

On AILA Europe

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Abstract: This is a brief presentation and history of the Italian AILA affiliate, including an explanation as to why – despite constant, wide and strong interests in applied linguistic issues and research in Italy – it was founded some three decades later than other affiliates such as British BAAL or German GAL, and with less specific attention to language teaching methodology.

Keywords: Italian, affiliate, AItLA

Today, like other affiliates of AILA, AItLA, the *Associazione Italiana di Linguistica Applicata* ('Italian Association for Applied Linguistics'), is a professional association for researchers, students and practitioners working in the broadest field of Applied Linguistics. Its origins, however, are somewhat different from those of affiliates such as British BAAL, German GAL, and Dutch Anéla. First, AItLA was founded in 1999, that is, some three decades later, and secondly, it was most strongly promoted by scholars interested in areas far more diverse than just language teaching and language learning. Both these traits can be explained by the context in which AItLA originated.

In the Sixties, when BAAL or GAL were established in Britain and Germany respectively, two major professional associations of linguists were founded in Italy: SLI, the *Società di Linguistica Italiana* ('Italian Society of Linguistics/Society of Italian Linguistics'), in 1966, and SIG, the *Società Italiana di Glottologia* ('Italian Society of Glottology' – see below for an interpretation of the latter word), three years later. Although neither association shunned theoretical issues, neither had a strong theoretical orientation. Quite the opposite, from their very start, both embraced a wide range of applied concerns, with a good degree of overlap

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between them. Take, for example, the topics of some of their annual conferences: SLI's *Lessico e grammatica: teorie linguistiche e applicazioni lessicografiche* ('Lexicon and grammar: linguistic theories and lexicographic applications') in 1993, and SIG's *Lessicologia e lessicografia* ('Lexicology and lexicography') in 1995; or SLI's *Lingue, istituzioni e territori: riflessioni teoriche, proposte metodologiche ed esperienze di politica linguistica* ('Languages, institutions and territories: theoretical considerations, methodological proposals and language policy experiences') in 2004, and SIG's *Standard and non standard tra scelta e norma* ('Standard and non-standard [language varieties] between choice and norm') in 2005. There were, however, two substantial differences between these associations, both involving inclusion (and exclusion).

The first difference between the two Italian linguistic associations founded in the Sixties is clear from their very names. Etymologically, both SLI's *linguistica* ('linguistics') and SIG's *glottologia* ('glottology') mean 'the study of language', the former deriving from Latin and the latter from Ancient Greek. So, the choice of words would not, in principle, differentiate between them, but *linguistica* is modern and clearly understood internationally as neutral, in so far as it includes all areas of linguistics on an equal footing, whereas *glottologia* is rather opaque when translated outside the Italian context, where it clearly implies an emphasis on comparative and historical linguistics. Thus conferences wholly devoted to topics such as SIG's *Continuità e discontinuità nella storia del greco* ('Continuity and discontinuity in the history of Ancient Greek') in 1993 and *L'indoeuropeo: prospettive e retrospettive* ('Indoeuropean: perspectives and retrospectives') in 1997 would be avoided by SLI. Nor does SIG ever include the word *didattica* ('pedagogy') in its titles, whereas SLI rarely neglects educational issues on the one hand, and often includes historical concerns on the other, as we can see comparing, for example, SLI's *Il verbo italiano: studi diacronici, sincronici, contrastivi e didattici* ('The Italian verb: diachronic, synchronic, contrastive and pedagogic studies') in 2001 with SIG's *Categorie del verbo: diacronia, teoria, tipologia* ('Categories of the verb: diachrony, theory, typology') in 2006.

The second substantial difference between the two major Italian associations relates to their policy on membership, which has always been open in SLI, and by invitation in SIG. As a matter of fact, SLI's membership widened considerably when its first special interest group GISCEL, the *Gruppo di Intervento e Studio nel Campo dell'Educazione Linguistica* ('Group for the intervention and study in the field of language pedagogy') was founded in 1973 in order to bring together linguists and language practitioners, and thus encourage the professionalisation of language teaching. Other specific SLI interest groups were to follow more recently. It is no wonder, then, that SLI has about one thousand

members today, compared to SIG's three hundred. Membership of both associations is not uncommon because, at least until recent times, they have provided the forum where contacts among linguists were established and maintained in order to discuss language policies, and appraise job opportunities at the national level.

It could thus be argued that the all-inclusive thematic range and membership policy of SLI made the founding of an Italian AILA affiliate superfluous in the Sixties. This was certainly true for a while, but then two types of applied linguistic interests began to feel the need for a clearer scientific representation than SLI seemed able to accommodate. The first type included several heterogeneous areas before SLI established its recent policy of accommodating for specificity in the same formal way it had done for language teaching with GISCEL in 1973. Too small for founding their own separate associations, these diverse interests saw the opportunity of joining forces within a single association of Applied Linguistics which could provide both a scientific forum for new methodological and technological approaches, and a stronger political voice nationally. In this sense, the main drive for an Italian AILA affiliate came from three eminent scholars: Renzo Titone, a psycholinguist; Antonio Zampolli, a computational linguist; and Roberto Ajello, a linguist harder to define – so wide are his interests, spanning from language anthropology in Africa, to neurolinguistics and Italian Sign Language, among others. What all three of them shared was a broad international outlook and a deep commitment to the applications of their scientific research in the best tradition of Applied Linguistics, offering a contribution to improving language learning and teaching (Titone), promoting innovative tools for language analysis (Zampolli), describing less known languages and finding solutions to language problems such as deafness (Ajello). However, even together, these 'smaller' areas, as well as others, could not hope for a membership large enough to warrant an independent association. And it was thus that their genuine and wide international outlook strongly appealed to a second type of interests that did not feel completely at home within SLI either, namely, what in Italian could generally be called 'stranieristica' ('foreign-istics'), that is, Applied Linguistics with a focus on foreign languages. In truth, French and Spanish first, then English, and later also German, had their own separate associations – SUSLLF, the *Società Universitaria per gli Studi di Lingua e Letteratura Francese* ('University society for the study of French language and literature'); AISPI, the *Associazione Ispanisti Italiani* ('Association of Italian Hispanists'); AIA, the *Associazione Italiana di Anglistica* ('Italian association of Anglistics'), and AIG, the *Associazione Italiana di Germanistica* ('Italian association of Germanistics') –, but these were dominated by literary and philological studies, allowing marginal scope to language teaching, and altogether neglecting linguistics.

But why were researchers dealing with foreign languages not fully at ease within SLI, which can hardly be described as provincial, having a large foreign membership, and traditionally a foreigner as vice-president? The answer is to be found partly in the ambiguity of the adjective 'Italian' in its name, which can agree with both Society and Linguistics, thus allowing a restrictive reading of the subject matter to anything connected with Italy, and partly in the location of foreign languages in Italian universities. Whereas departments of linguistics or glottology shared an arts faculty with Latin and Ancient Greek, the departments of foreign languages and literatures were often together in a separate faculty. SLI was thus clearly the product of the Italian arts faculties. This is no more so than in the figure of its main promoter and strongest supporter, Tullio De Mauro, a scholar, teacher, and mentor with a deep commitment to society in the widest and best political sense, who has always considered equally important the theoretical and applied orientations of SLI, constantly attended GISCEL conferences, and dedicated much of his time and energy to sociolinguistic issues. An eminent comparative and historical linguist with important scientific ties abroad (especially France), when it came to language teaching and sociolinguistic issues, he concentrated his unfailing enthusiasm to finding solutions for problems related mainly to dialect-speakers with insufficient knowledge of standard Italian. Only in this sense, 'his' SLI did not have the international outlook that researchers dealing with foreign languages naturally expect, and that an AILA affiliate could provide.

AItLA, then, afforded for Applied Linguistics in Italy in the late Nineties a unitary forum with an international outlook, which was provided not only by researchers dealing with foreign languages but also by those who knew foreign languages well or who had worked abroad for some time. Indeed, some AItLA founding members knew AILA affiliation well, being already members of British BAAL (e.g., Guy Aston), German GAL (e.g., Augusto Carli), or Australian ALAA (e.g., Camilla Bettoni), for example. The AItLA founding assembly was held in Pisa in 1999, attended by some 80 members, whose interests were widely distributed among many diverse areas of Applied Linguistics. Table 1 shows the members of the board who were elected then, and those who followed.

Table 1: AItLA's board.

<i>President</i>	Roberto Ajello, 1999–2004; Augusto Carli, 2004–10; Giuliano Bernini, 2010–16
<i>Vice-president</i>	Anna Ciliberti, 1999–2004; Laurie Anderson, 2004–07; Daniela Zorzi, 2007–10; Camilla Bettoni, 2010–16
<i>Secretary</i>	Guy Aston, 1999–2004; Gabriele Iannàccaro, 2004–10; Elena Favilla, 2010–13; Laura Gavioli, 2013–16
<i>Treasurer</i>	Francesca Gattullo, 1999–2004; Silvia Dal Negro, 2004–13; Cristina Bosisio, 2013–16
<i>Member</i>	Augusto Carli, 1999–2004; Anna Ciliberti, 2004–07; Elena Favilla, 2007–2010; Laura Gavioli, 2010–2013; Anna De Meo 2013–16

As stated in article 2 of its constitution, AItLA's aims are to:

- a) promote and encourage studies in Applied Linguistics in Italy;
- b) support and coordinate scientific research in all areas of Applied Linguistics;
- c) ensure Italian participation to conferences, congresses and other activities in the field of Applied Linguistics at the international level;
- d) facilitate contacts among researchers in Italy and abroad;
- e) support and promote the teaching of all disciplines belonging to Applied Linguistics;
- f) organise courses and seminars in all areas of Applied Linguistics;
- g) promote and contribute publications, even one's own, in the field of Applied Linguistics, such as a newsletter or bulletin, conference proceedings, seminars;
- h) activate or institutionalise relations with other associations of linguistic studies in Italy and abroad;
- i) organise conferences on topics and problems related to Applied Linguistics.

A decade and a half later, as we shall see below, most of these aims have been achieved through a variety of activities, chiefly among them the conferences, the publications, and the establishment of excellent relations with other linguistic associations and a prestigious status in the national political arena concerning language matters in educational institutions and society at large.

After a couple of conferences held initially in autumn every other year, AItLA soon established a tradition of annual conferences held in February and dedicated to specific topics. As we can see in table 2, the vast majority of topics have been in the broad areas of sociolinguistics (here understood in its wider meaning,

inclusive of bilingualism, language contact, etc.) and second language acquisition/learning – see below for a comment on this point. Each year, after a topic is approved by the general assembly, a scientific committee writes the call for papers, invites at least two foreign guests of international repute, selects papers and posters, and distributes them in the programme with the help of a local organising committee. Rather than dividing papers and posters into parallel sessions, it is AltLA's policy to have only plenary sessions, which is achieved by selecting only the best contributions. Conference participation has generally been of 12 to 15 paper and poster presentations, and 80 to 100 attendants.

Table 2: AltLA's conferences.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Topic</i>
1999	Pisa	Any
2000	Forlì	Any
2002	Perugia	Plurilinguismo e neurolinguistica ('Plurilingualism and neurolinguistics')
2004	Modena	Contatto linguistico e lingue di contatto ('Language contact and languages in contact')
2005	Bari	Mediazione interlinguistica e interculturale ('Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural mediation')
2006	Napoli	Imparare una lingua: recenti sviluppi teorici e proposte applicative ('Learning a language: recent theoretical developments and applied proposals')
2007	Milano	Aspetti linguistici della comunicazione pubblica e istituzionale ('Linguistic aspects of public and institutional communication')
2008	Malta	Lingua, cultura e cittadinanza in contesti migratori: Europa e area mediterranea ('Language, culture and citizenship in migrant contexts: Europe and the Mediterranean area')
2009	Pescara	Oralità/scrittura. In memoria di Giorgio Raimondo Cardona ('Spoken/written language. In memory of Giorgio Raimondo Cardona')
2010	Bolzano	Lingue e culture in contatto ('Languages and cultures in contact')
2011	Bergamo	Competenze e formazione linguistiche. In memoria di Monica Berretta ('Language competences and language education. In memory of Monica Berretta')
2012	Macerata	Comunicare le discipline attraverso le lingue: prospettive traduttiva, didattica, socioculturale ('Communicating the disciplines through languages: perspectives in translation, pedagogy, society')
2013	Palermo	Varietà dei contesti di apprendimento linguistico ('Varieties of language learning contexts')
2014	Verona	Grammatica applicata: apprendimento, insegnamento, patologie ('Applied grammar: learning, teaching, pathologies')
2015	Lecce	Linguaggio e apprendimento linguistico: metodi e strumenti tecnologici ('Language and language learning: technological methods and tools')

Besides annual conferences, AItLA also organises workshops, such as *Comunicazione e sordità* ('Communication and deafness') at Pisa in 2001; *Glottodidattica e ricerca: come verificare l'efficacia dell'insegnamento* ('Language teaching and research: how can we verify the effectiveness of our teaching') in Verona in 2002; *Neurolinguistica e disturbi del linguaggio* ('Neurolinguistics and language problems') in Modena in 2006; and *Ideologie della competenza e test linguistici per la cittadinanza* ('Proficiency ideology and language testing for citizenship') at Arezzo in 2008.

Publications are a major investment of AItLA's, in terms of energy and recently also of money. As shown in table 3, two book series were established initially, which ran for about a decade, published by Guerra Editore of Perugia: one series comprised the conference proceedings under the editorship of the respective scientific committees, and the other series, *Strumenti per la Ricerca* ('Tools for research'), included monographs or collected papers on specific topics by AItLA members. Recently these two series merged into one called *Studi AItLA* ('AItLA Studies'). The occasion for the merger was provided when the publisher became unable to provide the service free of charge. The main reason behind the decision, however, was the conviction that AItLA's proceedings were so much more than mere collections of conference papers, and that they were instead volumes which gathered, under a specific title, coherently organised chapters that had undergone two rounds of selection, as abstracts and as written papers, as well as a careful editorship. In practice, these volumes were no different from the other 'tool' series. So far, the new *Studi AItLA* series includes three volumes, published electronically by AItLA itself, and available free of charge to its members and at a reasonably low cost to non-members. Like the topics of the conference volumes, those of the old 'tool' series and the new 'study' series also belong, in the vast majority, to the two areas of sociolinguistics and second language acquisition, as we can see in table 3.

Table 3: AItLA's publications.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Editors/ Authors</i>	<i>Titles</i>
Conference Proceedings		
2001	Camilla Bettoni, Antonio Zampolli, Daniela Zorzi, eds	<i>Atti del 2° Congresso AItLA</i> ('Proceedings of the 2 nd AItLA conference')
2003	Giuliano Bernini, Giacomo Ferrari, Maria Pavesi, eds	<i>Atti del 3° Congresso AItLA</i> ('Proceedings of the 3 rd AItLA conference')
2005	Giorgio Banti, Antonietta Marra, Edoardo Vineis, eds	<i>Atti del 4° Congresso AItLA, Contatto linguistico e lingue di contatto</i> ('Proceedings of the 4 th AItLA conference, Language contact and languages in contact')

Table 3: (continued)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Editors/ Authors</i>	<i>Titles</i>
2006	Emanuele Banfi, Laura Gavioli, Cristina Guardiano, Massimo Vedovelli, eds	<i>Atti del 5° Congresso AltLA, Problemi e fenomeni di mediazione linguistica e culturale</i> ('Proceedings of the 5 th AltLA conference, Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural mediation')
2007	Marina Chini, Paola Desideri, Maria Elena Favilla, Gabriele Pallotti, eds	<i>Atti del 6° Congresso AltLA, Imparare una lingua: recenti sviluppi teorici e proposte applicative</i> ('Proceedings of the 6 th AltLA conference, Learning a language: recent theoretical developments and applied proposals')
2008	Cristina Bosisio, Bona Cambiaghi, M. Emanuela Piemontese, Francesca Santulli, eds	<i>Atti del 7° Congresso AltLA, Aspetti linguistici della comunicazione pubblica e istituzionale</i> ('Proceedings of the 7 th AltLA conference, 'Linguistic aspects of public and institutional communication')
2009	Gaetano Berruto, Joseph Brincat, Sandro Caruana, Cecilia Andorno, eds	<i>Atti dell'8° Congresso AltLA, Lingua, cultura e cittadinanza in contesti migratori. Europa e area mediterranea</i> ('Proceedings of the 8 th AltLA conference, Language, culture and citizenship in migrant contexts: Europe and the Mediterranean area')
2009	Carlo Consani, Cristiano Furiassi, Francesca Guazzelli, Carmela Perta, eds	<i>Atti del 9° Congresso Internazionale di Studi dell'Associazione Italiana di Linguistica Applicata, Oralità/scrittura. In memoria di Giorgio Raimondo Cardona</i> ('Proceedings of the 9 th international conference of the Italian Association for Applied Linguistics, Oral/written language. In memory of Giorgio Raimondo Cardona')
2011	Raffaella Bombi, Mari D'Agostino, Silvia Dal Negro, Rita Franceschini, eds	<i>Atti del X Congresso Internazionale di Studi dell'Associazione Italiana di Linguistica Applicata, Lingue e culture in contatto. In memoria di Roberto Gusmani</i> ('Proceedings of the 10 th international conference of the Italian Association for Applied Linguistics, Languages and cultures in contact. In memory of Roberto Gusmani')
2012	Giuliano Bernini, Cristina Lavinio, Ada Valentini, Miriam Voghera, eds	<i>Atti dell'XI Congresso Internazionale di Studi dell'Associazione Italiana di Linguistica Applicata, Competenze e formazione linguistiche. In memoria di Monica Berretta</i> ('Proceedings of the 11 th international conference of the Italian Association for Applied Linguistics, Language competences and language education. In memory of Monica Berretta')

Table 3: (continued)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Editors/ Authors</i>	<i>Titles</i>
2013	Cristina Bosisio, Stefania Cavagnoli, eds	<i>Atti del 12° Congresso Internazionale di Studi dell'Associazione Italiana di Linguistica Applicata, Comunicare le discipline attraverso le lingue: prospettive traduttiva, didattica, socioculturale</i> ('Proceedings of the 12 th international conference of the Italian Association for Applied Linguistics, Communicating the disciplines through languages: perspectives in translation, pedagogy, society')
Strumenti per la ricerca, 'Tools for research'		
2007	Elena Nuzzo	<i>Imparare a fare cose con le parole: richieste, proteste, scuse in italiano lingua seconda</i> ('Learning to do thing with words: requests, complaints, apologies in Italian as a second language')
2008	Sergio Pasquandrea	<i>Più lingue, più identità: code switching e costruzione identitaria in famiglie di emigrati italiani</i> ('More languages, more identities: codeswitching and identity construction')
2009	Cecilia Andorno, Stefano Rastelli, eds	<i>Corpora di italiano L2: tecnologie, metodi, spunti teorici</i> ('Italian L2 corpora: technologies, methods, theoretical aspects')
2009	Laura Gavioli, ed.	La mediazione linguistico-culturale: una prospettiva interazionista ('Language and cultural mediation: an interactionist perspective')
2013	Ambra Zaghetto	<i>Nuove prospettive sulla produzione artistica in Lingua Italiana dei Segni (LIS)</i> ('New perspectives on artistic production in Italian Sign Language')
2013	Ivan Lombardi	<i>Game [not] over: i videogiochi come strumento per la glottodidattica ludica</i> ('Game [not] over: videogames as tools for language teaching')
Studi AltLA, 'AltLA Studies'		
2012	Anna De Meo, Mari D'Agostino, Gabriele Iannaccaro, Lorenzo Spreafico, eds	<i>Varietà dei contesti di apprendimento linguistico</i> ('Varieties of language learning contexts')
2013	Maria Elena Favilla, Elena Nuzzo, eds	<i>Grammatica applicata: apprendimento, patologie, insegnamento</i> ('Applied grammar: learning, pathology, teaching')
2014	Anna Whittle, Elena Nuzzo	<i>L'insegnamento della grammatica nella classe multilingue</i> ('Teaching grammar in multilingual classes')

As well as these scientific publications, AItLA also publishes a *Newsletter* to keep its members informed about future events, calls for papers and manuscripts, awards, policy documents, ministerial circulars, and other matters related to Applied Linguistics. Official documents and drafts of proposals are also made available to a wider readership through the AItLA website.

AItLA has a tradition of awarding monetary contributions to young researchers. At its annual general meetings, every other year AItLA offers a prize for the best doctoral thesis or monograph in an area of Applied Linguistics, and every year it awards a bursary towards expenses for participating at its annual conference, favouring those who present a paper, live further from the venue and have no scholarship or permanent academic post. But young AItLA members are encouraged in many other ways as well. Indeed, the care and time senior members take informally to discuss ideas with them, and offer advice and guidance for their projects and careers is one of the features that distinguishes AItLA from other, more formal, linguistic associations in Italy. Through such informal activities the wider aims stated for AItLA in points (a) to (d) above are also met.

Another main aim of its constitution that AItLA has met conspicuously in recent years is the establishment of good relations with the other linguistic associations in Italy, and thus also the opportunity to strike a note publicly. This must be recognised as due mainly to AItLA's recent president, Giuliano Bernini. Trained initially in the areas of comparative and historical linguistics, he subsequently shifted his main interest to second language acquisition, and while equally at ease in both SLI and SIG, he quickly embraced AItLA's spirit with his European outlook and excellent knowledge of foreign languages. All this has given him the prestige to place AItLA firmly along with the other two major Italian associations whenever the opportunity arises to speak out publicly about language issues and linguistics concerns in both academic and national contexts.

There are two points, however, that need to be mentioned on the downward side: one is the range of areas actually represented in AItLA today, and the other the institutional status of Applied Linguistics in Italy. With regard to the first point, as we have seen, the range of areas covered in AItLA's annual conferences and book series is almost exclusively limited to sociolinguistics and language learning. Several factors have contributed to this focus, which is narrower than many of AItLA's original promoters – some of the strongest, as we have seen, were interested in areas such as psycholinguistics, computational linguistics and sign language – had hoped for. First, the untimely deaths of Renzo Titone and Antonio Zampolli deprived AItLA of two powerful mentors in important areas of Applied Linguistics. Secondly, whereas in the Sixties and Seventies of the last century, AILA associates like BAAL and GAL were able to provide a conveniently large umbrella for diverse 'smaller' areas, by the time AItLA was founded, some

of these areas, such as lexicography and translation studies, had either established their own associations or found a home within other ones. Thirdly, a number of senior AItLA members, such as Paolo Balboni, Bona Cambiaghi and Patrizia Mazzotta, who were present at Pisa's founding assembly in 1999 and for several years participated in AItLA's activities, gradually withdrew, and in 2009 founded DILLE, the *Società Italiana di Didattica delle Lingue e Linguistica Educativa* ('Italian society for language teaching and educational linguistics'), which today has about 80 members. DILLE's interests in language teaching and language education do not, in principle, differ from AItLA's. In practice, however, they do: in the long road of Applied Linguistics which starts with identifying language problems and ends up with presenting solutions to the real world, DILLE addresses mainly the final step, whereas – perhaps regrettably – AItLA has, so far, stopped short of this final step. Or, put differently, DILLE is interested in interpreting for teachers and educators the results of research in the areas of language teaching and language learning, whereas AItLA members see themselves foremost as (applied) linguists doing that research. Be it as it may, it is unfortunate that AItLA has thus been deprived of some vital concerns related to language teaching methodology, which now find a more specialised home in DILLE. Fourthly, as mentioned above, a number of AItLA members are applied linguists working in foreign language departments. As such, it is not surprising that their interests lie mainly in the teaching, learning and sociocultural contexts of those foreign languages.

Regarding the second point on the downward side, it is true to say that the institutional status of Applied Linguistics as a separate discipline has never been solid in Italian universities. But then, even departments of linguistics/glottology existed only in the larger universities, so it is not surprising that departments of Applied Linguistics were even rarer. Today, as universities are in a turmoil of re-organisation, faculties are being merged into schools, and departments dismantled, it is unlikely that Applied Linguistics will get even a mention. On the other hand, although not with this label, Applied Linguistics has been thriving in separate sections in 'foreign-istic' departments, ever since the foreign language-and-literature disciplines were officially uncoupled at the national level in the Eighties. Most staff now holding positions of English language, Spanish language, etc. – and there are hundreds of them – would, in a broad sense, fit the description of applied linguists, even though most identify more closely with their own specific foreign language areas and associations, rather than with Applied Linguistics and AItLA.

Summing up and concluding, AItLA is now an active association of some 100 members which conceives Applied Linguistics in its broadest meaning, even though the range of areas actually dealt with at its conferences and in its publications may not be as broad as was originally hoped for. Because AItLA came about rather late, in a context where other associations with strong applied linguistic interests were already established, it could attract only the most enthusiastic and convinced membership. As Susanne Göpferish says for Germany in her profile of GAL here in *EuJAL*, it should be clear that, also for Italy, not all applied linguistic research is done within AItLA. Far from it. The very fact that AItLA exists, and that most of its members also belong to other associations – such as SLI, SIG, DILLE and the foreign language ones – testifies to the importance of Applied Linguistics in Italy, and the many ways in which research in this field is conducted there.

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