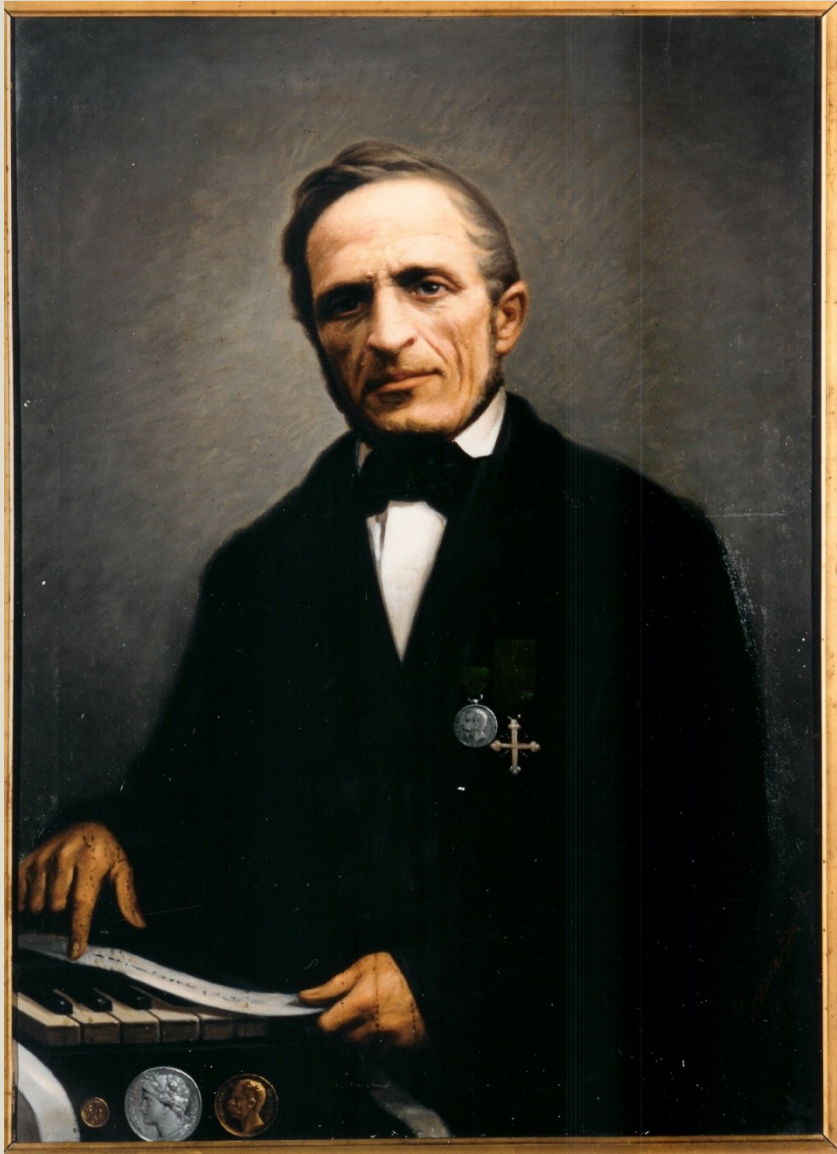


SENATO DELLA REPUBBLICA



Dicta and acta at the Italian Senate Assembly reports and tweets: two different roles



Antonio
Michela Zucco
1815–1886

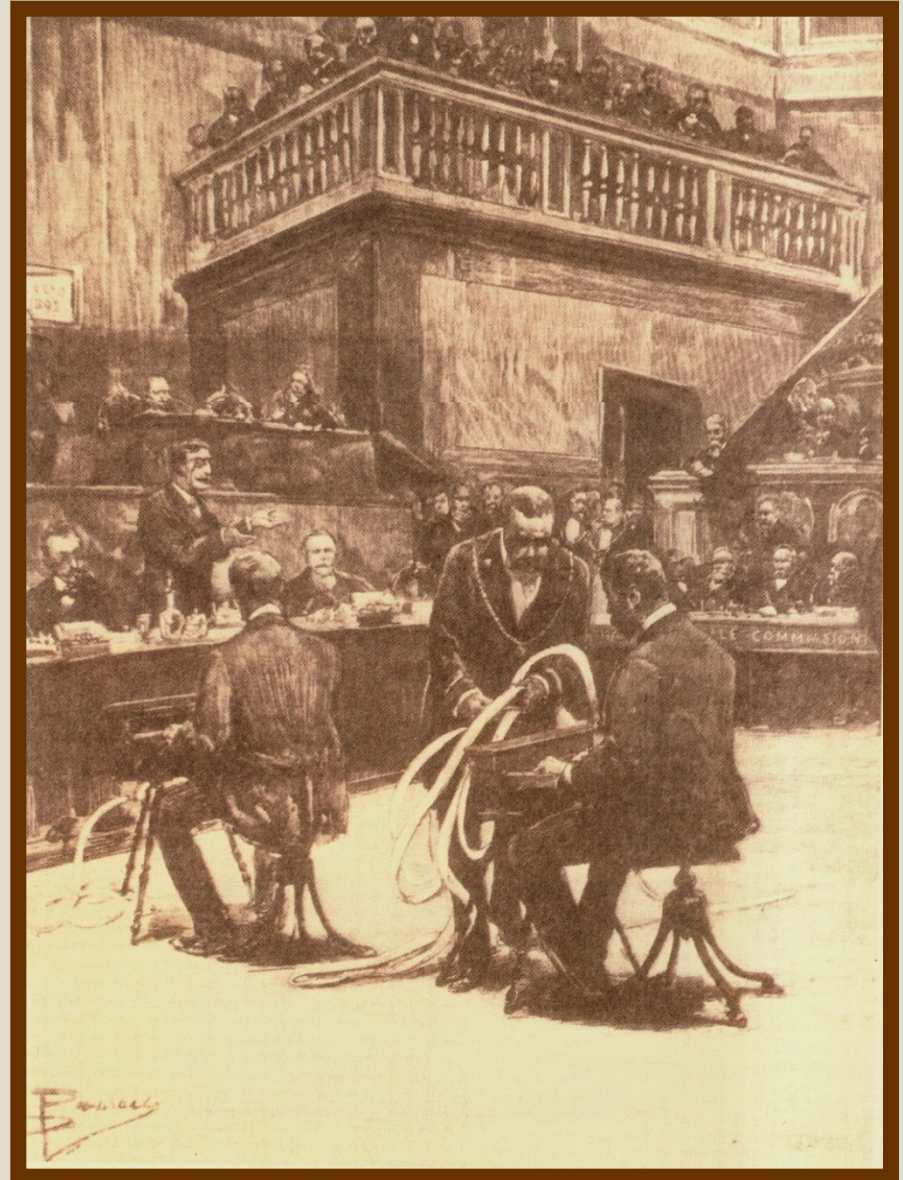
The faithful witness to two centuries of Italian Senate life



The Michela Machine (1880)



The original
WOOD model
continued in use
for over a century:
it was set on a
TRIPOD,
which made it
easier to move it



Ancient Michela system's stenographic symbols

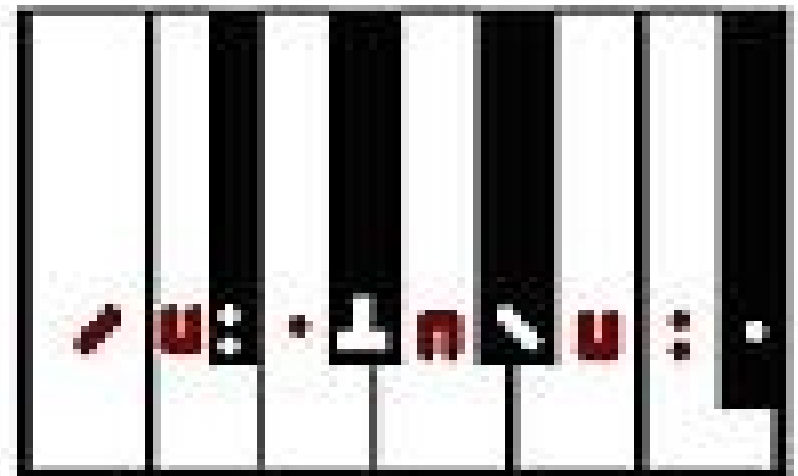
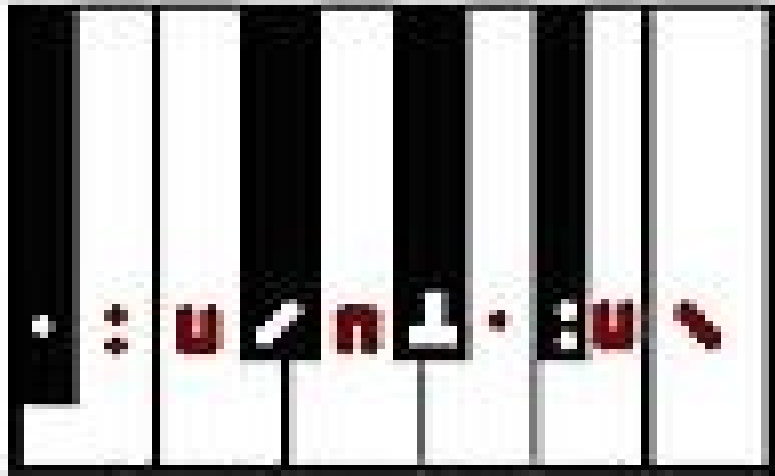
I SEGNI STENOGRAPHICI SONO:

•	corrispondente al numero	1
:	corrispondente al numero	2
U	corrispondente al numero	3
/	corrispondente al numero	6
∩	corrispondente al numero	9
⊥	corrispondente al numero	18

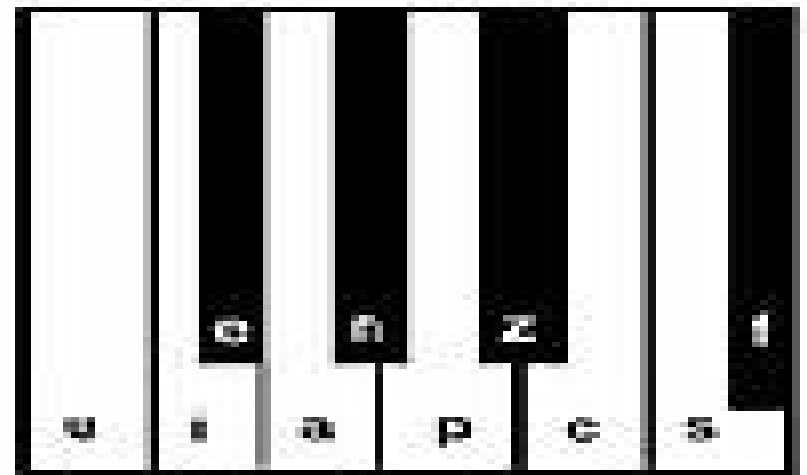
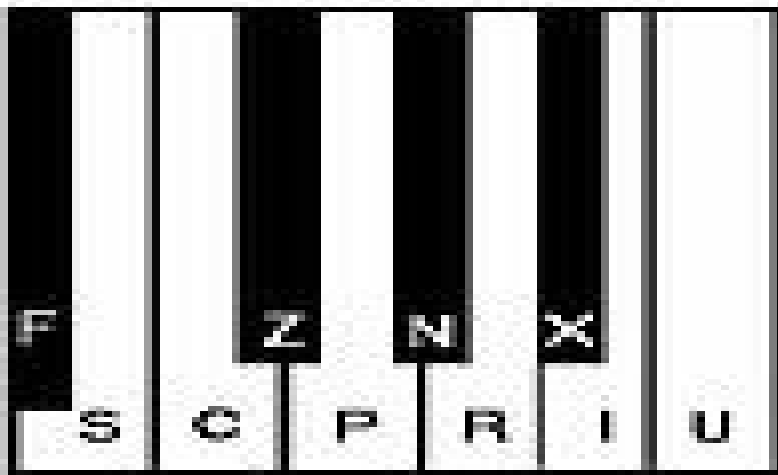


Beijing, 2009

In last international speed competition
a Senate stenographer joined,
“Michela” was the best performing
Stenographic machine for western idioms



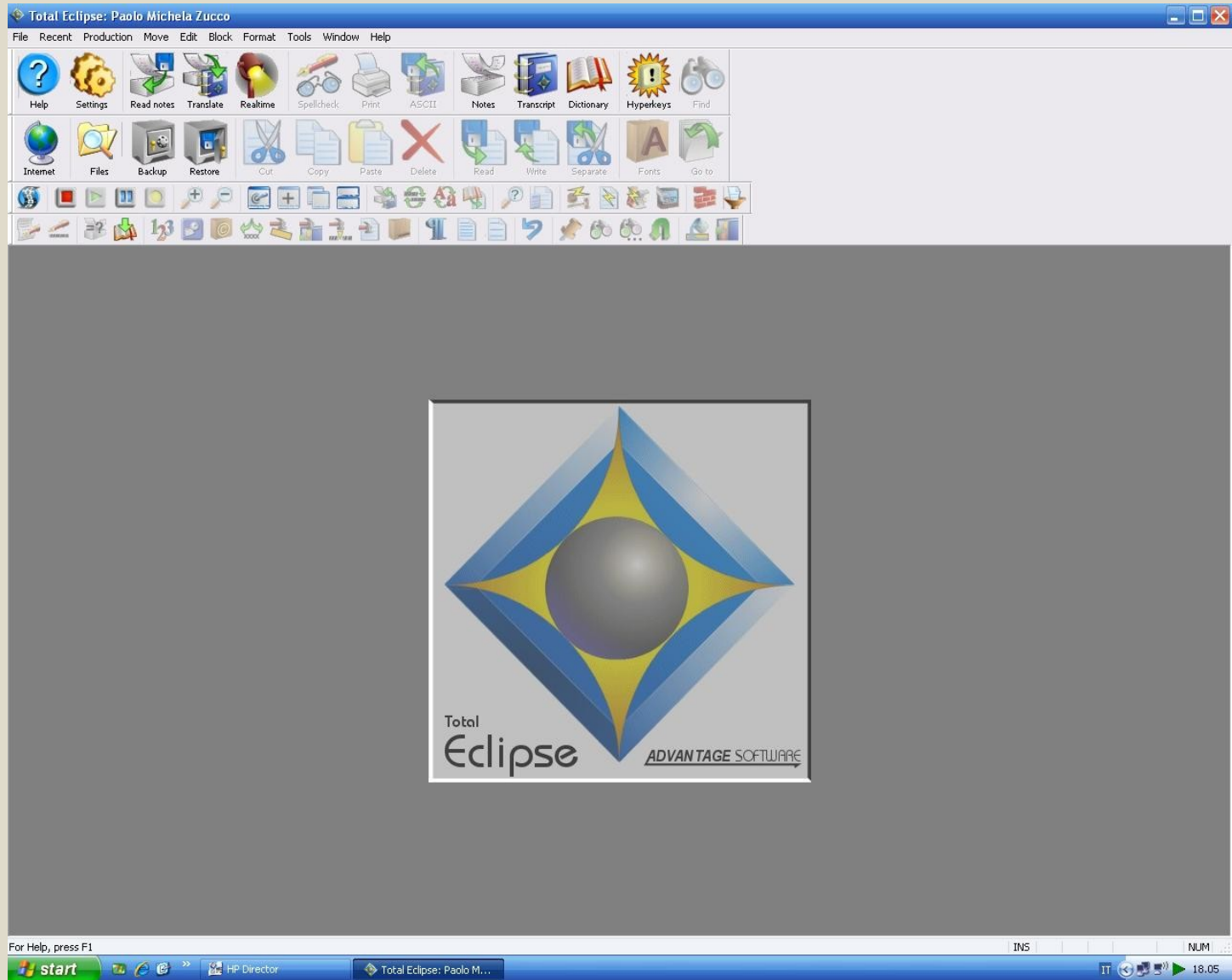
The phonetic strokes and the letters
on the keyboard



The “Vergoni”
electric model
of the 80’s



The software: Total Eclipse



An ordinary day work screenshot: the transcript and the minutes

The screenshot displays the Total Eclipse software interface. The main window is titled "Total Eclipse: Giulia Torregrossa - [RT062515-1329.ed]" and features a menu bar (File, Recent, Production, Move, Edit, Block, Format, Tools, Window, Help) and a toolbar with icons for Settings, Realtime, Transcript, Stop, Record, Pause, Files, Global, Full screen, Cut, Copy, Paste, Stop tran, Close, and Exit. The interface is divided into two main panes. The left pane shows a transcript of a speech, with text color-coded by speaker and content. The right pane displays a list of minutes, organized by speaker and time.

Transcript:

Signor Presidente, cari colleghe e colleghi, non vorrei ripetermi ancora nella disamina del maxiemendamento che in tutto e per tutto ricalca tutto quanto già conosciamo dal precedente maxiemendamento, che ricalcava a sua volta il testo originario.

Volevo in realtà porre l'accento su una questione un po' più politica e, per questo motivo, mi rivolgo in particolare alla signora Ministra, esponente del Partito Democratico e agli stessi miei colleghi del Partito Democratico, sempre così con la pacatezza ed il rispetto che mi contraddistinguono.

Vorrei fare la seguente riflessione: non so se vi rendete conto, care colleghe e colleghi, che nell'immaginario collettivo del personale scolastico di tutto il mondo della scuola state superando l'immagine profondamente negativa che

Minutes:

Speaker	Text	Time
S	Z N I ie n	00:01:14:22
	u n	00:01:14:27
P	ie	00:01:15:02
P	I u	00:01:15:07
P R I	i	00:01:15:13
F P	i p c	00:01:15:17
	i n	00:01:15:23
S Z N	ie	00:01:15:29
S Z P R I U	i cs	00:01:17:03
	pz s	00:01:17:12
F C XI	ie n cs	00:01:17:21
F Z P	ie	00:01:17:29
	i n	00:01:18:03
P R	a p f	00:01:18:09
C P R I	an c f	00:01:18:18
SC NR I	a	00:01:19:04
S	I ie n c f	00:01:19:13
S Z P	i n	00:01:19:22
F P R	a	00:01:20:01
	e s	00:01:20:09
P X U	e n z f	00:01:20:20
SC P	e n cs	00:01:20:29
P	p cs	00:01:21:08
	n z	00:01:21:23
	e	00:01:22:00
	an s	00:01:22:08
S R I U	e s	00:01:22:15
S	i	00:01:22:23
S Z P I	e n z	00:01:23:08
C P R I	e	00:01:23:16
F Z P	i	00:01:23:21
SC P	e n cs	00:01:24:02

Vol: 1, Page: 1 of 4, Line: 24, Col: 20 TC: 13:31:17:07 INS E NUM 19.45

My dictionary (140.000 entries), still growing

Total Eclipse: Paolo Michela Zucco - [Paolo2.dix]

File Recent Production Move Edit Block Format Tools Window Help

Help Settings Read notes Translate Realtime Spellcheck Print ASCII Notes Transcript Dictionary Hyperkeys Find

Internet Files Backup Restore Cut Copy Paste Delete Read Write Separate Fonts Go to

Steno	Text	Created	Modified	Used	#	Comment	AI	S..	W.
23: -a -ies FP-a	Aosta	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			3	1
24: -a N-a CPR-ie N-iz	anacronismo	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
25: -a N-a SCN-i Z-i	analisi	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
26: -a N-a SCN-uipzf	analogia	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			3	1
27: -a N-a F-a FCP-e FP-iz	analfabetismo	01/31/07 12:41:14			0			5	1
28: -a N-a F-i SCN-apf FP-ipc	anafattico	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			5	1
29: -a N-a FZPR-a F-e	anagrafe	05/30/07 10:00:20			0			4	1
30: -a N-a FZPR-a F-i CP-apzs	anagraficamente	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			5	1
31: -a N-a FZPR-a F-i CP-e	anagrafiche	11/15/05 15:01:25			0			5	1
32: -a N-a FZPR-a F-i SP-i	anagrafici	11/15/05 15:00:32		09/21/06 11:34:38	1			5	1
33: -a N-a FZPR-a F-ips	anagrafici	09/20/05 11:46:19		05/15/07 15:37:22	1			4	1
34: -a N-a FZPR-a F-ipc	anagrafico	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
35: -a N-a FZPR-a F-uiepc	anagrafica	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
36: -a N-a FZPR-af	anagrafe	09/20/05 11:46:19		05/30/07 09:53:35	1			3	1
37: -a N-a FCP-ie SCN-ips	anabolici	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
38: -a N-a FCPRI-izs SZ-azs	anabolizzanti	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
39: -a N-as	ANAS	09/20/05 11:46:19		07/26/07 17:09:28	7			2	1
40: -a N-as FP-a ZI-a	Anastasia	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
41: -a N-as FP-a ZI-ie	Anastasio	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
42: -a N-acs	ANAV	09/20/05 11:46:19	11/11/07 18:11:37		0			2	1
43: -a N-apzs N-e Z-i	anamnesi	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
44: -a N-anc CP-ips	anarchici	07/19/06 20:54:32			0			3	1
45: -a N-ancf CP-ipc	anarchico	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			3	1
46: -a N-ancf CPI-a	anarchia	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			3	1
47: -a N-ancs F-a FCP-e FP-i	analfabeti	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			5	1
48: -a N-ancs F-a FCP-uepf	analfabeta	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
49: -a N-e SCN-i FP-ie	anelito	09/20/05 11:46:19	11/11/07 18:11:57		0			4	1
50: -a N-es FP-e ZI-a	anestesia	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
51: -a N-es FP-e ZI-e	anestesia	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
52: -a N-es FP-e ZI-ie SCN-ie ZP...	anestesiologico	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			6	1
53: -a N-es FP-e S-is	anestesista	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
54: -a N-es FP-e FP-ips	anestetici	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
55: -a N-es FP-i FP-ipc	anestetico	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
56: -a N-epcs SCP-ie FP-i	aneddoti	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			4	1
57: -a N-epcs SCP-iepf	aneddoto	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			3	1
58: -a N-encs	anello	03/29/07 19:27:14			0			2	1
59: -a N-encs SCN-i	anelli	09/20/05 11:46:19		09/28/06 17:27:23	1			3	1
60: -a N-i SZP-a SCN-is FP-e	animaliste	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			5	1
61: -a N-i SZP-apf	animato	09/20/05 11:46:19		10/25/05 10:25:11	1			3	1
62: -a N-i SZP-an	animano	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			3	1
63: -a N-i SZP-ancf	animare	09/20/05 11:46:19			0			3	1

Steno

Text
Aosta

Type
Michela

Created
Tue Sep 20 11:46:19 2005

Times used: 0

AI contexts: 0

Strokes: 3

Words: 1

23 of 88409

INS

NUM

start HP Director Total Eclipse: Paolo M... http://sen.pari.gc.ca...

18.12

The Senate today



How to write the same word “volenterosa”:

- With FONETIC STENOGRAPHY:

(in syllables, with abbreviations, no final vowel, so can be masculine or feminine and the AI decides): vlen – troS

(as is known, realtime writers can choose to change the second entry: vlen–truoS)

- With ORTOGRAPHIC STENOGRAPHY:

(in sillables, no abbreviation, final diphthongs to separate words):

vo–len–te–ro–sua

STENOGRAPHIC REPORTS

Reproduce word-for-word everything said and done
(dicta and acta), both in Floor and Committees

SUMMARY REPORTS

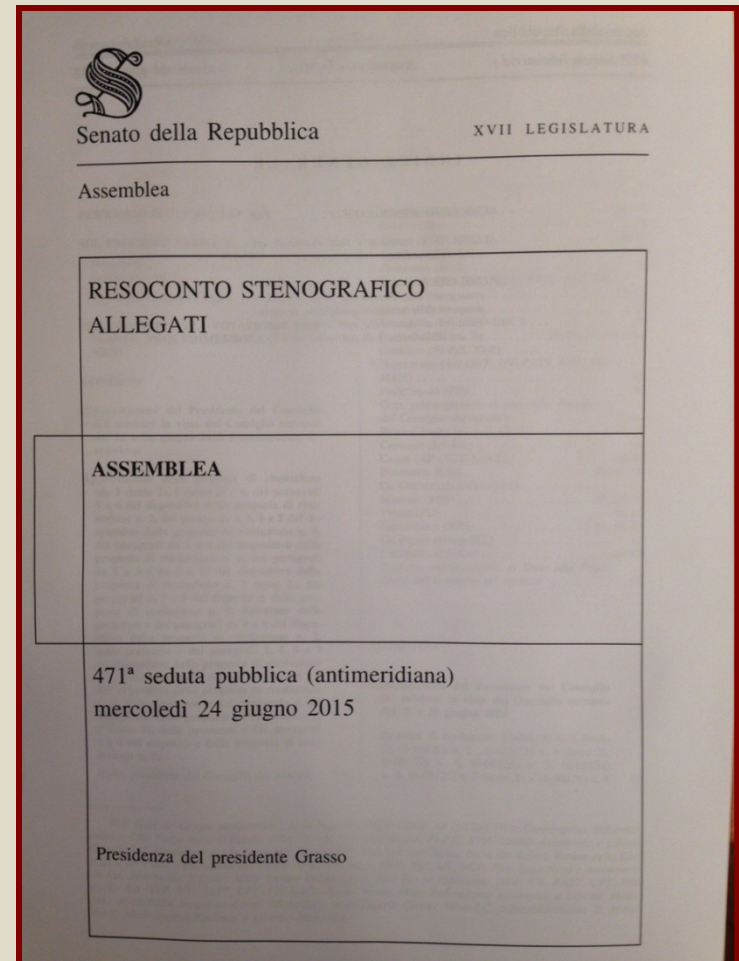
A third-person synopsis of debate and procedural phases
(now only in Committees)

THE SESSION COMMUNIQUE

A streamlined encapsulation of essential details of Floor
(amendments approved and political stances)



From speech to text





This is the reason
why we are always
in the middle of the
debating chamber

The reporter
as a wordsmith and
a polymath



Describing physical events (facta): pictures v. reports



Our report of the event:

*(The senator B. is showing a kangaroo puppet.
The parliamentary stewards remove it).*



PRESIDENTE. Ne ha facoltà. Mi pare che il suo emendamento sia stato apprezzato.

AZZOLLINI (NCD). Signor Presidente, ho apprezzato molto che oltre al canguro ci sia anche il gambero, perché quando si va indietro è noto che c'è il gambero.

PRESIDENTE. Senatore Azzollini, scusi se la interrompo. Siccome non vorrei che il canguro che è sul banco del senatore Buccarella diventasse senatore, prego gli assistenti di fare in modo che si tolga quel canguro dal tavolo. *(Il senatore Buccarella agita un peluche a forma di canguro. Proteste del senatore Santangelo).* **Prego i senatori Questori di farlo togliere. I pupazzi non sono ammessi in Aula.**

Tra poco troveremo anche il gambero in Aula.

AZZOLLINI (NCD). Signor Presidente, ho già detto che non condivido l'impianto di questa riforma. Per una ragione un po' provocatoria ho quindi presentato l'emendamento 1.1555. Il Senato ha le funzioni che gli vengono date dall'articolo 1 del disegno di legge costituzionale, ma ricordo che in nessuna altra Nazione esiste la Conferenza Stato-Regioni e la Conferenza Stato-Città che hanno poteri per certi versi minori, ma, come vedremo in seguito, per altri versi maggiori, di questo Senato (e non mi pare che questa riforma se ne occupi, non avendo quegli organismi rilievo costituzionale immediato). Siccome il Governo ci porta come presupposto fondamentale la riduzione dei costi, nella vita si può essere un po' più coerenti: è meglio che il Senato si toglie proprio e non ci sarebbero nemmeno i problemi che altrimenti avremmo.



← The senator commissioner and the parliamentary steward invite the senator to put his jacket back on

Uproar
in the Floor
of the Senate



The parliamentary steward removes the protest banners



June 25th 2015
School's law



30 REPORTERS

15 stenographer reporters – transcript
(Floor and Committees)

15 reporters



Text editors in charge of revision
(2 levels in Floor, 1 in Committees),
On line publication,
Annex to the session
Session communiqué

The production of Floor reports

- Transcript + editing (8–10 people)
- Correction (4 people)
- Final harmonization (1 person)
- On line Publication (1 person)
(minutes taken in the course of the session – AFTER HALF AN HOUR)
- Annex + Communiqué (3 people)
- Final publication (the following day)

What the stenographer does:

- ◎ TRANSCRIPT in the Floor (5 minutes)

- ◎ EDITING (30–40 minutes):

From spoken to written language

QUERY (names and legislative provisions)

Describing PHYSICAL EVENTS

Formulaic phrases (PROCEDURAL STEPS)

TAGS (hypertext marks)

To final publication

- ◎ FIRST CORRECTION
- ◎ FINAL REVISION
(harmonization with annexes + indexing)
- ◎ Final ON LINE PUBLICATION
- ◎ ARCHIVING in the databases
- ◎ PRINTING

The newspaper as the modern man's morning prayer



Minutes taken in the course of the session



Senato della Repubblica

Testi della seduta
Sigle dei Gruppi
Aggiorna all'ultima versione

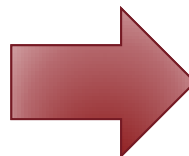
[Versione HTML base](#)

[Versione per la stampa](#)
[Mostra rif. normativi](#)

- ☐ Documento completo (341K)
- ☐ Frontespizio
- ☒ RESOCONTO STENOGRAFICO

Legislatura 17^a - Aula - Resoconto stenografico della seduta n. 473 del 25/06/2015
[\(Bozze non corrette redatte in corso di seduta\)](#)

On line after
30-40 minutes!
(since 1999)



SENATO DELLA REPUBBLICA
----- XVII LEGISLATURA -----

473^a SEDUTA PUBBLICA
RESOCONTO STENOGRAFICO
GIOVEDÌ 25 GIUGNO 2015

Presidenza del presidente GRASSO,
indi del vice presidente CALDEROLI
e del vice presidente GASPARRI

RESOCONTO STENOGRAFICO
[Presidenza del presidente GRASSO](#)

[PRESIDENTE](#). La seduta è aperta (ore 9,34).
Si dia lettura del processo verbale.

DI GIORGI, segretario, dà lettura del processo verbale della seduta antimeridiana del giorno precedente.

Sul processo verbale

[SANTANGELO](#) (M5S). Domando di parlare.

PRESIDENTE. Ne ha facoltà.

[SANTANGELO](#) (M5S). Signor Presidente, chiedo gentilmente la votazione del processo verbale, previa verifica del numero legale.

Home page



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Senato della Repubblica


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Composizione

Lavori del Senato

Leggi e Documenti

Attualità

Relazioni con i cittadini

Il Presidente

La home page del Presidente »

I Senatori

L'elenco in ordine alfabetico, le schede personali, i gruppi parlamentari.
[Vai alla pagina dei Senatori »](#)

Sito storico

Legislature precedenti al Senato e informazioni storiche sull'attività parlamentare »

Senato TV

La seduta in diretta, nel canale satellitare e in webtv »



Il sito e la piattaforma didattica per le scuole di ogni ordine e grado »

Collegamenti diretti

- Assemblea
- Commissioni
- [Parlamento.it](#) »

- Ultimi atti pubblicati
- Dossier di documentazione
- Affari Europei e Internazionali
- Archivio storico, Biblioteca e Centro di In-Form@zione e Libreria multimediale
- Concorsi, Bandi di gara e Manifestazioni di interesse
- Come visitare il Senato
- Amministrazione trasparente
- Istituzioni e parlamenti nel mondo
- English version

Prima pagina

Riforma della scuola. E' in corso, in Aula, la discussione del disegno di legge di riforma del sistema nazionale di istruzione (ddl 1934, già approvato dalla Camera). L'esame del provvedimento si concluderà nella seduta unica di giovedì 25.
[Comunicati di seduta »](#)
[Calendario dei lavori fino al 2 luglio »](#)

Consiglio europeo. Il Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri, Matteo Renzi, ha illustrato - nella seduta antimeridiana del 24 giugno - in Aula la posizione del Governo in vista del Consiglio europeo del 25 e 26 giugno. A conclusione del dibattito sulle comunicazioni del Presidente del Consiglio, l'Assemblea ha approvato la risoluzione di maggioranza e le risoluzioni, riformulate, della Lega Nord. Approvati, con votazione per parti separate, anche singoli punti delle risoluzioni di SEL, M5S, FI-PdL, GAL e CR.
[Comunicato di seduta »](#)
[Nota del Servizio Studi sul Consiglio europeo del 25 e 26 giugno »](#)

Decreto-legge rilancio settore agricolo. La Commissione Agricoltura il [24 giugno](#) ha concluso l'esame - avviato nella seduta del [18](#) - del ddl di conversione in legge, con modificazioni, del decreto n. 51 in materia di rilancio dei settori agricoli in crisi, di sostegno alle



Il Senato negli archivi dell'Istituto Luce »
Immagini e filmati dagli anni '20 alla VII legislatura



Il Senato e l'Unione europea »
L'attività parlamentare collegata con le istituzioni europee
[Calendario delle attività delle Commissioni »](#)

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[Carica](#)
[Accedi](#)

SenatoItaliano

Iscriviti 6.521

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[Video](#)
[Playlist](#)
[Canali](#)
[Informazioni](#)

2 live stream

Lunedì 6 luglio 2015
ore 16

Palazzo Madama
Sala Caduti di Nassirya

Conferenza stampa:
La persecuzione dei cristiani nel Mondo
e presentazione del libro
"Meriam" di Antonella Napoli

Senato 2
di SenatoItaliano
4 spettatori

DAL VIVO ORA

◀

▶

Canali in primo piano

Presidenza della Re...

Iscriviti

cameradeideputati

Iscriviti

Dal vivo ora

Senato della Repubblica
Senato TV

TV

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474ª Seduta pubblica
Martedì 30 giugno 2015 alle ore 16:31
RESOCONTO ORDINE DEL GIORNO

Comunicato di seduta

In apertura di seduta i sen. Loredana De Petris (SEL), Paolo Romani (FI-PdL), Candiani (LN) e Anna Bonfrisco (CR) hanno chiesto un'informativa urgente del Governo sulla situazione greca, prima che si celebri il referendum sulla permanenza nell'euro. Il sen. Marton (M5S) ha chiesto che l'informativa ci sia domani. Secondo il sen. Zanda (PD) spetta al Governo decidere quando riferire sull'andamento delle trattative. Il Presidente Grasso ha convocato la Conferenza dei Capigruppo domani alle ore 13. Nel corso della seduta, la Presidente di turno Fedeli ha comunicato che il Ministro dell'economia, domani pomeriggio, renderà un'informativa sugli sviluppi della situazione relativa al debito greco.

L'Assemblea ha avviato l'esame del **ddl n. 1971 di conversione, con modificazioni, del decreto-legge 5 maggio 2015, n. 51**, recante disposizioni urgenti in materia di **rilancio dei settori agricoli in crisi**, di sostegno alle imprese agricole colpite da eventi di carattere eccezionale e di razionalizzazione delle strutture ministeriali, già approvato dalla Camera dei deputati.

La relatrice, sen. Bertuzzi (PD), ha illustrato il provvedimento, migliorato dalla Camera, che introduce norme per governare il passaggio graduale dal regime delle quote latte a quello della liberalizzazione; prevede un piano di interventi per il settore olivicolo; contiene misure a sostegno delle imprese colpite da emergenze.

Different insitutional communication media

Le sedute più recenti

Martedì 30 giugno 2015 alle ore 16:31

474ª Seduta pubblica
ORDINE DEL GIORNO RESOCONTO

http://webtv.senato.it/3941

to meet the demands for fast turn-around times

dati.senato.it

Home Il progetto Scarica i dati Interroga i dati Feed RSS

Che cosa è dati.senato.it

Il punto per l'accesso diretto ai dati del Senato della Repubblica. Aggiornamenti quotidiani di informazioni facilmente e liberamente utilizzabili (dati aperti) che riguardano ogni aspetto dell'attività politica e istituzionale: i disegni di legge con i loro iter, le votazioni elettroniche d'Aula, le Commissioni, i Gruppi parlamentari e tante altre informazioni.

Una base informativa messa a disposizione di cittadini, ricercatori, giornalisti e sviluppatori per analizzare e condividere la conoscenza di cosa viene proposto, discusso e votato dai rappresentanti del popolo nella Camera alta del Parlamento Italiano.

I dati sono disponibili in formato linked data e rilasciati in licenza Creative Commons (CC BY 3.0) per il libero riuso.

A chi è rivolto

- RICERCATORI E ANALISTI**
Analisti e studio
Una base informativa a disposizione di Università e centri di ricerca per analizzare, studiare e monitorare.
- GIORNALISTI E BLOGGER**
Data Journalist
La possibilità di lavorare facilmente con dati e RSS per comprendere, seguire e informare.
- AZIENDE E SVILUPPATORI**
Applicazioni web e mobile
Endpoint SPARQL di interrogazione dati per sviluppare applicazioni per il web e la mobilità.

Il progetto
Il progetto Linked Open Data del Senato della Repubblica
vai a Il progetto »

Scarica i dati
I dataset fondamentali sempre aggiornati nei formati csv, json e xml per un utilizzo secondo le necessità.
vai a Scarica i dati »

Interroga i dati
I linked-data con la flessibilità di interrogazione tramite l'Endpoint SPARQL per un utilizzo avanzato e lo sviluppo di applicazioni.
vai a Linked-data »

Feed RSS
Tutti i feed RSS per essere aggiornati e condividere con facilità le informazioni sul web.
vai a RSS »

Linked open data

@SenatoStampa (since april 2013)



The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter feed for the account @SenatoStampa. It displays four tweets, all dated '3 lug' (July 3rd). Each tweet features the profile picture of the Italian Senate, which is a stylized 'S' inside a red square. The tweets provide information about Senate activities, including public opening hours, legislative decrees, and upcoming programs.

Senato Repubblica @SenatoStampa 3 lug
Domani [#Senato](#) aperto al pubblico dalle 10 alle 18. Comunicato stampa: [senato.it/comunicato?com...](#) [senato.it/Leg17/4283?voc...](#) [pic.twitter.com/Hy6dTuVzMR](#)
Visualizza foto · ↩ ↻ ⭐

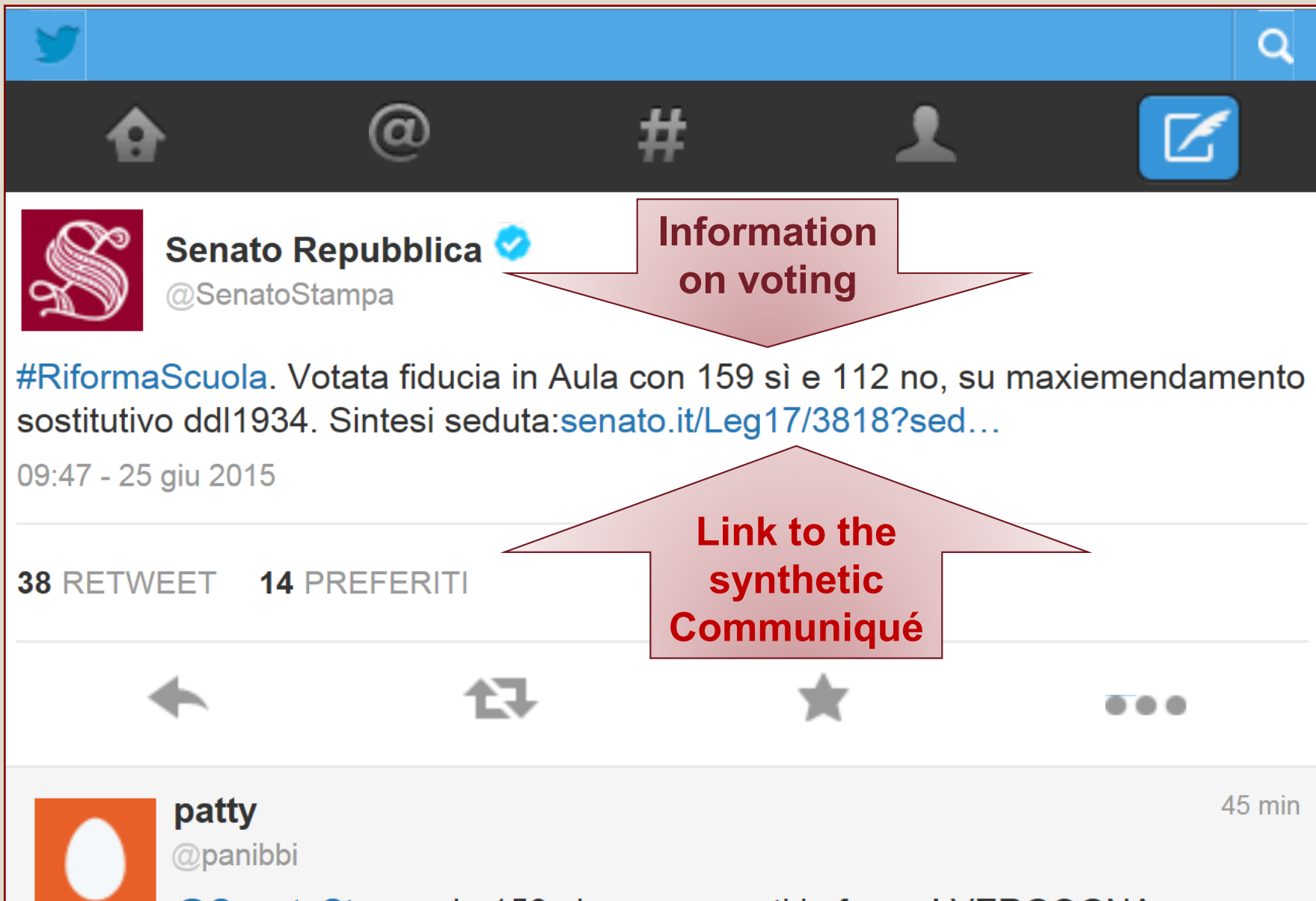
Senato Repubblica @SenatoStampa 3 lug
Decreto-legge [#Pensioni](#). Da martedì 7, in 11aComm., esame ddl 1993 [senato.it/leg/17/BGT/Sch....](#) Scheda lettura Serv.Studi: [senato.it/japp/bgt/showd...](#)
Visualizza dettagli · ↩ ↻ ⭐

Senato Repubblica @SenatoStampa 3 lug
Nella sezione "Attualità" del sito [#Senato](#), anticipazioni attività in programma a Palazzo Madama prossima settimana: [senato.it/2987](#)
Visualizza dettagli · ↩ ↻ ⭐

Senato Repubblica @SenatoStampa 3 lug
E' in linea la sintesi dell'attività svolta dal [#Senato](#) dal 29 giugno al 5

A useful hub for the Senate's various other channels of communication

Twitter interface showing a tweet from Senato Repubblica (@SenatoStampa) about the #RiformaScuola vote. The tweet text is: "#RiformaScuola. Votata fiducia in Aula con 159 sì e 112 no, su maxiemendamento sostitutivo ddl1934. Sintesi seduta: senato.it/Leg17/3818?sed...". The tweet is dated 09:47 - 25 giu 2015. Below the tweet, it shows 38 RETWEET and 14 PREFERITI. A red arrow points to the tweet text with the label "Information on voting". Another red arrow points to the tweet text with the label "Link to the synthetic Communiqué". The bottom of the image shows the start of a reply from patty (@panibbi) with a timestamp of 45 min.



Senato Repubblica @SenatoStampa

#RiformaScuola. Votata fiducia in Aula con 159 sì e 112 no, su maxiemendamento sostitutivo ddl1934. Sintesi seduta: senato.it/Leg17/3818?sed...

09:47 - 25 giu 2015

38 RETWEET 14 PREFERITI

patty @panibbi

45 min

Chamber of deputies' Facebook account (since 2nd june 2015)

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of the Italian Chamber of Deputies (Camera dei deputati). The page header includes the URL <https://www.facebook.com/#!/Cameradeideputati?ref=ts> and the page name "Camera dei deputati". The profile picture is a blue square with a white stylized "D" logo. The cover photo is a wide-angle shot of the Chamber of Deputies' interior, showing the semi-circular seating and the central aisle. Below the cover photo, the page name "Camera dei deputati" is displayed with a verified blue checkmark, followed by the category "Organizzazione". Navigation tabs include "Diario", "Informazioni", "Foto", "Persone a cui piace", and "Video". On the right side, there is a "Crea una Pagina" button and a list of recent posts. The main content area features a post from 4 hours ago about the Wikimania Esino Lario event, which took place in June 2016. The post includes a video thumbnail with the text "ATTIVITA LEGISLATIVA" and "COMMISSIONI ASSEMBLEA". Below the post, there is a section for "INFORMAZIONI" with a video thumbnail and the text "Pagina ufficiale della Camera dei deputati. La democrazia da vicino." and "Social Media Policy: http://bit.ly/Policy_Camera". The bottom of the page shows a Windows taskbar with several open applications, including "Total Eclipse: Giulia...", "GIULIA TORREGROS...", "Microsoft PowerPoi...", "superjilla - Yahoo M...", and "(3) Camera dei depu...".

Camera dei deputati

Web TV
Flickr
YouTube
Twitter
Camera dei deputati
Portale storico
Open Data
Biblioteca
Archivio storico

Crea una Pagina

Recenti
Lanciato/a

Camera dei deputati
Organizzazione

Ti piace
Segui già
Messaggio

Diario
Informazioni
Foto
Persone a cui piace
Video

Piace a 10mila persone
Mario Rossi e Enrico Ronzoni

Invita i tuoi amici a mettere "Mi piace" a questa Pagina

INFORMAZIONI

ATTIVITA LEGISLATIVA
COMMISSIONI ASSEMBLEA

Pagina ufficiale della Camera dei deputati.
La democrazia da vicino.

Social Media Policy: http://bit.ly/Policy_Camera

Camera dei deputati
4 ore fa

Nel giugno 2016 si terrà in Italia, ad ESINO LARIO in provincia di Lecco, il dodicesimo raduno mondiale della community di Wikipedia: Wikimania Esino Lario.

A un anno dall'evento, la Camera ha ospitato un Barcamp - una conferenza aperta i cui contenuti sono proposti dai partecipanti - per scoprire da vicino come funziona l'enciclopedia online e offrire un'opportunità per discutere di come si possano adeguare le attuali norme in materia di diritto d'autore e riproduzione dei b... Altro...

Wikipedia arriva in Italia. E l'Italia su Wikipedia?

"Wikipedia arriva in Italia. E l'Italia su Wikipedia?" è stato il tema del BarCamp che è tenuto lunedì 22 giugno, presso la Camera dei deputati. Nel giugno 2...

YOUTUBE.COM

Chat (21)

Everybody's on line through his/her laptop



The influence of social networks on parliamentary reports



#Senato

@SenatoStampa

Talking directly to people outside

*“Honourable citizens,
who are listening from home...”*

Senato della Repubblica

– 19 –

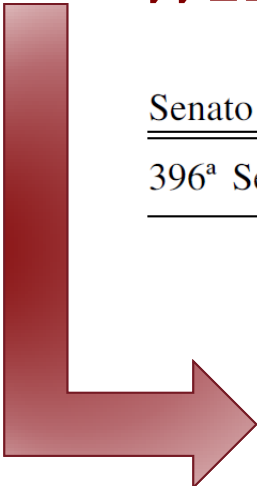
XVII LEGISLATURA

396^a Seduta (*pomerid.*)

ASSEMBLEA - RESOCONTO STENOGRAFICO

19 febbraio 2015

PRESIDENTE. Ne ha facoltà.



SANTANGELO (*M5S*). Signora Presidente, signor Sottosegretario, onorevoli cittadini che ci ascoltate fortunatamente da fuori, ci sono gravi inesattezze nella ricostruzione dei fatti. Cercherò di andare per ordine.

L'entrata dei telefoni cellulari all'interno delle caserme agenti viene già regolato dal dipartimento amministrazione penitenziaria con una nota che ha protocollo n. 091480/5.1 del 6 giugno 2000. Il carcere di Trapani il 24 giugno 2000 – la prego di seguirmi in questi brevi passaggi – con l'ordine di servizio n. 175 decreta che soltanto ed esclusivamente i magistrati possono fare ingresso all'interno della seconda porta del carcere di Trapani. L'agente Picone ha rispettato un ordine di servizio preciso e

Simplification of voting formulas



Senato della Repubblica



Versione ePub



Versione

PDF (509 KB)

Versione HTML base

☐ Documento completo (193K)

Frontespizio

☐ RESOCONTO STENOGRAFICO

☐ ALLEGATO A

☐ ALLEGATO B

Votes

(La richiesta risulta appoggiata).

Colleghi, in attesa che decorra il termine di venti minuti dal preavviso di cui all'articolo 119, comma 1, del Regolamento, sospendo la seduta fino alle ore 16,55.

(La seduta, sospesa alle ore 16,42, è ripresa alle ore 16,55).

La seduta è ripresa.

Indico la votazione nominale con scrutinio simultaneo dell'articolo 1.

(Segue la votazione).

Il Senato approva. *(v. Allegato B).*

Indico la votazione nominale con scrutinio simultaneo dell'articolo 2.

(Segue la votazione).

Il Senato approva. *(v. Allegato B).*

Indico la votazione nominale con scrutinio simultaneo dell'articolo 3.

(Segue la votazione).

Il Senato approva. *(v. Allegato B).*

Procediamo all'esame dell'articolo 4, sul quale è stato presentato un emendamento che si intende illustrato.

Passiamo alla votazione dell'emendamento 4.1.

Someone still reading his speech
from paper, instead of his laptop



Reappraising written language

Verba volant, scripta manent



50th Intersteno Congress - Budapest, 20 July 2015

The different roles of stenographic records and Twitter in the coverage of proceedings in the Senate

By Giulia Torregrossa

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The different roles of stenographic records and Twitter in the coverage of proceedings in the Senate

by Giulia Torregrossa

1. Introduction

This report, which coincides with the bicentenary of the birth of the inventor of the “Michela” stenography machine used in the Senate, aims to show how even in this social media age with its constant stream of new products for the communication and dissemination of information, stenographic reports have survived as impartial records of parliamentary proceedings, and have therefore remained the official voice of the Senate.

2. The bicentenary of the birth of Antonio Michela Zucco

The year 2015 marks an important anniversary in the history of stenography in the Italian Senate, as it's the bicentenary of the birth of Antonio Michela Zucco, the brilliant inventor of the “Michela” stenography machine, which has borne faithful witness to two centuries of Italian parliamentary life. The anniversary provides us with an ideal opportunity to look back at the history of this machine, which, thanks to its amenability to technological modification, has managed to keep up with the changing times and is still used daily in the **Senate of the Italian Republic** for the taking of minutes. Even in an age in which telecommunications and the mass media reign supreme, the “Michela” is still used to record all that is said (*dicta*) and done (*facta*), whether on the Floor of the Senate or in Committees, and remains unmatched for the speed of its output.

Since the institutions of state are meant to serve and represent the people, the people have the right to know the work that they do. This commitment to parliamentary **transparency** is one of the defining characteristics of democracy, and is enshrined in

article 64 of the Italian Constitution in the statement that “parliamentary sessions are public.” Parliamentary reports constitute the official and objective record of what happens in **Parliament**, a word that is etymologically derived from the Late Latin *parabolare*, to talk.

3. The “Michela” system

The Michela was one of the first stenographic machines ever invented. Originally designed in the mid-nineteenth century by the brilliant Professor Antonio Michela Zucco as an aid for the **visually-impaired**, it was fitted with blind stamps that punched a piece of paper with raised patterns representing phonetic symbols (similar to the raised dots that make up Braille script). Later, when the speed of the machine and hence its potential for wider application as a means of registering the spoken word were recognised, the blind stamps designed to be read by touch were replaced with ordinary inked stamps, readable by sight.

At the Universal Exposition of Paris of 1878, the machine won “only” the silver medal, because its inventor didn't want to reveal all his technical secrets. Thanks to the sponsorship of Garibaldi, the machine was adopted for stenographic reporting in the Senate, where the original model continued in use for over a century. It was made of wood and set on a tripod, which, in the days before amplification systems, made it easier for the stenographer to move the machine closer to the speaker to hear what was being said.

The genius of the system is that it's based not on how words are spelled but on their **phonetic** sound, and the original system made use of just six symbols to achieve this. In his quest to construct a universal phonetic alphabet based on his studies of the human voice, the inventor catalogued all the sounds that can be reproduced in various languages. Mechanical shorthand systems of the early 1800s had, in fact, already started using

phonetic representations of words rather than letters, and the principle was applied to the early prototypes of shorthand machines, which were thus able to reproduce simple phonemes consisting of a consonant and a syllable, but the Michela system was the first to succeed in reproducing all the constituent elements of any phoneme without greatly increasing the number of keys that had to be pressed.

The brilliance of the system lies in its simplicity. The machine has just 20 keys, which are slightly modified versions of those that are found on a **piano**. As the system breaks words down into **syllables**, which are reproduced by key combinations, just as one might play a chord on a piano, it permits the use of many abbreviations, and can thus achieve very high transcription speeds. The ingenuity of this approach is attested to by the string of prizes won at home and abroad by its users. In all Italian competitions between 1977 and 1996, Senate stenographers won first place; and in international competition, they won **three world titles** in 1983, 1985 and 1995. In the most recent international competition in which a Senate stenographer participated, Beijing in 2009, the Michela was the best performing stenography machine for western languages.

As the machine requires its operator to reproduce only the sounds of words, without having to worry about spelling, it can be used to record speech **in any language**. Some years ago, my colleague Lillo Bruccoleri carried out a famous experiment in which he transcribed a speech in Japanese that he then read back, even though he had no knowledge of the language.

The Michela machine went electric in the 1980s, then electronic. Finally, about 15 years ago, the great-grandson of the inventor converted the phonetic symbols into letters of the alphabet to improve its capacity to interface with computers. The machine now includes a lightweight master keyboard that uses the very popular **MIDI protocol** for musical keyboards to input data that is then processed using transcription software.

Colleagues of previous generations, having dedicated themselves with passion to testing and researching new systems to determine which one best suited our needs, finally opted for a software application called **Total Eclipse**, which is used by the Congress of the United States and the Canadian Senate for the generation of subtitles for the hearing impaired. This program, which is able to interface with any keyboard and any language, makes it possible to produce verbatim transcripts with practically no delay. It's versatile enough to adapt to different ways of working, such as using a pool of scopists (editors) in different locations connected in real time via an intranet to the stenographer. It also adapts to the writing style of a given stenographer, thanks to a customisable dictionary feature. Its other advantages include: the advanced management of conflicts through the use of artificial intelligence algorithms; the insertion of prefixes and suffixes using orthographic dictionaries; the application of dedicated grammar rules; and the generation of a digital audio recording that is synchronised with the text – a key feature that proves its worth when interpretations are disputed. The adoption of this new technology has enabled **the eradication of an intermediate stage** from the former system, which required the dictation of the stenographic notes to a parliamentary assistant, who then transcribed them to computer. This has reduced the number of staff needed, with clear **cost savings** for the Senate.

Finally, the great versatility of the Michela machine is demonstrated by the fact that, while it has always been regarded as a stenographic machine based solely on phonetic reproduction, it also in fact permits **spelling-based stenography**, albeit at slower speeds. The spelling mode uses the same software, but references a different dictionary, compiled by the aforementioned great-grandson of the inventor. The spelling-mode dictionary incorporates all the possible syllables of the Italian language (about 44,000), which may be entered either as prefixes or as suffixes. The dictionary also

puts diphthongs to special use, deploying them as end-of-word signals for the software, but the essence of the original system remains the same. This method makes practically no use of abbreviations, which slows down speeds a little, but is more accurate because it avoids the pitfalls of phonetics-based AI, which, owing to the exclusion of final letters, may mistakenly flag up gender disagreements or incorrectly run syllables together if a word is not known to the system. This spell-mode solution opens up new avenues of use for the Michela machine, including subtitling. The Bureau is also evaluating a project aimed at synchronizing the video records of the sessions with the verbatim reports, using the timecodes produced by Eclipse during the stenotyping, for the generation of subtitles for the hearing impaired and in order to help doing specific queries.

While developing the technology of the Michela machine, the Bureau of the Senate also **tested** some of the most popular speech recognition programs for the editing phase. The aim was not so much to eliminate the passage in which the “stenographic ticker tape” was read out to another parliamentary assistant as to entrust the entire process, from the taking of the minutes to the production of a finalised text, to the one person, and thus reduce the number of staff needed to create a document. The trials revealed **the advantages and disadvantages of both technologies**, and showed that while speech recognition had the important benefit of requiring shorter training times thanks to its extreme simplicity of use, the Michela system combined with the Total Eclipse program was capable of producing a sufficiently finished product in real time, and eliminated the phase in which the stenographic ticker tape had to be dictated to a voice-recognition program. I have to admit that I am filled with pride when I see the admiration on the faces of people who, be they Senators, expert witnesses appearing before Committees, guests or colleagues, watch me working on my laptop and are amazed to see, appearing in real time (and even with punctuation points!), the words that a speaker is delivering.

After considered reflection, a decision was made to continue with the updated stenographic system, which has so far proved better suited than speech recognition to the demands inherent in the reporting of activities conducted in the Senate (i.e. better at rapidly recording as much information as possible about events as they unfold and rendering it available in real time). Accordingly, in 2005, the team of “Michela” stenographers in the Senate was joined by the first generation of “Total Eclipse” users specially trained by the Bureau, a group of which I have been a proud member for nearly ten years.

4. The reporting of Senate proceedings

The Senate produces two types of records of proceedings: **summary reports**, now used for Senate Committees only, which give a third-person synopsis of what is said and an account of the procedural phases; and **verbatim stenographic reports**, which reproduce word-for-word everything that is said and done (though these may vary in some respects, depending on the type of session).

A **stenographic report of proceedings on the Floor of the Senate** will register the actual words spoken with greater fidelity than will a report of a Committee meeting. There are two reasons for this. In the first place, proceedings on the Floor need to be published – and therefore also captured – as rapidly as possible. The report goes online during the session itself with a time lag of about 30-40 minutes (and this is achieved with just 8-10 stenographers actively taking the minutes). Secondly, the proceedings of the Floor of the Senate are of particular relevance. They are closely followed by the media, and are often captured on audio and video. Speakers have the right to make only formal corrections to what they have said (in the final version of the report, an asterisk is placed next to a contributor’s name to indicate that a correction was made).

In the **stenographic records of Committee meetings**, however, the language used is at once more colloquial and, depending on the subject matter, much more technical. This is especially true for hearings with external bodies, where the topics can range from nuclear fission to opera. As a result, parliamentary reporters are often required to be “**polymaths**”, capable of comprehending and navigating their way through all sorts of different subject matter. One approach tried in the past was the **specialisation** of parliamentary reporters in certain subject areas so that some might achieve greater mastery of the technical language used in Committees and others a greater familiarity with the complex parliamentary procedures of the House. Today, however, the staff are used interchangeably between both environments, as this is conducive to more fluid working arrangements and encourages the sharing of expertise.

The arrangements described above mean that the records of Committee work must then undergo a final “polishing” before they are released. There are three reasons why this must be so. First, the deliveries are often made off-the-cuff rather than from a prepared text. Second, as a result of different staff working rules for Committee meetings, fewer stenotypists (one to three) are available. As the reports are not produced simultaneously with the Committee work but are issued at a later date, more time is available for a careful revision of the text. Third, the writing shifts for the stenographers are twice as long as in the debating chamber of the Senate (ten minutes instead of five), and each stenographer remains present for the duration of the Committee meeting so that he or she may follow the full course of the discussion.

Some meetings are of a particularly sensitive nature, such as those held by **Committees of Inquiry**, whose powers of investigation are comparable to those of the judiciary. When sessions are held behind closed doors for reasons of confidentiality, and are therefore neither broadcast by satellite nor streamed and the summary report simply

lists the names of those who have spoken at the meeting, the only remaining form of public disclosure is the stenographer's record. It needs to be as faithful as possible to what was said, and so the stenographer will come very close to taking verbatim minutes of the meeting.

Reports, whether they refer to proceedings in the debating chamber of the Senate or in Committees, include hypertext markers (**tags**) to facilitate indexing and archiving in the databases, and thus help readers retrieve information.

5. The transition from the spoken word (*dicta*) to the written document

A salient quality of a parliamentary record is that it must strike the proper **balance between the spoken and the written language**. A considerable difference exists between the speech of an impassioned orator, perhaps delivered with a particular intonation and accompanied by gesticulations (an eminently Italian trait) and the printed words of an official document, which must comply with strict stylistic rules, such as the measured use of punctuation (which practically rules out ellipses and exclamation points), and is wary of including bad language. These aspects of the parliamentary record may well give outsiders the impression of excessive formality, and encourage the belief that the written reports are light-years removed from contemporary diction which, following the now widely popular social media style, often seems to lack syntax but abound in illegible abbreviations, forms of punctuation and emoticons that stand in for things that are implied but not said. In fact, a constant and delicate challenge facing the parliamentary reporter is how to transpose accurately and clearly words spoken by an orator, without misrepresenting his or her meaning, to an official document that is an impartial record of the parliamentary proceedings and the official voice of the Senate.

6. Describing physical events (*facta*) in the debating chamber

Since the reporting of events on the Floor of the House must cover everything that happens, the physical actions, or *facta*, must also be described. To do so, the records contain parenthetical notes written in the third person and placed in italics. They may include references to applause (including whether it was sarcastic), or a note to indicate that a political party has staged a walk-out, that a Senator has unfurled a protest banner, that someone is displaying an effigy, or wearing a t-shirt with a slogan on it. In such cases, the images transmitted on television or emanating from an unofficial source will generally outdo in effect the necessarily very terse description contained in the stenographic report, also because, being official documents, these reports should not contain excessive detail about events that have little bearing on the pre-eminently legislative activity of the House.

7. The parliamentary reporter-stenographer as wordsmith

It's essential for parliamentary reporters to be present in the debating chamber for as long as the session continues. When the chamber becomes turbulent, the stenographer is able to pick up Senators' off-mike comments and interruptions, which are often not detected by even the most sophisticated recording systems, or take note of physical gestures of political import that the television cameras may miss. What the stenographer sees and hears constitutes valuable testimony: without the stenographer present as witness, the information would be irredeemably lost. At such times, the stenographer should be quick to register the content, especially the words on protest banners, before they are removed by parliamentary stewards.

In his or her role as a reporter on proceedings, the stenographer, through the observation of the expressions and gestures of a speaker, can capture the general gist of the discourse and, with reference also to the context in which the words are pronounced,

make the necessary additions to complete an unfinished sentence. Over the course of various Parliaments, the stenographer will become ever more attuned to speakers' linguistic nuances (even if they are, in fact, often quite the opposite of nuances). He or she will know to skip over repeated nouns, correct mistakes (such as the misuse of a verb), verify legal, historical and geographical references, and check the accuracy of quotations and expressions in languages other than Italian. Indeed, when transcribing the words of a speaker with whose style, peculiarities and areas of interest he or she has become well acquainted, the stenographer can almost predict the content of the discourse itself.

A **basic rule** that stenographers must follow is to respect the **personal characteristics** of each speaker, and not succumb to the temptation to adapt the prose to their taste, because the effect would be to create for one speaker as many different rhetorical styles as there are stenographers reporting. Even so, it's inevitable that some personal preferences (especially regarding minor elements such as punctuation or preposition use) will leak into the report; and yet the appearance of these distinctive traits, which are part of what distinguishes humans from machines, are also a celebration of the individuality of each of us in this line of work. Parliamentary reporting is akin to an art form, in that the stenographer, deploying a sort of Socratic maieutic method, must be able to delve into the animated discourse of a speaker to “extract” his or her intended meaning and, using the speaker's own words, render the thoughts both whole and suitable for the written record.

A general guideline with international validity, regardless of the specific characteristics of the language being spoken, is given in the classic definition of the British parliamentary report (Hansard) by Sir Erskine:

[...] which, though not strictly verbatim, is substantially the verbatim report with repetitions and redundancies omitted and with obvious mistakes [...] corrected, but which, on the other hand, leaves out nothing that adds to the meaning of the speech or illustrates the argument.

In the quest for universal **professional standards** founded on principles that should be inculcated into parliamentary reporters from their very first day of training, primacy must be given to **the correct use of language**. Proper use of language cannot be assumed as a given, as is all too evident whenever we read newspapers or listen to how language is used on television, where, for example, verb tenses and moods are impoverished, especially when it comes to the use, or rather the declining use, of the simple past, the subjunctive and the infinitive. And yet, one's long-established professional experience notwithstanding, it's also necessary to keep an open mind to changes in stenographical techniques and reporting standards.

8. The making of Senate reports

The team of parliamentary reporters in the Senate, who form part of the **“Parliamentary reporting and institutional communications service of the Senate”** is currently made up of an extremely reduced number compared with the past, as a result of a freeze on new hires following the Government's spending review. All told, the Senate has around 30 staff of whom 15 are active stenotypists.

The production of parliamentary transcripts of proceedings on the Floor of the Senate is managed by a team of 8 or 10 “front-line” stenographers who, using a sort of relay method, spend five minutes in the debating chamber recording the speeches, then around 30-40 minutes writing up their notes before returning to the chamber for another five minutes, and continuing in this way for as long as the proceedings go on. The documents they produce in this way are transmitted electronically to their “second-line” colleagues, who are divided into two teams, the first of which is in charge of putting the unrevised texts on line as “minutes taken in the course of the session”, and the second of which is in charge of revision. Four parliamentary staff, alternating among themselves,

maintain a constant editorial presence in the debating chamber. Each member remains there for a longer period (about 40 minutes) to deliver material support to the stenotypist by keeping him or her apprised of shifts from one procedural phase to another and abreast of everything that is going on at the session. Finally, there is a “third line” of revision performed by a staff member who audits the entire session from the Speaker’s bench, and is thus able to enjoy a panoptic vision of the events, or, to use Herodotus’ term, a *σύνπασα γνώμη*. This member of staff is thus able to coordinate the minutes already put up on the internet with the version that will be sent out for printing. Finally, there is an editorial section in charge of the “annex to the session”, which supplies the legislative texts and reports the outcome of votes.

The reporting of Senate Committee meetings, on the other hand, requires fewer staff. Apart from the stenotypists, a single second line of scopists (editors) is responsible for producing the final version of the report.

9. The session communiqué

Another key document is the **session communiqué**, which has no equivalent in the Chamber of Deputies. In its original form as an “end-of-session communiqué”, it was published at the end of the proceedings and was limited to simply cataloguing the most important procedural steps. This, however, was before the inception of the “live” session reports, back when summary reports were the earliest documents to be issued. Following the abolition of the summary reports, which were progressively replaced also in other main European parliaments by verbal processes issued almost in real time, the session communiqué changed and expanded its scope. It's now edited by one person and published online in real time. The communiqué is updated during the session, at the end of each stage of procedure.

As the communiqué enjoys a wider margin of discretion in the selection and presentation of content and is not bound to the chronological order of the proceedings, the first information that emerges is the outcome of votes - highlighted in bold font - so it's of particular use to outsiders. Being the final product of meticulous prior research into the legislative measures on the agenda of discussion, the communiqué offers a more streamlined and efficient encapsulation of the essential details than the summary report, and is presented in a less formal and more journalistic style. Since the communiqué focuses on the most salient part of the Senate's work, it's often the document that the press uses for its coverage (sometimes neglecting to attribute its source). Since the communiqué will highlight amendments made by a Committee acting in a reporting capacity, explicate the political content of the amendments, and indicate what stage has been reached by a parliamentary bill, it serves the valuable purpose of providing a precise version of the text that will be forwarded to the other House of Parliament. Finally, the communiqué reports the stances taken by the various political parties during the general debate and at the moment of the vote. It also includes the arguments of the opposition, which certain sections of the press often overlook (preferring to concentrate on the Government's statements or on personal commentaries from individual politicians on social media). In these days of unfiltered publicity and partial reporting, too much coverage is given to stories that are sensationalist but ephemeral, and the treatment of content as if it were all of equal significance fails to differentiate between what is important and what is not. The communiqué, however, resists this tendency by according proper value to the work of Parliament, and demonstrates how institutional communication can serve an instructive and probative purpose.

10. The publication and use of official records: the transition from print to bytes

In recent decades, the spread of internet technologies has seen the general replacement of print with electronic formats. Here in Italy, Umberto Eco – one of the few intellectuals who can afford to go against the grain – has been at the forefront of a debate in which he has fiercely criticised the Web and defended the use of paper, citing Hegel to his cause: “Reading the morning newspaper is the modern man’s morning prayer. We shall return to paper-based information”. Even so, when it comes to the publication of parliamentary proceedings, the **electronic format**, which offers fast and convenient reference on the website of the Senate, is starting to supplant **paper-based records**. The texts of laws and amendments, along with all sorts of official documents, are now constantly available on line, and by publishing reports on the Web, the Bureau of the Senate has been able to make huge savings on the costs of editing and printing. Meanwhile, the documents and sources referenced by expert witnesses appearing before Senate Committees can also be published on the Web pages of the Committees, which have therefore grown richer through the addition of academic documents, statistics, charts and the like. A **document** no longer refers simply to a piece of printed paper, but may encompass a wealth of other content that is available in digital format.

The advent of the internet, which has been a useful source of information for our work, has made it possible to shorten our publication times. Over the course of the years, the ways in which official documents are **accessed and used** have multiplied because significantly more of them are now available for public consultation, which may be done from anywhere.

On the other hand, the arrival of the internet age also made the online publication of parliamentary acts a matter of necessity, since at a time when easy access to information is

assumed as a matter of course, anything that is *not* on the internet and therefore not widely available is regarded as almost inexistent.

Yet it's important for us as an institution to make sure our output stands out from the undifferentiated mass of data and information that is so much part of today's world; and so we must produce documents of quality. An encouraging sign that we are doing this right is the high ranking parliamentary speeches are given in the Italian version of the world's most used search engine, since it suggests both that the information we produce is considered important and that it's widely accessed. Producing quality documents, however, takes time, which is often not available owing to the absolute need to put parliamentary reports up on the Web immediately. The parliamentary reporter must therefore use his or her professional judgement to balance the demands of non-institutional external parties awaiting information and his or her own perfectionist inclination not to release work until it's a polished final product.

Despite the enormous shortening of the **times to publication** compared with the recent past, it often seems that the stenographic record struggles to keep up with live television broadcasts, and cannot compete against the immediacy of news agency releases or tweets, especially when the focus is on particularly hectic parliamentary events, such as the approval of controversial amendments or moments of uproar during a debate. The slight time lag in the publication of the report, however, is made up for by the unquestionable advantage of expediting specific queries to retrieve names or references to legislative provisions and amendments in the knowledge that the data is both complete and officially certified. To meet the demands for fast turn-around times, the Senate issues different types of official record. Whereas until a few decades ago all that was available were printed transcripts published several days after the session to which they referred, since 1999 the uncorrected proofs of the transcripts of parliamentary proceedings have

been available shortly afterwards on the Senate website, along with, now, the session communiqué, news updates and tweets. The Senate is probably unique among international parliaments for the range of options it has available. The parliamentary transcript offers a word-for-word account of all the speeches made, television coverage enables viewers to watch them, tweets offer brief and instantaneous reports of events, and the session communiqué offers a synopsis of the contents of a debate.

11. Transparency and institutional communications

The transcripts and session communiqués are just two of the primary, official and impartial sources that the Senate uses to keep citizens informed. It also uses many other tools of communication: **satellite channels** that broadcast live debates from the Floor of the House and the proceedings of Committees; the **official websites** of the two Houses of Parliament (www.camera.it and www.senato.it), both of which include an abbreviated version in English; the website of Parliament (www.parlamento.it); Web-TV and two YouTube channels streaming sittings of Parliament live. The back archives of the Web-TV service also enable viewers to watch previous sessions, which is particularly important when no transcripts have been made of them, since the recordings are the only means of public disclosure.

The portal dati.senato.it is the first point of entry for anyone seeking direct access to the data of the Senate. It consists of a store of data that is updated daily and made available to citizens – though it's also used by specialists – who may thus analyse and distribute knowledge of what the people's representatives are proposing, debating and voting on. The primary purpose of the site is to provide, in freely reusable formats such as **open data**, much of the information that has already been published on the website of the Senate, and thereby promote genuine citizen participation in the decision-making process.

12. The Senate Twitter account

In our contemporary world where the communication of information is so pervasive, the two Houses of the Italian Parliament have also set up social media accounts (both are on Twitter as [@SenatoStampa](#) and [@Montecitorio](#), while, since 2 June, the Chamber of Deputies has also been on Facebook). The Senate has set up a number of **Twitter accounts**, including one dedicated to its institutional work (@SenatoStampa), one to budgetary matters (@SR_Bilancio) and one for young people (@SenatoRagazzi). Since its inception in April 2013, the first of the three has grown steadily and now counts 45,000 followers. It's used to disseminate official announcements about the most important proceedings in the debating chamber of the Senate and in Committees, as well as about institutional events in general (the start of a debate, the approval of a bill, the progress of a vote, the calling of votes of confidence, the meeting of a Committee, a Committee hearing, the announcement of deadlines for the presentation of amendments, the scheduling of talks and seminars, the commemoration of historical dates or the opening of Senate premises to public visits). The tweets are institutional, but are delivered with a journalistic style that is dictated also by the limited number of characters imposed by the Twitter standard, and provide short snippets of information with links to more detailed background sources to be found on the Senate website. Thus the links point to, for example: the Web-TV site, session communiqués, transcripts, press releases, summaries of legislative bills, Twitter hashtags on related subjects, discussion threads, and quotations or retweets from other institutional accounts. In short, the Twitter account serves as a hub for the Senate's various other channels of communication.

The establishment of a Twitter account marked a significant moment in **the making available of institutional content**. In addition to providing information in a

highly compact form, Twitter has the undeniable advantage of considerably widening the pool of users, since it's usable by anyone with a mobile device. The account is for official announcements only, and differs completely in this respect from how individuals, including some public figures, use social media, often on the impulse of a moment, to post a broad array of content, including some of a personal nature.

The developments we have been discussing raise interesting questions about **sources of information**, a topic of great relevance when it touches upon parliamentary affairs and the role of the institutions as impartial primary sources that can cater to the growing public demand for transparency. It's worth listening again to the authoritative voice of Umberto Eco on this subject. With particular regard to young people and schools, Professor Eco suggests that social media has given anyone and everyone as great a say as a Nobel laureate. This, he argues, is problematic because the Web is also replete with arrant nonsense and delusional re-readings of history. On the one hand, social media facilitates the almost immediate dissemination of news; on the other, the subjectivity of the individual positions to which it gives voice often leads to output that is superficial, incomplete and accidentally or intentionally misleading.

In Italy, a rising number of politicians are seeking to increase their followers by taking to social media platforms, notably Twitter and Facebook, but also Instagram, Flickr and so on.

Meanwhile, at an international level, Twitter is facing difficulties in becoming a viable competitive platform, especially following the slowdown in the number of new users and visits to its timeline, which led to the resignation of its CEO, Dick Costolo. In spite of the recent increase in the number of characters allowed in direct messages (from 140, as in a tweet, to 10,000), which has made it possible to send short documents without having to break up the messages or opt for another platform and thereby subtract traffic

from Twitter, in spite of the trial replacement of the classic heart symbol to the more conventional star for adding a tweet to bookmarks, and, finally, in spite of the announcement of a host of new features coming this autumn, most Italians continue to use the service as a microblogging site, much as if nothing had changed since 2007, when links, photos, and multimedia were still unavailable. As Twitter is less user-friendly than other social networks, many use it as a passive news feed through which they follow a single celebrity. Essentially, many users behave almost like television viewers – in fact, it's in the hours after the evening meal that the number of tweets tends to soar. The platform continues to evolve, so it remains to be seen whether Twitter will forever remain a runner-up in the race with Facebook or whether it will fulfil the hopes of its new executives and become the largest public platform in the world.

13. The influence of social networks on parliamentary reports

Thanks to their popularity, social networks have influenced our spoken language and, therefore, also the style of parliamentary reporting. The increasing informality of language has unquestionably been influenced by the inexorable rise of a sort of communication style that is so succinct that phrases sometimes resemble slogans. The quotations favoured by politicians in their speeches have also undergone a transformation, with Latin phrases giving way to citations from **blogs** or references to Twitter **hashtags**.

The ever deeper penetration of the world of information technology through social media is generating a steady stream of **neologisms**. Contrary to previous and more nationalistic historical periods, the Italian language has nowadays become lazier at finding equivalents for new words from English, and simply adopts them as they are (e.g. *chattare*, *twittare* or *bloggare*) without even transliterating the sound of the imported term, as Spanish at least tries to. Our daily speech is peppered with foreign words adopted

for reasons of fashion, but often mispronounced or used in the wrong context. Parliamentary reports have had to tread a fine line as they adapt themselves to this changing linguistic context.

Colloquial expressions, which imbue speeches with a more colourful tone, have also been finding their way into parliamentary transcripts in increasing numbers, especially when the express aim of those using them is to create a closer bond with the people through the deliberate adoption of a more direct spoken style. Some speakers have lately begun to innovate on parliamentary norms and open their discourses by saluting the people rather than the Speaker of the Senate, as required by the Rules of Procedure, or by using the familiar “tu” rather than the formal “Lei” when addressing colleagues. Conversely, some representatives of separatist-devolutionary political movements often make pointed use of dialect expressions, which have to be included in the transcripts because to translate them would be to rob them of their intended effect.

One of the changes recently introduced into parliamentary reports regards the formulaic phrases used for certain **procedural stages** such as voting, which have been pared down and simplified on the grounds that they were outmoded, excessively elaborate and redundant compared with the more dynamic pace of Parliament.

The widespread popularity of social networks has sometimes even impinged upon the subjects debated in the Senate. Although time is usually set aside at the end of a debate for the discussion of subjects not included on the agenda, if a sensational news story has just broken, a Senator may decide to ignore the list of scheduled speakers and interrupt proceedings to talk about the hot topic of the moment. Not only do modern communications and social media bring news quickly into the debating chamber of Parliament, they are also the means by which news from Parliament leaks into the outside world. Often, all it takes is a tweet sent in the midst of a parliamentary sitting, or a stolen

snapshot of something in the debating chamber to stir up public outcry before the official source has had a chance to issue its version of events in the form of a parliamentary report. Here, the gap between the reporting of facts by an informal source and the reporting of the same in the parliamentary record could not be wider.

14. Conclusion: reappraising written language in the framework of multimedia communication

While the birth of radio and television broadcasting seemed to doom written communication to a slow but steady erosion, the internet has, paradoxically, managed to revive it by increasing its availability and audience. In the world of media communications, written texts have regained their importance. Indeed, the growth of computer-mediated communications in Italy has forced linguists to deal with the emergence of “e-Italian”, to borrow the term used by Giuseppe Antonelli in his book *L'italiano nella società delle comunicazioni* [*Italian in the communications society*].

Given that, as Mirko Tavosanis puts it in *L'italiano del Web* [*The Italian of the Web*], “from the user’s perspective, the Web is first and foremost a large body of written texts”, the internet and social media have given a new breath of life to the stenographic record, which may now be used in new ways, but they have also raised a host of questions and challenges. An increasingly common occurrence is for Web users and “spin doctors” of various types to extract passages from parliamentary transcripts for retweeting or reproduction on other social media platforms, and to refer their followers to the original documents for further details. In the aftermath of a parliamentary debate, for example, it's now common for the webpages of the main political parties to share parts of the parliamentary transcript on Facebook or to send out links to it via Twitter, so that the party’s position can be made known.

The written word is now more tractable than it once was. It can be easily transferred, shared, reworked, incorporated into a larger document or hyperlinked, so that a parliamentary transcript may now well include links to amendments, biographies of the speakers or to the session communiqué. The result has been to transform the parliamentary report into a vital form of communication open to autonomous use. The spread of the internet and social media, in addition to belying predictions that the written word would be eroded, has also disproved those who foretold of the substitution of textual transcripts of parliamentary activities with audio-video recordings. As it turns out, the formats are complementary and interconnected, but not mutually exclusive.

Just as a video recording of a sitting of Parliament cannot entirely replace the written report of the same, so **machines cannot yet replace** professional interpreters, translators, stenographers and editors. Although new technologies have ever more to offer by way of assistance to human effort, professional staff remain as indispensable as ever. A case in point is the automatic translation services of Google or Microsoft. They undoubtedly increase productivity, but only ever produce a rough working draft that then requires extensive editing work, much in the same way as parliamentary reporters need to rework their own direct transcriptions. In any case, unless we are dealing with court evidence, such as a wiretap, it's inconceivable that every single word uttered and recorded should be used in the final document, whose readability and quality depend on the choices and editing work of language professionals. To capture the thousands upon thousands of words uttered every day in Parliament, reduce them to a comprehensible textual form and thus make them available for future generations requires the mediation of the human intellect. An old Latin saying, as true today as it ever was, puts it succinctly, *verba volant, scripta manent*: the spoken word is ephemeral; the written word is permanent.

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