the particular interests of the teacher and students:

- 1) The languages of pre-Roman Italy
- 2) Antica Roma: Classical and Vulgar Latin
- 3) Dal Latino al Romanzo: the first documents
- 4) Alto Medioevo: Carlo Magno
- 5) il Due e Trecento: Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch
- 6) il Quattrocento: Humanism, Latin, vernacular

- 7) il Rinascimento: the invention of dialects
- 8) il Seicento: language of a new reality
- 9) il Settecento: purists and anti-purists
- 10) l'Ottocento: language for a new country
- 11) il Novecento: Italians learn Italian
- 12) Italy today: contemporary Italy

While there are few textbooks or guides available in English, Kinder and Scotellaro's recently published *A Linguistic History of Italy* (2020) serves as an excellent introductory resource. Completely available online, it provides a history which tells over 2000 years of linguistic development through a range of multimedia, providing a cutting-edge option for teachers and students. It is also unique in that the whole volume is entirely bilingual, with all material available in both English and Italian. One particular characteristic of this volume is its focus on the linguistic history *of Italy* rather than *of Italian*, thus adopting an open approach to the multiplicity of linguistic varieties used throughout the history of 'Italy', broadly defined. This history is divided according to both thematic and chronological criteria, allowing the teacher to select the topics and time periods which they wish to focus on and thereby providing a tailored experience. An additional advantage is the in-built student activities: at the end of certain modules, one finds a series of questions and answers which use the traditional methods of historical linguistics. These activities allow students to test their knowledge based on the reading they have just completed. For example, in the case of the first module on Ancient Rome, one of the activities involves describing the evolution from spoken Latin to Italian by looking at the interaction between phonology, morphology, and syntax that lie at the foundation of the grammar of modern Italian. After an example of the phonological tendency to drop word-final consonants in Latin, students are asked to perform the same operations on a set of practice sentences. A solution key is also provided, so students can check they have understood correctly as they go (example 1.):

- 1) Ora esegui gli stessi passaggi:

Ordine delle parole SVO

Caduta di consonanti in fin di parola

Inserzione delle prime forme degli articoli e della preposizione
de sulle seguenti frasi latine:

1. canem filius dominae videt
2. librum filii legit domina
3. canis librum dominae manducatur
4. filium canis videt dominae filius
5. pastam dominae manducatur canis

Example 1: An example exercise showing the evolution from spoken Latin to Italian (Kinder and Scotellaro, 2020)

While this is a particularly novel publication, there exist more traditional resources available for whoever is involved in planning and teaching a course on the history of Italian. In English, Martin's *A Linguistic History of Italian* (1995) provides an excellent 'internal' history and further explanations for students and scholars alike who are looking for historical explanations of linguistic developments. In Italian, a particularly useful volume is Patota's *Nuovi lineamenti di grammatica storica dell'italiano* (2007), designed for university students in Italy. Patota explains in his Introduction that the volume "ambisce a spiegare in modo facile una materia difficile". The aim is to introduce the student to those notions of historical linguistics that are indispensable for a course of 30-32 hours on *Storia della lingua italiana*. An attractive characteristic of this volume is its ability to be wide in scope but provide the essential accounts that are necessary for further reading (similar in nature, but more dated, is Serianni, 1998). Patota's volume includes simple and effective explanations of the main phenomena at all linguistics levels (phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis). It also includes a selection of representative texts from the Middle Ages and an accompanying philological description. Each chapter is followed by a set of activities for the student, and an answer-key is provided at the end of the book. By way of example, Chapter 3 entitled *Dal latino all'italiano: i mutamenti fonetici* contains multiple-choice questions such as the following:

Perché nella parola *domani* (< DE MANE) la [e] del latino volgare è passata ad [o]?

1. a causa dell'anafonesi
2. perché è protonica
3. perché, in posizione protonica, è seguita da una consonante labiale
4. perché è una labiovelare

Patota (2007: 112)

Not only do these activities provide a gentle introduction to fundamental concepts in historical linguistics, such as anaphonesis, pretonic vowels etc., but the addition of sample texts means that students can begin to explore the importance of these concepts in actual data, and then also across languages more generally. From this understanding, they can learn to see how the specific-to-general nature of their learning can be of service to those embarking on linguistic research at the graduate level.

Courses on history of the Italian language can also benefit from a recent proliferation of publications that have appeared in Italian during the past twenty years or so. Although there exist too many to mention here, we can list the series *Storia dell'italiano scritto* edited by Antonelli, Motolese, and Tomasin (6 volumes, published 2014-2021), Serianni and Pizzoli's *Storia illustrata della lingua italiana* (2017) and Serianni's *Prima lezione della lingua italiana* (2015), De Mauro's *Storia linguistica dell'Italia repubblicana dal 1946 ai nostri giorni* (2016), Cella's *Storia dell'italiano* (2015), Morgana's *Capitoli di storia linguistica italiana* (2003), and Tesi's *Storia dell'italiano: la formazione della lingua comune dalle origini al Rinascimento* (2001). This is not to mention the more traditional and classic studies on the subject, among which I recall only a few (e.g. Migliorini, 1960, Durante, 1981, Gensini, 1982, Coletti, 1993, De Mauro, 1963, Serianni and Trifone, 1993, Marazzini, 1994), as well as the *Storia della lingua* series published by il Mulino and edited by Bruni (1990-2003). Electronic resources and corpora useful for studying history of the Italian language are provided in section 2.4 below, under general resources.

2. 2. Dialectology

Courses on the dialects of Italy adopting either a historical or contemporary perspective also make use of historical linguistics. The position of dialectology in the Italian curriculum has previously been argued for by Repetti (1996), and many of these arguments stand as strong reasoning today. Not least of which, Repetti mentions that "without a thorough understanding of how dialects work, we will miss out on some of the most brilliant writers Italy has produced" (1996: 511, see also Ledgeway, 2011). Repetti's article provides a still useful outline for a course on Italian dialectology or, better still, the Dialects of Italy. It may be useful here to summarise the iteration of the course explained in further detail in Repetti (1996):

1. What is dialectology?
2. Early linguistic history of Italy

3. Linguistic resources: Pellegrini's *Carta dei dialetti d'Italia*, dialect families
4. Dialects in depth (varies according to student interests) – phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon; particular phenomena of interest: metaphony, *raddoppiamento sintattico*, subject clitic pronouns
5. Bibliography: Professional journals in the field (*Rivista italiana di dialettologia*, *Rivista di linguistica* etc.). Linguistic Atlases (*Atlante italo-svizzero*). Dialect dictionaries
6. linguistic minorities
7. dialects outside of Italy
8. Italian sociolinguistics (diglossia, bilingualism, code-switching)

Points (6-8) above can be altered in line with the particular context, country, and student backgrounds. These final three topics can be considered flexible offerings in this regard. Repetti makes the point, however, that varieties of 'Italian' and dialects generate much excitement on the part of Italian-American students who are already familiar with an American variety of Italian dialects. Much the same is true of students also in Australia and (I imagine) around the world. This range of topics can be extended further, depending on the focus of the course and its length, to consider the use of dialect also in electronic media, such as on the internet or on Twitter, for example. Alternative topics include the use of dialect in particular domains of Italian society, such as politics, in the home, or in youth speak. A recent and particularly interesting example is Duberti and Tosco (2021), who report on their efforts at teaching Piedmontese at the University of Turin. Since the appearance of Repetti's article, more recent publications have made the teaching of Italian dialectology much easier for an English audience (see also Repetti, 2014).

While the topics listed above still serve, in my view, as an excellent introductory structure to a course on Italian dialectology, updated resources in English are now available which facilitate their teaching to new generations of students. This is the case, for example, with the volume by Clivio, Danesi and Maida-Nicol (2011). In their Introduction, the authors specify that the book has been designed for non-specialists and non-Italian scholars, thereby making the content easily digestible while not coming across as intimidating for the beginner. The liberal adoption of maps to indicate the location of particular dialect phenomena and regions is very helpful for students who may have little familiarity with Italian geography. The examples provided are

clear and contain glosses for those unsure of the meaning of certain data. Another benefit is that the final two chapters provide an overview of contemporary phenomena which can often be overlooked: diglossia, contact phenomena and the social value of the Italian dialects, and Italian and the dialects today. One desideratum of the volume is an accompanying set of exercises for the student to work through, as well as a section for additional readings and online resources.

Given this available structure, what follows below updates some bibliographical references and makes further suggestions for use in class. Excellent resources remain for overviews of Italian dialects in general, such as Loporcaro's *Profilo linguistico dei dialetti italiani* (2009), Maiden and Parry's *The Dialects of Italy* (1997), Grassi, Sobrero and Telmon's *Fondamenti di dialettologia italiana* (1997), Cortelazzo et al.'s *I dialetti italiani: storia, strutture, uso* (2002) but also the relevant sections in handbooks of dialectology, such as Telmon's (2018) overview of Italian dialects and regions, as well as the section "the scientific tools of dialectology" in Clivio, Danesi and Maida-Nicol (2011: 21-37). Today, digital approaches are breaking new ground in measuring dialect groupings and other phenomena which use dialect data, such as Tamburelli and Brasca (2018), who offer a reclassification of Gallo-Italic.

New datasets available online, as well as the online publication of traditional volumes, also mean a plethora of resources are readily accessible for teaching dialectology and historical linguistics. Examples include the *Lessico Etimologico Italiano digitale* (www.lei-digitale.org), the *Atlante Linguistico Italiano* (www.atlantelinguistico.it), and the *Atlante lessicale toscano*¹. One innovative resource, entitled *Atlante sonoro delle lingue e dei dialetti d'Italia*², allows the user to access a sample of dialect recordings from around the whole of Italy. Transcriptions of recordings also appear at the bottom of the online map accompanying this website. This database also contains an option to search for a particular *comune*, in order to verify whether data are available from that particular location or not. Dialect dictionaries are also available online. To cite but one example, ArchiWals is a digital archive designed to protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Walser in Piedmont and Valle d'Aosta (www.archiwals.org). A more complete list of dialect dictionaries and linguistic atlases online can be found at the website of *Korpus im Text: Innovatives Publizieren im Umfeld der Korpuslinguistik*³. A recent volume, entitled *Historical Dialectology in the Digital Age*, has been published by

¹ Parole di Toscana. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from <http://serverdbt.ilc.cnr.it/altweb>

² Atlante sonoro delle lingue e dei dialetti d'Italia. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from <https://atlas.limsi.fr/?tab=it>

³ Korpus im Text. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from www.kit.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/?p=12110

Alcorn et al. (2020), albeit with a focus on English. Nevertheless, similar methodological approaches are being applied to historical Italian as new corpora are built. It is barely worth mentioning that YouTube and many other social media sites mean that a range of audio and video samples of dialect data are readily accessible.

2. 3. Romance linguistics

Compared to the two courses discussed above, Romance linguistics is somewhat removed from departments of Italian Studies proper. Nevertheless, it represents a thriving field of research, and it is not uncommon for staff in Italian to teach in such an area. Courses on Romance linguistics are more likely to be taught in US and European universities, as well as some universities in Asia, rather than in Australasia. Students who are interested in historical linguistics and the internal and external properties of Italian will likely find a wealth of recent publications and resources available. The benefit to students of enrolling in courses with a broader focus on the whole Romance family can be immense. Recently, the importance of using Romance data in studies for questions in general linguistics has been brought to the fore (see Maiden 2004, for example). On this point, Sornicola makes the following important observation:

Romance linguistics has rather more to offer general linguistics in its thinking on the synchrony-diachrony relationship and the problem of language change than contemporary general linguistics has to offer Romance linguistics.

Sornicola (2011: 1)

The field of Romance linguistics is broad in scope. Any introductory course on the subject will likely vary according to the particular research interests of the instructor and the passions of the students. One benefit of offering a course in Romance linguistics is that the teaching can often be shared among colleagues from different disciplines (Latin, linguistics, and the various Romance languages). Since many students are often enrolled in one or more of these subjects throughout their degree programmes, they are often curious about a subject whose structure is comparative by nature. Romance linguistics may assume some or no background knowledge of Latin prior to enrolment (even if some is often recommended). Courses can begin with an Introduction to what the discipline of Romance linguistics is and what Romance linguists do before considering the external history and Latin. While there exist many examples of different curricula available, one option for a general structure can be articulated into the following topics:

1. Introduction to the Romance Languages
2. External history
3. Latin and the Romance languages
4. Sound changes I
5. Sound changes II
6. Morphological changes I
7. Morphological changes II
8. Syntax: current issues I
9. Syntax: current issues II
10. Sociolinguistics of the Romance Languages I
11. Sociolinguistics of the Romance Languages II
12. Final review and presentations

Other offerings might also involve non-standard languages, such as Occitan, Sardinian, Catalan, Breton, Sicilian, Friulian etc., language contact in the history of one or more Romance languages, as well as the so-called Romance-based creoles. Given the diverse nature of the many topics which can be potentially taught in a course on Romance linguistics, it can be useful to assign readings from select journal articles or chapters if the objective of the course is not a general introduction. The field itself has benefited from many excellent handbooks and recent histories. Some of these volumes also include introductory sections explaining the fundamental concepts in historical linguistics. One particularly welcome, successful, and recent overview is Alkire and Rosen's (2010) *Romance languages: a historical introduction*. This volume sets the material out in a clear and concise way, introducing students to the fundamental questions in the discipline. The benefits for both teachers and students include a glossary of linguistic terms, suggestions for further reading, but also practice questions and answers that are embedded within the body of the text itself. For example, chapter 6, entitled *Verb Morphology: the present indicative*, begins with a brief overview of the different conjugation classes in Latin, Italian, Spanish, and French; it then provides a series of questions based on material which the reader has just encountered, or has come across in previous chapters:

6.1.1 The conjugation classes

Latin had four classes:

| <i>Latin conjugation</i> | | | <i>Italian</i> | <i>Spanish</i> | <i>French</i> |
|--------------------------|---------|----------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| I | LAVĀRE | ‘wash’ | lavare | lavar | laver |
| | PENSĀRE | ‘think’ | pensare | pensar | penser |
| II | HABĒRE | ‘have’ | avere | haber | avoir |
| | DEBĒRE | ‘owe’ | dovere | deber | devoir |
| III ¹ | PERDĒRE | ‘lose’ | perdere | perder | perdre |
| | VENDĒRE | ‘sell’ | vendere | vender | vendre |
| IV | DORMĪRE | ‘sleep’ | dormire | dormir | dormir |
| | PARTĪRE | ‘depart’ | partire | partir | partir |

Question: Based on the Penultimate Rule (§ 1.1.4), which Latin infinitives are rhizotonic (stressed on the root)?

Answer: Only class III

Question: In which of these languages were the rhizotonic infinitives retained?

Answer: In Italian and French: *perdere*, *vendere* and *perdre*, *vendre* with syncope.

Table 2. 1. Example of ‘questions and answers’ embedded into the body of the chapter from Alkire and Rosen (2010: 96)

A final benefit is that, through the book’s companion website accessible through Cambridge Core, additional resources such as practice tests, final exam questions, and answers to exercises can be downloaded for free (with an institutional subscription). More generally, there exist many other recent contributions to the field which contain valuable overviews of particular Romance standards, varieties, and structures, such as *Cambridge History of the Romance Languages. Volume 1: Structures* (Maiden, Smith and Ledgeway, 2011) and *Volume 2: Contexts* (Maiden, Smith and Ledgeway, 2013), as well as

The Oxford Guide to the Romance Languages (Ledgeway and Maiden, 2016). In Italian, excellent treatments are provided by Barbato (2017) and Schlösser (2005). Specific topics and approaches to the study of Romance data have benefited from the publication of recent manuals, such as *Manual of Standardization in the Romance Languages* (Lebsanft and Tacke, 2020) and *Manual of Romance Sociolinguistics* (Ayres-Bennett and Carruthers, 2018). Other volumes remain a stalwart for their comprehensive and lucid explanations of particular phenomena, including Harris and Vincent (1988), Posner (1996), Lausberg (1965-1969), and Elcock (1975).

Online resources for Romance linguistics specifically created for didactic purposes or the sharing of data are not as plentiful as one might wish. Nevertheless, useful are the *Oxford Online Database of Romance Verb Morphology*⁴ and *CRL: Clitics of Romance Languages*⁵, a searchable database that allows the user to perform refined searches across a variety of syntactic categories, speakers, regions, and other fields. Other useful websites include *Orbis Latinus*⁶ and the large range of links and resources provided by the Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Arts and Letters at Tohoku University⁷.

2. 4. General Resources

Regardless of the particular course being taught, I list here more general reference works and electronic corpora from Italian linguistics which can be usefully exploited when taking a historical approach. In certain cases, explanations of the historical evolution of Italian can be found in general reference works. Given the nature of the subject at hand, the majority of these are in Italian. I list only the most relevant here for those new to the field and who wish to explore further.

Rohlfs' *Grammatica storica* (1966-1969) is encyclopaedic in its nature by providing standard and dialect data from many individual *comuni* around Italy. The three volumes cover all linguistic levels of phonology, morphology, and lexical variation and are articulated into the various historical changes from Latin to Italian. Similarly, Castellani's *Grammatica storica della lingua italiana e dei suoi dialetti* (2000) provides extraordinary detail of some of the earliest variations in Italian, as does Tekavčić's historical grammar (1980). A

⁴ Oxford Online Database of Romance Verb Morphology. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from <http://romverbmorph.clp.ox.ac.uk>

⁵ CRL: Clitics of Romance Languages. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from <https://crl-database.herokuapp.com>

⁶ OL, Orbis Latinus. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from www.orbilat.com/index.html

⁷ Romance Linguistics and Related Fields. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from www2.sal.tohoku.ac.jp/~gothit/romance.html

useful resource is the *Manuale di linguistica italiana* (2016), edited by Lubello, which provides a state-of-the-art overview of some major fields in Italian linguistics. This volume presents 30 different chapters articulated into various subsections including *L'italiano nella storia; L'italiano contemporaneo: strutture e varietà*, and; *I luoghi della codificazione / le questioni / gli sviluppi recenti della ricerca*. For historical linguistics in general, Lyle's *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction* (1999) remains a much-used guidebook. There exist numerous introductions to historical linguistics in Italian (for example, Luraghi, 2016; Magni, 2014).

With regard to online resources, readings, and corpora, a useful overview is provided by Formentin's entry on *grammatica storica* (2010) in Treccani online. The entry begins with an introduction to historical grammar between diachrony and synchrony before discussing the relationship between *grammatica storica* and *filologia*. It then provides an overview of some of the major developments in the history of Italian at the broad linguistic levels and structures. In terms of online databases and corpora, a range of different resources exist for historical linguistic research in Italian. The database of the *Opera del vocabolario italiano* (OVI)⁸ continues to remain one of the major resources. Updated quarterly, at the time of writing, it contained 2,978 texts from the origins up until around 1525. The *Tesoro della lingua italiana delle Origini* (TLIO)⁹ is an easily accessible dictionary of old Italian. A more recent database, designed specifically for research in historical Italian over a range of text types, genres, and time periods, is *MIDIA: Morfologia dell'Italiano in DIACRONIA* (www.corpusmidia.unito.it). This corpus begins from the early thirteenth century until the first half of the twentieth century. It contains around 800 texts, for a total number of 7.5 million forms. A specific database for research on nineteenth-century Italian is the *Corpus Epistolare Ottocentesco Digitale*, known as *CEOD*, (ceod.unistrasi.it). This database allows for both simple and advanced searches for linguistic items. It is currently made up of approximately 1,350 letters by 75 different writers for a total of over 600,000 different linguistic forms. Of course, the website of the *Accademia della Crusca* (accademiadellacrusca.it), available in both English and Italian, provides access to a wealth of material. A list of available online resources can be found on the website of Accademia by navigating to *collegamenti utili > banche date, corpora e archivi testuali*.

While most research in historical linguistics relies on textual data, spoken corpora can also be usefully exploited in historical linguistic research (for a list

⁸ Corpus OVI dell'Italiano antico. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from <http://gattoweb.ovi.cnr.it>

⁹ TLIO, Tesoro della Lingua Italiana delle Origini. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from <http://tlio.ovi.cnr.it/TLIO>

of some of these in various languages, including Italian, see the LISA online page¹⁰. One option is to search for particular variants and the number of tokens to see how issues of historical variation have 'sorted themselves out' in contemporary language (for example, the polymorphy of 1sg. verbs such as *dovere*: *debbo* / *devo* / *deggio*, doublets such as *disco* / *desco*, or so-called geosynonyms, for example, the corresponding lexemes for 'cloth for use in housework' like *straccio* (north), *cencio* (centre), *pezza* (south) (for a list of some of these, Kinder and Savini, 2004: 11). In terms of historical linguistics, many handbooks are available. Recent guides include *The Handbook of Historical Linguistics. Volume II* (Joseph, Janda and Vance, 2020), *The Routledge Handbook of Historical Linguistics* (Bowerman and Evans, 2014), and others.

3. Pedagogy and pedagogical issues

The introductory notes to this chapter have already commented on the place of linguistics in the Italian Studies curriculum generally. In this author's view, the main pedagogical issues at hand in the teaching of historical linguistics can often include a hesitation on the part of the student to enrol in a course which is linguistic in nature, given that they may have had little to no previous instruction in linguistics, or even understanding of what linguistics is. These fears are often quickly allayed as students discover the wonders of the historical evolution of Italian and how it can reveal the mysteries of its evolving present. Once the appetite is whet, students are often intrigued by the fascinating linguistic variety that characterises Italy's past and present. This variety can be studied from a wide variety of perspectives, not just from the example courses described above. Online tools and recent publications of textbooks and other introductory materials attest to the vitality of linguistics as a prime area of interest for researchers and their desire to make them known to their students as well. This is not to speak of other subdisciplines which can also pique students' interests and are also worthy of study in the Italian context, such as sociolinguistics, sociophonetics, second language acquisition, dialect syntax, historical sociolinguistics, to name just a few.

In general, historical linguistics, as integrated into the above courses, presents few obstacles. Given the flexibility of topics and possible approaches, the level of depth and difficulty can be adjusted according to the particular cohort of students. The same goes for deciding the language of instruction. In some cases, students may have Italian language skills deemed sufficiently strong to engage with the material in a meaningful way. However, these topics can also be delivered entirely in English, thereby making them attractive options for

¹⁰ LISA. Retrieved 24 April 2022 from www.lilec.it/lisa/category/strumenti-linguistici/corpora-online

students who have little to no previous knowledge of Italian. In my experience, a mixture of both languages can be helpful in introducing the subjects to beginner students, while Italian is preferable at more advanced levels, especially at the MA and PhD levels. In this sense, the courses described above can be pitched at any level of instruction. When it comes to the history of the Italian language and dialectology, students who are majoring in linguistics may see these courses as particular avenues of parallel interest and therefore enrol if the course is taught in English; in the case of Romance linguistics, students who are majoring in one or more Romance languages will be able to gain a deeper appreciation of the family as a whole, as well as the general properties of language change.

Assessment is also likely to vary according to the particular requirements of university programmes and the methods which teachers feel are appropriate for their students. I have found it best to offer weekly tests, as well as a mid-term paper and/or a final exam. For the linguistic history of Italy, typical questions I have set for practice tests include the following, usually delivered after four or five weeks of instruction:

Question 1

Describe the features of Vulgar Latin which can be deduced from the above items from the Appendix Probi, AND say what further changes have taken place from Vulgar Latin to modern Italian.

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 4 | masculus <i>non</i> masclus | [Mod. It. = maschio] |
| 20 | columna <i>non</i> colomna | [Mod. It. = colonna] |
| 54 | frigida <i>non</i> frigda | [Mod. It. = fredda] |
| 83 | auris <i>non</i> oricla | [Mod. It. = orecchia] |

Table 2. 2. Features of Vulgar Latin

By this point, students will have become familiar with some of the major vicissitudes in the early linguistic history of Italy, such as the concepts of Classical and Vulgar Latin and their sociolinguistic contexts. They will also have spent some time during seminars investigating and describing major textual evidence, such as *Appendix Probi*. Students are able to describe the social and historical context of various documents, as well as some of their linguistic features, using the appropriate terminology from historical linguistics. These features include syncope in unstressed syllables, lowering of /ŭ/, monophthongization, loss of word-final consonants, loss of /h/, changes

to vowels in hiatus, etc. Students are also encouraged to think more broadly about how changes at the phonological level are connected to the broader developments occurring at so-called 'higher' levels of linguistic abstraction, such as morphology and syntax. For the mid-term paper, questions generally tend to address broader topics and take the form of a traditional research essay. This format allows students to explore the rich tradition of scholarship that lies behind some of the major preoccupations that still characterise the field of Italian language history. At the same time, students are able to acquire familiarity with some of the fundamental aspects of linguistic and general history from Italy's past, which they have not often had the opportunity to explore. Example questions include:

- 1) Discuss the reasons for the rise and success of the vernaculars during the Low Middle Ages and for the predominance of Sicilian and Tuscan vernaculars at that time.
- 2) Describe and discuss the presence of a popular and a learned tradition in the history of the Italian language. Give examples.

Similarly, dialectology can be assessed through tests and mid-term papers. Questions can range from focussing on the specific, such as describing metaphony and its effects in particular dialects; in other cases, students might describe the features of a particular dialect or dialect group based on a piece of dialect writing, such as a poem or short text. Assessment for a course on Romance linguistics can also follow a similar format but ask students to compare or contrast particular phenomena across two (or more) Romance varieties. In any case, this final note aims to serve as a reminder for the instructor that questions of selection should be made carefully. It is vital that the introduction of technical terms from historical linguistics be delivered in a digestible and approachable way, especially at lower levels, so as not to scare students off the path before they even begin the journey.

4. Conclusion

Historical linguistics has much to offer Italian departments and, more importantly, to interest our students in Italian Studies. Not only do such topics provide an important background to the historical development of language in Italy, but they complement a now vast array of courses in literature, cinema, arts, visual studies, and many other traditional and emerging fields of study. This chapter has surveyed just one subdiscipline of linguistics, but courses from related or cognate areas, for example, sociolinguistics, equally provide important and fascinating areas of student interest. Feedback on linguistic courses that I have taught has been consistently positive. The encouraging

reaction provoked in students confirms the utility of offering such topics in the curriculum. In part, this may be because the question of the historical development of Italian dialects and the sociolinguistic landscape of contemporary Italy can be a difficult reality to grasp for non-native students. Further, these are courses which students are unlikely to encounter during the course of a traditionally structured degree in 'linguistics' at an Anglophone university. Conversely, it is not unusual for them to be part of a traditional *laurea* in an Italian university; in this way, they allow students to have a 'taste' of the kind of subjects which students in Italy are able to pursue.

Offering linguistics and linguistic-related courses can also be one way to diversify the curriculum in Italian Studies. Traditional approaches to historical linguistics can be supplemented by the new methodologies and tools that are emerging for linguistic research, including a plethora of online material and corpora. I have attempted to survey only the most useful and well-known resources in this chapter. In such a short space, the selection is, of course, made harder by the many different types of academic publications, online material, journals, and handbooks that are now available across fields that have large bibliographies. The aim here has been not to focus on the most ground-breaking research innovations in any one particular field but to suggest some basic tools that can be helpful in a didactic sense and provide a possible structure for those embarking on teaching historical linguistics for the first time. I have attempted to focus on English-language rather than Italian publications, but given the nature of the topic, Italian resources are, of course, more plentiful. This is not to speak of the resources available in other Romance languages and other languages still, including the abundant material available in German. The reader will be able to find for themselves another bibliography that is most relevant to their interests and will undoubtedly (and quickly) discover other dictionaries, websites, and volumes that are of most use for their particular needs.

The development of new research fields, such as historical sociolinguistics, has also allowed new research questions (and new histories) to emerge. The popularity of such courses may also be due to the range of linguistic varieties in Italy, which students are often unaware of, but also the complex way in which these varieties have evolved throughout the history of Italy and are still present today. It is worth recalling that linguistics is itself a relatively new discipline in universities. In this context, it has provided a fertile testing ground for new research questions to be applied to Italian data; in turn, it is the data which have driven new questions and methodologies to come to the fore. Teaching in an English-speaking university, where English is the *de facto* national language, and in a context with a 'monolingual mindset' (Clyne, 2008), has further corollaries; not least of all, it makes the linguistic diversity

characteristic of Italy even more enticing as an object of study for students, as they encounter a reality that is so different from the Anglophone one. In short, in this but in many things, Italy once again provides an example of fascinating diversity in both a historical and contemporary sense, as well as a source of constant cultural enrichment.

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