

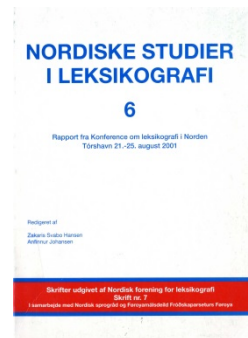
# NORDISKE STUDIER I LEKSIKOGRAFI

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GIANFRANCO CONTRI

## About a project concerning a little Faroese-Italian dictionary

The lexicographical project, of which I am going to try to illustrate some aspects, is about a little bilingual Faroese-Italian dictionary that Prof. Jørgen Stender Clausen of the Department of Linguistics at Pisa University in Italy suggested that I compile, and that I carry out working at the Føroyamálsdeild, the Department of Faroese Language and Literature in Tórshavn in the Faroe Islands.

When I started this work, whilst staying for some months in the Faroes in 1995, I wondered about the possible characteristics of such a job; I am a graduate in History and apart from a little Italian-Faroese phrase-booklet, which I edited in 1984,<sup>1</sup> I had no – and still have little – experience of lexicographical research.

In history, the points of contact between Italy and the Faroe Islands have been very limited, although mutual literature translation work has been done in both directions: from the Faroes to Italy with the translations of works by Jørgen-Frantz Jacobsen, Heðin Brú, William Heinesen and poetries by Christian Matras and Arnbjørn Danielsen, and from Italy to the Faroes with the translation into Faroese of works by Boccaccio, Dario Fo, Carlo Collodi (*Pinocchio*!), Ignazio Silone, Stefano Benni and poetries by Francis of Assisi and Salvatore Quasimodo.

The project started by concentrating on trying to develop and structure a little Faroese-Italian dictionary of about 10.000 words, mainly for visitors from Italy to the islands but also for Faroese travelling to Italy. I couldn't for the time being think about a larger project, but a little, practical tool could, in my opinion and hopes, help a "curious" visitor to get to know and appreciate a bit more of the other's country. So, since the beginning, I have tried to keep this sort of possible user/reader in my mind, and have become more and more aware of the fact that the project involved both linguistic as well as technical/graphical skills, in order to make a small but useful tool.

I will try to explain some of the main guidelines which together with my indispensable consultants and collaborators Jógvan í Lon Jacobsen, Eyðun Rannváarson Jensen, Óli Mortensen and Andreas Sanesi, I have tried to follow in the the project. Since 1997, during a stay in the islands and then daily over the past two years, I have also been using a lexicographical computer program named "RiSt", developed by Heini Justinussen, Petur Zachariassen and Martin Zachariassen at Fróðskaparsetur Føroya, the University of the Faroe Islands. This has been of the greatest help, after having started using paper index-cards and then normal word-processing computer programs.

In choosing the headwords, I have made reference to many texts and lexicographical works. The first of these, which I have used as the starting point of the work, is the children's Faroese-Faroese dictionary *Orðaskyn* by Ingrid Sondum and others<sup>2</sup>, in which most words contained are taken from various works by Jeffrey Henriksen and the text books *Lesibók*. To

them as sources I have added other books and lists of words, included the Italian-Faroese phrase-booklet mentioned before, and regularly tried to add words seen or heard in the daily life and work. I would also like to point out that, particularly since its publication in 1998 but even before thanks to the kindness of the editors, I have made daily, systematic and essential reference to the *Føroysk orðabók*,<sup>3</sup> the new monolingual Faroese dictionary of the mother language.

Getting down to the practical side of the work, I would like to say that the heart of this project is how to try to deal with some of the aspects posed by a (little) lexicographical work between languages, Faroese and Italian, that:

- 1) though belonging to the same Indo-European family have some quite different structural features (for example cases inflectional system and substantives in the definite forms in Faroese);
- 2) have an everyday common vocabulary very different from each others (because of course everyday life in the Faroes presents a quite different reality from the one in Italy, and I would dare to say not only Italy but also compared to many other countries, even the Nordic/Scandinavian ones).

Here, with the help of a few examples, I shall show you some of the ways which have been adopted in the effort to tackle some of these aspects:

- In the dictionary a rather extensive use of cross-references is made, which point from the inflected forms to the main entry, in order to help the reader to find the way to the meanings more easily. This happens mainly for the most common nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns and indefinite articles, but also for some substantives in the definite form. For example:

**báttin > bátur**

**báturin > bátur**

**dag > dagur**

**daga > dagur**

**dagar > dagur**

**dags > dagur**

**degi > dagur**

**døgum > dagur**

**kalt > kaldur**

**køld > kaldur**

**sagdur > siga**

**sagt > siga**

**segði > siga**

**sigur > siga**

**søgdu > siga**

**veðrið > veður 1**

- In the entries the inflected forms are written in full, and not only with the endings as is often made by conventions in many dictionaries. The reason is that it is rather difficult for an Italian to separate exactly the different parts of a Faroese word between the stem and the ending, particularly in compound words, although this can make a printed – paperwork a bit bulky and maybe graphically heavy. As instances:

**bátur** *sm* (báts bátar) barca, battello,

imbarcazione *bátarnar/bátarnir* le barche

*fara í bátin* andare in barca *vera í bátinum*

essere in barca *báturin/bátin* la barca *báturin*

*hjá mær* la mia barca *báturin hjá ...* la barca di

...; *parte di par comp* > **bjargingarbátur,**

**fiskibátur, kavbátur, motorbátur,**

**postbátur, róðrarbátur, seglbátur**

**orðabók** *sf* (orðabókar orðabøkur) dizionario,

vocabolario *føroysk-donsk o. dizionario*

faroese-danese *hyggja í orðabókina* guardare

nel/sul vocabolario *eg leiti eftir tí í orðabókini*

lo cerco sul vocabolario

- Some entries are a combination of linguistic and encyclopedical information. This happens in the case of words that have no equivalent in the other language, and especially for the “very Faroese words”, i.e. words of great importance, great familiarity and daily use in the Faroes, but with such a strong “Faroeseity” to require further explanations for a foreigner. Here some examples:

**fjallgonga** *sf* (fjallgongu fjallgongur) **1**

operazione stagionale di raduno degli ovini dai pascoli allo stazzo (*eseguita congiuntamente dai proprietari degli animali*)  
*anche > fjall 0.2 cfr > várgonga, heystfjall*

**2** gregge *anche > seyðagonga*

*fjallgongan kom í rætt* il gregge entrò nello stazzo *fjallgongan spjaddist* il gregge si sparpagliò

**hjallur** *sm* (hjals hjallar) capanno/deposito del

cibo (*dove viene appeso il pesce e la carne a frollare, stagionare o seccare, costruito con pareti in tavole di legno non combacianti che permettono all'aria di penetrare e circolare al suo interno*) *í hjallinum hongur ræstur fiskur og skerpikjöt* nel capanno del cibo sono appesi pesci frollati e carne ovina stagionata

**kvæði** *sn* (kvæðis kvæði(r)) **1** ballata popolare

faroese (*di origine medievale, che si danza collettivamente in tondo tenendosi per mano; simile probabilmente alla 'caròla' italiana descritta da Boccaccio nel Decameron, 1 giornata: "a carolar cominciarono"; cfr > táttur, vísa*) *skipa eitt k.* iniziare e condurre una ballata popolare **2** poesia, poema

**ólavsøka** *sf* (ólavsøku ólavsøkur) **1** festa di

Sant'Olav (29 luglio, dedicata alla memoria di Olav Haraldsson, re di Norvegia morto nella battaglia di Stiklestad il 29 luglio 1030) **2** festa nazionale delle Føroyar (28 e 29 luglio, durante la quale si tiene anche la cerimonia ufficiale di apertura del > **Logting**, il parlamento faroeso) *á ólavsøku* per (la festa di) Sant'Olav *góða ólavsøku!* buona festa di Sant'Olav!

**skerpikjöt** *sn senza pl* (skerpikjòts) carne ovina

stagionata all'aria (*comun. nel > hjallur, cfr ræst/turt k. > kjöt*)

**tjaldur** *sn* (tjaldurs tjøldur) (omit.) beccaccia di

mare, ostrichiere (Haematopus ostralegus; *uccello nazionale faroeso > grækarismessa, tjaldursdagur*) *tjaldrið er tjóðfuglur okkara* la beccaccia di mare è il nostro uccello nazionale *tjaldrið verpur oftast trý egg* la beccaccia di mare depone spesso tre uova

In this little work is often evident a certain pedagogical approach whose aim is also to introduce, in the most possible “friendly” way on a printed paper dictionary, an Italian speaker to the diversity of the structure of Faroese, so that, in my hopes, she/he will not get too scared of or frustrated by the differences, and get therefore closer to the beauty and charm of this language.

<sup>1</sup> Contri G. (a cura di), 1984, *Frasario italiano-faroese*, con trascrizione e istruzioni per la pronuncia di Andreas Sanesi, Tórshavn.

<sup>2</sup> Sondum I., Danielsen P.M., Nattestad N., Dalsgarð D., 1994, *Orðaskyn – Mín fyrsta orðabók*, Føroya Skúlabókagrunnur, Tórshavn.

<sup>3</sup> Poulsen, J.H.W., Simonsen M., Jacobsen, J. í L., Johansen A., Hansen Z. S., 1998, *Føroysk orðabók*, Føroya Fróðskaparfelag, Tórshavn.

