

ALISON DUGUID
FORMERLY UNIVERSITY OF SIENA

MY COLLEAGUE ALAN

CITATION

Duguid, A. (2024). My colleague Alan.
Journal of Corpora and Discourse Studies,
7(1): 285-287

DOI

10.18573/jcads.148

ISSUE DOI

10.18573/jcads.v7

LICENSE

© The authors. Available under the terms of the CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 license

My colleague Alan

Alison Duguid

I am glad to see this Festschrift in honour of Alan. He has had a long and distinguished career and made important contributions to our particular field of linguistics. I have known Alan since 1992 when we both were part of the CLA when I moved from Naples to Siena University. He was part of the Arezzo crew who came to meetings organised by John Morley, and later he worked in the Facoltà di Lettere in Siena where I was based. We were lucky to have a number of stimulating seminars organised by the CLA and Alan always had interesting things to say in the discussions. He always had his instant corpus analyses to hand, using *MicroConcord* at the time, and I was thus introduced to the linguistic field which was to become CADS. Later we worked together as part of funded research groups in which Siena took part and in which corpus work became a key feature (the nationally funded *NewsPool* and more importantly *Cordis*, then later on *IntUnE*, a European project) in which corpus work was applied to a number of topics and rich multi-faceted corpora were collected and the discourse analysed – from newspaper discourse to Parliamentary inquiries and television news. We loved data and noticing things with language. We used *WordSmithTools* and were introduced by Guy Aston to *Xaira*, learning about tagging and partitions and other corpus facts of life. Things were absorbing and exciting. Alan was publishing a lot: from his original *Patterns and Meanings* and his work on White House Briefings he moved on to later work on semantic prosody, metaphor and irony and more recently evaluative cohesion, he runs with a topic finding rich data and fruitful insights.

He had moved to Camerino and later to Bologna on becoming a researcher and then a professor but we still met up for the regular research meetings and for seminars and he always had clever things to say and stimulating ideas to propose and his publications were frequent and most admirable. Later I was in on the gestation of the *SiBol* project, in John Morley's Siena kitchen, where Alan's idea of MD-CADS was developed and led to much fruitful collaboration. Again, the details of data collection indicate the speed with which things change on the technology front; the *SiBol* corpus went from CDs bought directly from the broadsheets to the downloading of whole years' worth of the three broadsheets and ended up as one of the *SketchEngine* corpora. We collaborated on a symposium at a CL conference and a special issue of the *Corpora* journal which he edited, along with

other colleagues, Anna Marchi and Charlotte Taylor. Alan had worked a lot on the concepts of face and footing which interested me, in his White House briefings, and we both had an enthusiasm for the many facets of evaluation and for the work of Michael Hoey on textual interaction and lexical priming theory; our collaborations frequently took up these themes. We worked together on the CADS conferences on a number of occasions, in particular Pontignano 2016.

Alan has always been generous in lending himself to joint publications with bright young colleagues but also dedicated time to some like me who find it difficult to put ideas into coherent form. We have done a number of joint papers, also working with Charlotte Taylor on the volume *Patterns and Meanings in Discourse*. He has been very encouraging and often galvanised me by proposing publications and projects to work on. I know Alan suffered from having to edit my somewhat neurodivergent work and I have always been grateful to him for his role as co-author-cum-editor, which, alas, he says he found very frustrating. We have also done joint presentations on a number of occasions on political discourse, foreign affairs briefings, absence, delegitimization and disinformation, taboo language, forced priming and counter priming and I have always come away with something new and stimulating from our collaboration. I am immensely grateful to him for the opportunities he gave me. Thank you Alan, and well done and thank you to Anna Marchi and Charlotte Taylor who organised this volume!