

Alexander Gill's *Logonomia Anglica*

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RESUMEN: In this paper I attempt to draw as accurately as possible the picture of the cultural environment wherein Alexander Gill's main work, the outstanding *Logonomia Anglica*, published in London in 1619, was written. In effect, it is in the Renaissance scholarly context where most relevant Humanistic work has grown in England as well as in Western European nations. Grammatical theories at that time were indebted both to classical language learning tradition and to the new learning of national vernacular tongues. This complex framework is the climate that sees the publication of Gill's grammar. Subsequently I approach the study of the original publication in a facsimile edition of Stockholm. I discuss some grammatical paradigms of the verb and the contribution he made to the study of English language in his time.

RESUMEN: Mi propósito en este artículo es hacer una evaluación aquilatada del trasfondo cultural en el que fue escrita y publicada en Londres en 1619 la obra principal de Alexander Gill, la sobresaliente *Logonomia Anglica*. En efecto, es el contexto intelectual renacentista el que ha promovido obras relevantes del Humanismo en Inglaterra además de en otras naciones europeas. Las teorías gramaticales de la época eran deudoras tanto de los saberes clásicos en materia de lenguas como del nuevo enfoque dado al aprendizaje de lenguas vernáculas. Este marco complejo es el clima testigo de la publicación de la gramática de Gill. Más adelante abordo el estudio de la publicación original facsimilada de Estocolmo. Trato algunos paradigmas del verbo y la contribución que el autor ha hecho al estudio del inglés en su época.



1. INTRODUCTION

With the new emphasis now laid on classical learning in the Renaissance years grammatical studies gathered uncommon strength in the 16th century and were further developed well into the 17th century. Otto Funke has pointed out some of the background factors that contributed to this phenomenon:

Drei Motive sind es im besonderen, welche hiefür die treibenden Kräfte bedeuten: das *künstlerisch-formale*, das *kulturell-wertende und erzieherische*; schliesslich das *nationale* Moment. Italien geht voran; seine Humanisten wollen der lateinischen Sprache jene Formvollendung und Eleganz wiedergewinnen, in die sie die klassisch-römische Zeit gekleidet hatte.¹

Those forces are to some extent explicitly stated in some of the major Humanistic works of those centuries. Laurentius Valla, for instance, in the Preface of his well known treaty *De latinae linguae elegantia* (1440) proudly argued that the Romans “our forbearers” had extended their language, the source of all knowledge, through the world:

“Haec (lingua Latina) enim gentes illas populosque omnes, omnibus artibus, quae liberales vocantur, instituit haec optimas leges edocuit. Haec viam ad omnem sapientiam munivit”.

He went even further in his praise of Latin when he noted that if the various nations showed determination in getting rid of the Roman political yoke, they remained faithful, nonetheless, to the use of Latin. He then invokes the old Roman tradition to be restored with all its blooming force, which was admittedly supported by the momentous upsurge of political, national and aesthetic values.

Other prominent contributors came to the fore in this blurred panorama, like Guarino, Perotus and Sulpitius Verulanus. Language became worth studying since it was “*origo et fons omnium liberarum artium*”. Indeed all new humanistic writings were expressed in Latin, and what is more, Latin was imposed as the spoken expression in most university colleges while the students had Latin grammar as one of the main subjects, if not the most relevant, in their studies.² At the time, prominent English scholars like Colet, Grocyn, Lily or Linacre had spent some time in Italy (especially in Rome, Florence, Venice and Bologna).

¹ Otto Funke, *Die Frühzeit der Englischen Grammatik*, Verlag Herbert Lang & Cie. Bern 1941, p. 13.

² In the language teaching tradition one method was frequent, the *Dialogues* or *Colloquia* that stress the spoken mode of language and which had its origins already in medieval Alexandria. Two well known ones for the study of Latin in the Renaissance were *Colloquia familiaria* (1534) by D. Erasmus imitated by J.L. Vives in *Exercitatio linguae latinae* (1538), both designed for instructing young learners in Latin. According to Breva Claramonte “students were taught to speak, read, and write the Latin used by the classical authors. Emphasis was laid on the selection of vocabulary and variety of expression” in his essay “Vives: Exercitatio linguae latinae” in Hans Aarsleff et al. (eds), *Papers in the History of Linguistics*, Vol 38, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1987, pp 167-177.

However, the mentioned invocation of the “sources” became a fundamental call that moved the scholars towards an appreciation of the Greek language³ that was now seen in a new light. The beginnings of the new era known as Renaissance⁴ hark back to the last part of the previous century when classical scholars experienced the inspiring influence of the Greek who had fled the Turks’ domination. The settlement of many scholars in the context of a Greek culture and their disciples based in Italy after the fall of Constantinople made a remarkable impact in the scholarly new learning. Aldus Manutius was a well known scholar who brought Greek to the attention of the humanists. Grocyn introduced Greek studies in Oxford well before the end of the 15th century.⁵

Scaliger’s work *De causis linguae latinae* which appeared in 1540 meant quite a landmark in the grammatical tradition, as it abandoned the common late medieval approach based on dialectics of Modistic grammar⁶ and the normative view of many medieval Latin grammarians. The essential notion handled by this grammar was the “ground” or “motivation” for language use.⁷

³ According to W. K. Percival’s “Renaissance Linguistics: the old and the new” in Th. Bynon and F.R. Palmer (eds) *Studies in the History of Western Linguistics*. Cambridge: CUP, 1986, p. 59, some Italian humanist scholars invited M. Chrysoloras to teach Greek in Florence in the last decade of the 14th century. Then other scholars went to Constantinople to learn how to speak Greek. One of them, Guarino Veronese taught Greek in a number of Italian cities in the early Quattrocento while the major classic authors (Aesop, Homer, Xenophon) were translated into Latin during that century. But, as Percival notes, this dedication to Greek was not important enough to unsettle the pride of place Latin had and continued to have during those centuries: “Renaissance humanism should not be equated, as it sometimes still is, with the discovery of Greek language and literature”.

⁴ For a discussion of Renaissance in general see W. K. Ferguson’s *The Renaissance in historical thought. Five centuries of interpretation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948 Ever since the appearance in 1860 of J. Burckhard’s *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* The Renaissance has been considered a complex and thorny phenomenon to be tackled, its significance largely depending on the country, the period and the field of knowledge involved. A not lesser problem connected with this is the concept of *humanism*.

⁵ Padley highlights the event of the Greek scholars’ exile as perhaps the most decisive for the initiation of a new cultural trend in Western Europe. See more details in G.A. Padley’s *Grammatical Theory in Western Europe, 1500-1700*. Cambridge U.P. 1976

⁶ Modistic grammar, supporting the views of Duns Scotus, was mainly rooted in France and Germany, and now scornfully viewed by humanists. The critique levelled by new trended philosophers supporting W. Ockham at the Modistic “modes of meaning” was a great turn in European thought.

⁷ Scaliger in *De causis* establishes word-classes that are borrowed from Aristotle’s logic, copying his classificatory system of phenomena and applying it to language: genera, species, differentiae and accidentia. In fact his criteria for description were semasiological hierarchy: “grammatica est de signis rerum”, an approach which was also assumed by D.Thrax’s grammar.

As F. Caspari points out, as many as four periods are to be distinguished in the history of Humanism in England: first, a timid early start in the 15th century; second, the return from Italy of some notable scholars at the turn of the century spanning to the 1530; third, the period of separation from Rome followed by secularization of learning; and finally, the Elizabethan era when Latin was accepted as the educated language of the emergent ruling class of the country gentry. So contrary to the Italian humanists that were laymen opposed to scholastic thought, the early English humanists still depended on the old scholastic theological tradition, since they were mostly churchmen. Weiss points out that the chief humanist scholars, Grocyn, Colet, Linacre or More showed "solid scholastic foundations" which they shared with quite a few continental counterparts.

One remarkable consequence of the emergence of a ruling middle class was the practical, superficial use they made of scholarly learning: the cult of rhetoric and the study of aesthetic exegesis and commentaries of texts, the practical training of good speakers and the administrative class. In this connection it may be worth noting that some authors stress the role played by the emerging commercial relations in Europe in the evolution of the vernacular languages whereto we shall turn below.⁸ It also merits some further comments the creation of Banks, a business in Arab and Jewish hands during the Middle Ages⁹, and now flourishing mainly in Italy, Germany, France and The Netherlands.¹⁰

⁸ S. Martin Gamero in her well documented work, *La enseñanza del inglés en España*, Gredos, 1961, underlines the importance of the numerous multilanguage handbooks stressing the practical spoken aspect of language (like *Vocabulaire* (1530) and *Colloquia* (1616), for instance, which were direct heirs to the Latin *Colloquia* (cf Erasmus' example in note 2 above) and which ran through several editions, most of them printed in Antwerps) for the study of foreign languages in the 16th century. According to J. Underhill in his *Spanish Literature in the England of the Tudors*, Columbia U. Press, 1899, p.58, the Spanish merchants in England felt almost at home: "The Spanish merchants were directly favoured by the crown, instead of being utterly dependent on the intercession of their Ambassador; they were honoured, now and then, by friendly intercourse with the well disposed among the aristocracy". After Philip II's marriage the number of Spaniards living in London increased considerably. Underhill (Ibid, p.62) quotes a passage from the *Chronical of Queen Mary* where the amount goes up to over 12.000 (in a London population well under 100.000), many of whom would leave England after Elizabeth's taking over in the English throne.

⁹ This fact is mentioned in a recent PhD thesis by Maria del Mar Viña, *La enseñanza de las Lenguas Vivas en España*, Santiago de Compostela, 2000, p. 38 ff.

¹⁰ The German bankers, Raymond and Anton Fuggers (known in Spain as Fúcar), had their capital invested with Charles of Ghent, and financed his election as Emperor. As a result, many Flemish middle class merchants fled to Spain for business. They left conspicuous traces in Almagro near Almadén, exploited for silver, a blooming town during the 16th century.

2. THE NATIONAL VERNACULAR LANGUAGES

The development of national vernacular grammars was a step forward towards the fading away of the previous hegemony of Latin. As Migliorini noted, vehement scholarly debates took place in Italy concerning the choice of an appropriate vernacular language to be used as the literary means of expression.¹¹ The one imposed by scholars proved artificial and not too convincing. Vernacular grammarians in France and Spain had things easier due to the imposing force of strong central governments. In sum, the struggle for standardization was the challenge vernacular grammarians had to fight, one important issue being the reform of the spelling.¹²

In that context and as a consequence of the new social order, natural sciences start to develop supported by a Neo-Platonic view of natural phenomena together with Aristotle's *Politics* and *Ethics*.

The counterpart in language was the adoption of mentalistic rather than formal, logical criteria to judge the traditional parts of speech. This meant an emphasis on grammatical meaning following Aristotle in the *De Interpretatione*, who defined words mentalistically as "symbols or signs of affections or impressions of the soul". This attitude was taking shape while some national languages were gaining ground in the appreciation of educated speakers. A new nationalistic feeling was shaping and worked remarkably well in the production of literary works. The French *La Pléyade* left a special national hallmark of the French which was soon the model to be imitated in the whole Europe. Pierre de la Ramée (Petrus Ramus) lent support to the liberal arts (*Scholae in liberales artes* (1559)), in an attempt to encourage grammar and rhetoric at schools, defending a Platonic vision of practical dialectics while attacking Aristotle's logical philosophy.¹³ His *Grammaire* written in French was aimed at defending the vernacular and establish rules based on observation rather than rooted on a supposed

¹¹ B. Migliorini, "La questione della lingua" U. Bosco et al (eds) *Questioni e correnti di storia letteraria*. Milano: Carlo Marzorati, 1949, pp 1-75 It is worthy of note that in Spain there appeared an early *Vocabulario castellano* at the end of the 15th century "con la mira de corregir el vulgarismo y la prevaricacion de la lengua castellana" in F. Huarte, "Un vocabulario castellano del siglo XV". *Revista de Filología española*, 35, 1951, pp 310-340

¹² A. de Nebrija. The work where this problem is typically treated by this outstanding Spanish grammarian is: *De vi ac potestate litterarum deque illarum falsa prolatione*. Salamanca, 1503. Besides the famous *Gramática Castellana* of 1492, Nebrija also published relevant lexicographical works like *Vocabularium Antonii Nebrissensis* in 1506 among other of similar kind, as it was noted by the Hispanist H.J. Niderehe in "La lexicografía española desde los principios hasta el año 1599" Hans Aarsleff et al. (ed): *Papers in the History of Linguistics*. Vol 38, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1987, pp 157-166

¹³ In special his *Aristotelicae animadverstones*, 1543 and his well known first work in French of the kind: *Dialectique*, 1555

universal Latin system, although a earlier Latin copy circulated at the same time. In a way the Humanists reacted though timidly against medieval logic as opposed to vernacular grammars which attempted in principle to impose their own logic.¹⁴ Ramus's treatment of grammatical concepts was based to some extent on the observation of facts that led to inductive, empirical rules and it was to be imitated by Ben Jonson in the next century. Moreover, Ramus stubbornly insisted that the objective of linguistic analysis should be the examination of the very material actually used by speakers. Horatio's fundamental question, "*utrum lingua an loquentes?*" became a then current, real dilemma to be solved. However, his whole system of logic reminds us of Aristotle's treatise on Logic and only in a few aspects did he succeed in getting rid of the Greek's influential ideas.¹⁵

That Ramus represented a break with the tradition is a fact that has been often underlined. O. Funke has pointed out that Ramus had an influence on some early English grammarians¹⁶ in the description of formal categories, although it was in some Protestant places where it found wide circulation.¹⁷

In the same line within this general Humanistic frame one can place *Minerva* (1587) by Sánchez de las Brozas (El Brocense). He was no doubt considered an innovator and his cited major work highlights the need to cultivate the vernacular language as a means of expression when learning an already decayed language, Latin.¹⁸ The academic use of vulgar

¹⁴ In England some works of this type were published in mid 16th century, like *Rule of Reason* (1551) by Thomas Wilson.

¹⁵ Ramus argued that grammar should be divided into two dialectic parts, *etymology* and *syntax*. He was inclined to use formal categories based on morphology, thus paying little attention to syntax, which in fact he neglected. This was a departure from the more attractive view of grammatical categories like Scaliger's, which were psychologically inspired.

¹⁶ O. Funke, "William Bullockers, *Bref Grammar for English* (1586). Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der frühneuenglischen Grammatik", *Anglia*, LXII, London 1938 pp 116-37. Some years later there appeared other English grammars inspired in Ramus' sources, namely Paul Gr(e)aves' *Grammatica Anglicana*, (1594), where surprisingly we find a subtitle on the first page: "ad unicum P. Rami methodum concinnata" This surely adscribes it to an admitted direct influence of P. Ramus on Cambridge grammarians, and not only in Scotland (St Andrews).

¹⁷ As Padley suggests, Ramus' ideas "found fertile ground in Scotland and at Puritan Cambridge. In Scotland they were spread through the influence of the regent, the Earl of Murray, who had been a pupil of Ramus, became established at the University of St. Andrews". It seems that an early English version of Ramus' *Dialectica* (London 1574) was determinant for his long lasting influence of over one century in England cf. G.A. Padley, *Grammatical theory in Western Europe 1500-1700*, Cambridge U.P 1976

¹⁸ In the subtitle of *Minerva* there is a reminder of Scaliger's psychological method, "de causis linguae latinae" and, although he claims no originality, he considers himself an unconditional supporter of Nebrija's ideas and a challenger of old Scholastic principles, cf. Constantino

languages, like Spanish, was apparently a matter of discussion in Salamanca University as the meta-language for teaching grammar. El Brocense totally backed up the rationalist creed (*humana ratio*) as the key to explaining philosophical phenomena at large, and no less so language itself. His much quoted statements in favour of the fundamental role played by reason (*ratio*) have been interpreted by his critics as a forerunning programme which inspired the ensuing famous French work, Port-Royal's *La grammaire général et raisonnée* (1660).

Before Renaissance times the prospects of a grammatical study of English language in most leading schools and Universities was rather pessimistic. Works like Lily's *A Shorte Introduction of Grammar*, published in 1567, was intended, in spite of the misleading title, for learning Latin¹⁹. Latin rules were simply aped and worded in English, with a total, subservient dependence on the classical language, which had no less a status and privilege of scholar consideration than a universal language.²⁰

Faced with this cultural climate, The English Renaissance authors characteristically adopted one of the two positions: either to complain about the state of abandonment and poverty of the native language or to make bold attempts to enrich it.²¹ In any case some of them were very concerned with the scarce attention shown so far for English on the part both of authorities and scholars. The blame was laid variously on authorities, scholars themselves or on the lack of rules of the language itself in matters of grammar, spelling and pronunciation.

As a result of some voices raised on the national language issue, things started to change in the third quarter of the 16th century.²² Similar

García, *Contribución a la historia de los conceptos gramaticales: la aportación del Brocense*, Madrid 1960.

¹⁹ The long subtitle of this remarkable work runs as follows: "ad omnium puerorum utilitatem praescripta, quam solam Regia Maiestas in omnibus Scholis profitendam praecepit".

²⁰ O. Funke commented on this: "Es darf hierbei wohl darauf hingewiesen werden, dass durch diese Methode auch zugleich das muttersprachliche Englisch eine grammatische Pflege erfährt, wengleich es vom Latein her betrachtet wird" (*Die Frühzeit*....1941, p.15)

²¹ Flora R. Amos points out that Caxton, the well known 15th century translator, "expresses concern only for his own language", as it is to be judged by English readers without regard for the qualities of French. He actually confessed himself unlearned in "the art of rhetoric" and requested to use "old and homely terms". In her work *Early Theories of Translation*. New York: Columbia U. Press, 1920, p.38

²² According to E. Vorlat in her *The Development of English Grammatical Theory (1586-1737)*, Leuven: Leuven U. Press, 1975, p.5, three statements can be traced in the evolving of a national appreciation of English: "In 1582 Mulcaster declares that is at the highest level of perfection; in 1583 Sidney, looking across the border, judges that it can compare with 'any in the world', meaning the modern languages; and in 1598 Chapman 'assigns English a higher place than the other modern languages'. For the data she is indebted to J.L. Moore's *Tudor-Stuart Views on Growth, Status and Destiny of the English Language*. Halle. a S., 1910.

extolling statements do appear thenceforth in many grammars of English, well aware as the ages of the Tudors and the Stuarts were of the role played by the native language in the shaping of the national pride.

3. THE 16TH CENTURY LATIN GRAMMARS IN ENGLAND

Alongside the influence, as we suggested above, of the cited foreign humanist grammarians and scholars, Latin grammars written by Englishmen have also exercised an enormous influence upon English. The most outstanding in the Renaissance period were two, namely William Lily's *A Shorte Introduction of Grammar-Brevissima Institutio* a school text book first published in 1548²³ and used in English schools until the 17th century, and then Thomas Linacre's *Rudimenta Grammatices* (about 1556). The former is cited first because it was outstanding already in popularity when it came to be published under Lily's name²⁴. In fact it was in circulation a long time before that date, as a result of the collective efforts of authors connected to St. Paul's school, like Colet and Lily among others. With the name of Eton Latin Grammar since 1510 it was the only one authorized by royal decree of Henry VIII. Linacre's work in turn was also the outcome of serious efforts of previous years of teaching when he had published for St. Paul's school minor works like *Progymnasmata* dating back to about 1525.

They have in common a pedagogic goal in mind. To these two some popular works about Latin can be added. They were written by the French Petrus Ramus²⁵ and enjoyed wide circulation in England. Some later English grammarians like Gill, Butler and Greaves attempted to imitate Ramus' principles and make them fit the English language but they largely failed to do so, as both languages were obviously found to differ structurally in various fundamental aspects. Moreover, the philosophical character of Ramus' approach apparently proved to be too unpractical and

²³ Other authors give later first versions, like Funke (1941), who gives a first edition of 1567. This date has been modified today to an earlier date, when *A Short Introduction* was just a brief version that was increasingly much improved by several later hands.

²⁴ In the anonymous work *Reflections upon Learning*, published in 1700. (rpt Scholar Press, Menston, England, 1970) it is suggested that "under the name of Mr. Lily was done by some of the most considerable men of the Age (...) the most Rational part, the Syntax, was writ or corrected by Erasmus, and the other parts by other hands: so that tho' Mr. Lily now bears the name, which while living, he always modestly refus'd, yet it was carri'd on by the joynt endeavours of several Learned men, and he had not the largest share in the work" (pp.19-20)

²⁵ The well known works by Petrus Ramus at the time were: *Grammatica* (1572) *Scholae Liberales Artes* (1578) and *Rudimenta grammaticae* (1578). The interesting issue raised in *Scholae* was the vernacular appreciation of language as an inherently formal system and its application to a Latin grammar with strict rigor not based in logic and philosophy.

unpedagogical and thus worthless to be followed.²⁶ So Ramus' influence was apparently confined mainly to small circles, particularly of St Andrews colleges in Fife, eastern Scotland²⁷.

The English grammarians in the Rameian tradition were squarely faced with the invariable character of the English noun system. Both Linacre and Lily are well aware of this inconvenience and try to explain it the best way they can:

Linacre notes: "Accidunt inclinabilibus omnibus, numerus et persona. Nomini autem, pronomini et participio, praetereo casus et genera. Verbo et participio etiam tempus. Uni verbo modus". (A-Ir) But we will turn to the verb system and its sources further below. Lily in turn simply states in the English version: "In Speache be these eight partes followinge: nounce, pronoune, verbe, participle, declined. Adverbe, coniunction, preposition, interiection, undeclined". (A-Vr) Petrus Ramus reacts against the prevalent classical tradition and utterly rejects the distinction made between *flexibiles* and *inflexibiles* (i.e. between variable and invariable words) as they "non satis explicantur" as he put it. For him it is number the only true variation:

"Vox est numeri aut sine numero: numeri, quae adsignificat numerum: & quidem singularem aut pluralem, unde numeri singularis aut pluralis appellatur...Vox numeri est nomen aut verbum...Vox sine numero est Adverbium aut Coniunctio."²⁸

Of course his English followers draw their attention to this remark. Their imitators in the next hundred years also reflect the Latin based classification of eight or nine word classes. As a matter of fact, Gill actually makes a combination of Greek tradition (Dionysius Thrax) and Latin tradition (Petrus Ramus). But we shall come back to this below.

One major problem they had to tackled when they faced a Latin based grammar was the "article" issue, since there was a blatant non structural equivalence there. Lily, for instance, solved this in a bold, witty manner: he called the article definite *the* (and by extension indefinite *a*) "articles borrowed of the Pronoune" (A,Vv) and treat them as translation of

²⁶ However, Hume found in his *Grammatica Nova* that he is the only Latin grammarian to be trusted: "solus Ramus restabat, cuius method in multas apud nos scholas penetraverat. Itaque grammaticam quoque eius, & scholam sedulo pervolvi".

²⁷ May we add a brief note to comment that St. Andrew's University had a Papal foundation (by Benedict XIII, the Spanish Pedro Martinez Luna from Aragon, known as El Papa Luna, as the emblematic half moon in the University shield shows) in the 15th century as a religious stronghold against opposing political forces to Papal authority.

²⁸ Petrus Ramus, *Rudimenta Grammaticae*. Ex *P. Rami Professoris Regii postrema Grammatica, breviter collecta*. Parisiis, 1578 p. 75. Ramus remarks the variation of vulgar languages with respect to Latin and notes cases when morphological changes take place in words and when this does not happen.

hic-haec-hoc. Gill's solution to parts of speech (Vocum species) reflect a Greek Thraxian tradition: "Partes orationis sunt tres: Nomen, Verbum, quorum est numerus singularis et pluralis, et Consignificativa dictio, ubi sunt Articuli, Adverbia, Praepositiones"²⁹ The clear Aristotelian division of *kategoremata* substance (nouns and verbs) and *syndesmoi* accidents (co-significants) is reflected here.³⁰ Gills was, incidentally, interested in the contrast of English with other languages where differences are seen against a background of a grammar which reveals its common main core and then has superficial variations.³¹ For instance, after explaining the universally valid, traditional frame of categories, he goes on to give a host of concrete exceptions to the rules of singular and plural formation.

4. THE 16TH CENTURY ENGLISH GRAMMARS

Alexander Gill had notable forerunners. One such was William Bullokar who was portrayed by Funke as a humanist proud of his mother tongue, and as someone who dedicated all his life to the English language. The background against which Bullokar should be judged is described briefly by O. Funke:

Was die Schulen betrifft, so sehen wir freilich in England die Pflege der Muttersprache noch sehr im Hintergrunde, was vielfach zu Klagen Anlass gibt, aber wir dürfen nicht übersehen, dass der Unterricht im Latein zugleich auch den Anfang grammatischer Schulung im Englischen bedeutet (vgl. Die Magdalen College Group), dass Leteinbuecher (wie Colet-Lily's Grammatik) in englischer Sprache geschrieben waren, und auch die englischen Interpretamenta zu den lat. Paradigmen ein, wenn auch latinisiertes, Geruest der heimischen Grammatik darstellten.³²

William Bullokar's training was in agriculture and law, then he served in the royal army for Queen Mary and later in life he became a tutor

²⁹ A. Gill, *Logonomia Anglica*, p.30

³⁰ Plato was actually the source of this tradition which lies at the base of the subsequent mentalist approaches inspired in the semantic criteria of grammatical categories proposed by Dionysius Thrax: "...that which denotes action we call *rema*, the articulate sign set on those who do the actions we call *onoma*" quoted in J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship*, 3 Vols. Cambridge U. Press 1906-8, Vol 1, p.90

³¹ He illustrates English *the* with this: "De utrisque numeris adiungitur & respondet articulo Teutonico *der, die, das*, nisi quod inflectionem non admittit. Reliquae nominum species his articulis destituuntur, nisi quatenus docetur in syntaxi". *Logonomia Anglica*, p.30

³² O. Funke, *Die Fruezeit der Englischen Grammatik*, Verlag Herbert Lang & Cie., Bern 1941, p. 20

in London. With his *Booke at Large* (1580) he made an attempt to reform the seemingly chaotic English spelling.³³

His main work, though, his *Bref Grammar for English*³⁴ (1586) set a first example to be followed by the rest of the Humanist scholars of the time, if they only had enough pride for their native language. So admittedly he modestly paved the way to further work on English grammatical categories.³⁵ He even mentions the idea of writing a dictionary, which sounded coherent with his analytical views of English.³⁶

The explicit pedagogic aim it pursues is primarily to teach grammar to native speakers³⁷, especially young children at school, and then to serve as a guide for foreigners who wish to improve their scant knowledge of English. This aim is of course wishful thinking, as it were, since clearly the sketchy work does not match the ambitious goal. As E. Vorlat aptly points out:

It is a rather poor grammar, awkwardly composed, with repetitions and omissions and many inaccuracies. However, it should be borne in mind that, in England, this is the first step toward grammar writing and that Bullokar had no other example but a far from ideal Latin work.³⁸

³³ The Czech scholar Ivan Poldauf in his valuable work, *On the History of some Problems of English Grammar before 1800*, Prague: Charles U. Press, 1948, notes that "Bullokar, who had few pretensions except that of originality, dared to do so (venture upon the untrodden field of English grammar" (in contrast with Mulcaster's unpretentious toeing the line drawn by Ramus). However, he imitates Lily's grammar in his classification of the parts of speech, which barely fit the English own system. For instance the *of* + noun group was the genitive case of the noun expressed by sign instead by termination. Also genitive are the possessive modifiers *my*, *your*, *his*. He does not follow Lily in introducing the *potential* as a mood different from the *optative* and the *subjunctive*.

³⁴ The only known copy of the original is kept in the Bodleian Library. According to Poldauf it is an abbreviation of a *Grammar at Large*. In fact, we can read these lines at the Preface: "A Twin this volume is that hath/ A fellow of more fame". One wonders what may have happened to that great first treatise of English.

³⁵ We read in the title page of *Bref Grammar*: "to no small commodity of the English Nation not only to come to easy, speedy and ready entrance into the secrets of other languages".

³⁶ The first English dictionary was to be written by Robert Cawdrey some years later in 1604

³⁷ W. Bullokar has been praised for his keen interest and nationalistic feeling for his native tongue. Funke makes the following remarks indirectly quoting some of the original words concerning this point: "Er will seiner Muttersprache *den ihr gebuehrenden Rang* sichern, er betont *ihre voellig ebenbuertige Stellung* gegenueber andern Idiomen und besonders gegenueber dem Latein, ja er gibt ihr in gewissem Ausmass sogar den Vorzug". It follows from this that Bullokar was concerned with mainly two issues which are connected, namely, the identity and independence of English own features and the place it should hold in the ranking map of the rest of the modern and ancient languages.

³⁸ E. Vorlat, *The Development of English Grammatical Theory*. Leuven: Leuven U. Press, 1975 p.12

One further notable description of English comes from the work of a Frenchman, Jacques Bellot, who published in 1580 the bilingual manual of instruction *Le Maistre d'Escole Anglois or The English Scholemaister*. It is of great value since it displays a parallel translation in opposite columns. Bellot's source is no other than the well known, official handbook for all learners of English which came to be known as *Lily's grammar*, which I have already mentioned above.

A further work on English grammar, also written in Latin, is *Grammatica Anglicana*³⁹ (1594) by Paul Greaves, an almost totally unknown author who seemed to have been a Cambridge scholar. As is traditional among Humanists, he states his aims and motivation for writing in the *Preface*: he is also eager to see English considered a language worthy of study at the same level as other languages spoken by European nations. The comparison invites the quotation:

At Gallis, Italis, Germanis, Hispanis, caeterisque gentibus, quibus natura non tam aequa arrisit, ne tantillum quidem de nostro iure concedendum puto. Si Gallus verborum facilitatem et mimicam prolationis elegantiam requirat.....si Italus suam in verbis gravitatem, et modestiam iactet....Si Germanus vim verborum et vehementiam objiciat, quid quaeso non persuadeat Anglus, cuius singula verba tot fere argumenta. Quid dicam plura? (p.3)

Greaves overrates English worthiness when contrasted with other nearby languages, like French or Italian. Again it is intended both for native as well as for foreign speakers. He explicitly follows Petrus Ramus' method in adopting his parts of speech classification.

The national language awareness is mostly revealed in translations, where St Jerome's medieval criteria (commonly expressed: "*word for word is possible; if not, sense for sense*").⁴⁰ In Spain Fray Luis de León was

³⁹ The complete title is: *Grammatica Anglicana, praecipue quatenus a Latina differt, ad unicam P. Rami methodum concinnata a P.Gr.*, Cantabrigiae 1594. There is some disagreements about the spelling of his name, which has come to be spelt either as Graves or as Greaves, though there is general inclination for this latter form.

⁴⁰ This corresponds closely to Aelfric's versions, expressed in the Preface to the *Life of the Saints*, of the same Jeromian dictum: "*Nec potuimus in ista translatione semper verbum ex verbo trasferre, sed tamen sensum ex sensu*". However, we can already see a shift in Wycliff's prologue, commonly attributed to Purvey, where he emphasizes the vernacular virtues: "*The best translating is out of Latin into English, to translate after the sentence, and not only after the words, so that the sentence be as open, either opener, in English as in Latin...for the words owe to serve to the intent and sentence*". Indeed translations from Latin and Greek clearly

prosecuted and imprisoned for his translation of the *Song of Songs*⁴¹. Similarly, in England a doctrinal controversy arose with W. Tyndale's version of *the New Testament*. The double source synonyms (*inkhorn* vs. *vulgar* terms) caused bitter disputes: Th. More accused W. Tyndale of mistranslating "three words of great weight" i.e., priests church and charity, for which he substituted *seniors*, *congregation* and *love*. And he then adds:

This is true of the usual signification of these words themselves in the English tongue, by the common custom of us English people, that either now do use these words in our language, or that have used before our days.⁴²

Tyndale was well aware of the linguistic contrasts because he requested his critics to "consider the Hebrew phrase....whose present perfect and present tense is both one, and the future tense is the optative mood also". In fact, the need for maxims of brevity, conciseness and accuracy were especially emphasized as good qualities in the translation of the Bible. Fray Luis de León agrees with this: "Solamente trabajare en declarar la corteza de la letra, así llanamente, como si en este libro no hubiera mayor secreto del que muestran aquellas palabras desnudas..."⁴³

A still further work of this time is Alexander Hume's Latin *Grammatica Nova*, which was published in 1612 for the students at Edinburgh High School, prescribed by Parliament but prohibited by the Church. It was a controversial manual that lacked a strict grammatical terminology since it was aimed at easing out the otherwise arid field of grammar for young pupils. We should bear in mind that James, the king of England, was Scottish, at the time when Hume wrote an unprinted short grammar of English about 1617 entitled *Of the Orthographie and*

showed the specific character (or *genius*) of English. The contemporary controversy Fulke-Martin about English word meanings is quite revealing in this respect.

⁴¹ Fray Luis de León seems to draw on the same principle of St. Jerome when approaching the Bible. He has, however, wider views about *literality*: "El que traslada ha de ser fiel y cabal y, si fuere posible, contar las palabras, para dar otras tantas, y no mas ni menos, de la misma cualidad y condición y variedad de significaciones que las originales tienen, sin limitarlas a su propio sentido y parecer, para que los que leyeren la traduccion puedan entender toda la variedad de sentidos a que da ocasión el original, si se leyere, y queden libres para escoger de ellos el que mejor les pareciere". (Prólogo al *Cantar de los Cantares*)

⁴² In Th. More: "Confutation of Tyndale" *Works*, p. 417. cf. Flora Amos in *Early Theories of Translation*, New York: Columbia U. Press, 1920, where she gives a detailed account of the problems in translating the Bible in the Renaissance.

⁴³ Fray Luis de León, *El Cantar de Cantares* (1561), Jose Manuel Blecua (ed), Madrid: Gredos 1954, p 44

Congruitie of the Britan Tongue.⁴⁴ Its aim was addressed at reforming the pronunciation and the spelling of English, a task that involved also the harmonization with the Scottish pronunciation. The term “congruity” refers to that tendency of some reformers of the age to works towards a common identity, shared by other countries, notably Spain⁴⁵, of the whole English nation under one crown and one language.

However, his feuds with the Church prevented him from having much success with some of his grammatical works and therefore he had rather had them kept away from critical eyes.

5. THE *LOGONOMIA ANGLICA*

For Poldauf the first grammatical work worth that name is *Logonomia Anglica* of Alexander Gill (or Gylle, even Gil, as spelt in his time). He was born in Lincolnshire in 1567⁴⁶, studied at Corpus Christi College, Oxford (1581-2), was registered at Oxford University in 1585 where he was licensed, four years later, for his Master of Arts degree.⁴⁷

Vorlat attempts to unveil some psychological traits of this author and refers to the Swiss scholar, O. Funke’s opinion: “*Funke characterizes Gill as a puritan and a typical representative of the Baroque*”.⁴⁸ But I find

⁴⁴ The name *Britan* is a reflection of his intention to level out the dialectic differences and find a harmonic via media for English as an only national language.

⁴⁵ The often quoted motto of Antonio de Nebrija, “*una lingua, un imperio*” is but a signal of the times. The accession of King James to the throne in 1602 coincided with the spreading of this idea in the rising of the main European nations. May we also recall the German emergence as a vernacular national language through the work of Luther. He demanded respect for the character (otherwise genius) of German in his much quoted comments to his translations, *Sendbrief von Dolmetschen* (1530): “Wes das Herz voll ist, des gehet der Mund ueber. Das heisst gutes Deutsch geredet, des ich mich beflissen und leider nicht allwege erreicht noch getroffen habe. Denn die lateinischen Buchstaben hindern ueber die Massen sehr, gutes Deutsch zu reden”.

⁴⁶ His date of birth, however, is far from clear. The document of his Will signed when he was “in the threescore and tenth yeare of my life” the year before his death, shows that he was born either in 1564 or 1565 (as I. Poldauf assumes). However in the four-line copy of the manuscript fly-leaf of his late work *Sacred Philosophy of the Holy Scriptures* presented by himself in Oxford Corpus Christi College he stated to have been born in 1566-7.

⁴⁷ I. Poldauf, *On the History of some Problems...*p.71, notes some interesting facts about his biography, like: “he was esteemed a great schoolmaster, latinist, divine and scholar”. However he wrongly states that he studied at Cambridge where he took the cited degree. In 1608 he succeeded Mulcaster in the office of High Master of St Paul’s School of London. Between 1620 and 1625 Milton was one of his pupils. He made a reputation as scholar there and died in London in 1635.

⁴⁸ E. Vorlat, *The Development of English Grammatical Theory*, Leuven U. Press, 1975 p.15. The fact that Gill extols the excellence of the English language hardly places him among the Baroque. It seems that Funke judges him as outstanding in his day, as Poldauf did too, and for

his words too extreme, since Gill is a typical Renaissance humanist who wrote in Latin and yet valued and extolled the genius of his language. It is apparent then that a shift of mentality is in the making, since the earlier timid comparisons made by grammarians between English and other languages have now changed into outspoken praise: "Et quum reliqui Teutones, quaquaversum erumpentes in Italia, Gallia, Hispania, and linguam gentis didicerint: tamen, maiores nostri sermonis sui puritatem semper retinuerunt".⁴⁹ Perhaps he tipped the balance to the side of English when he thought that this language would reach a state of perfection well over Latin, if only a good grammar like his own was granted to it. Further below in the same Preface (p. XI) to his *Logonomia* he goes on to suggest: "*Et si Latinae linguae origines libet altius inquirere, multa a nostris esse desumpta invenies*". His main preoccupation with English was first and foremost, like in many of his contemporaries, the wide gap between written spelling and pronunciation. His transcription were indeed full of rare wisdom, well above the common observations made by spelling reformists of that age, although he does not pretend to be a spelling reformist. Moreover, he showed unusual concern with language comparison⁵⁰ and went as far as comparing English not only with Latin but also with Greek, Hebrew as well as with some modern languages. The final aim is to find the English essential features. Again we find him saying in his cited work (p.60): "Sed uti omnis alia lingua, sic etiam Anglica suos habet idiotismos, qui Latine vix, aut omnino reddi non possunt". And he goes on to comment on some expressions like future form with *sal* and *wil*, the use of nominal verb form *ing* (*mi luving and sparing of yu*), the use of the passive (*I am run out of breath*), the impersonal *it* (*it rains*).⁵¹

him this fact places Gill into a movement of the Arts that is yet to come (in fact 50 years ahead for England).

⁴⁹ A. Gill, "Praefatio ad Lectorem", *Logonomia Anglica*. London, 1619 p. IX. Gill further invokes those ideas present in Horatio's pragmatic dictum "si volet usus" and suggests that English is the result of many influences throughout history and today, except for some proper names, "...vix ulla vox Britannica in usum communem recepta est". However, as a good humanist, he considers Latin, Greek and Hebrew the most excellent, sacred languages. Apparently, as Vorlat notes, he is the first to discuss the origin of languages, in special Anglo-Saxon, which is yet another sign of his humanist learning.

⁵⁰ Ivan Poldauf stresses this fact and notes the idea of comparative philology emerging for the first time in a grammar of English. (*On the History of some Problems of English Grammar*, p.71)

⁵¹ Again in the "Preface to the Reader" A. Gill writes wry, critical lines addressed to his otherwise appreciated ordinary English speakers (which can be the reason for being scornfully called *puritan* by Otto Funke. He had this to say: "Such is the stupidity of the uneducated masses that they admire most what they least comprehend: from that time on (about the year 1400) a new scurry appeared in writing and speaking, for since every one wishes to appear as a

5.1. *The reports of the first edition*

The first edition, according to the Bodleian copy, of Gill's *Logonomia Anglica* came out in London in 1619 (ex dono auctoris). There are other three first copies, all marked and corrected. According to G.E. Dawson of the Folger Shakespeare Library,⁵² the British Museum MS is dated 1600-1606. The task of correcting and marking this book must have been a hard task to do. In fact Dawson also states there that "he had no reader in mind, presumably, but himself, and therefore caring only for a reasonable degree of legibility, not at all for elegance". The Bodleian copy, however, is carefully written by Gill's hand and the annotations and corrections in copies of his book were unmistakably prepared for presentation. The various copies suggest then a common hand.

H. Nixon,⁵³ from The British Museum Library, also wrote a report about the four editions extant at the British Museum and he found that there is insufficient evidence as to who the author of the corrections was. He also found that the corrections were made at different times, both in different copies and in the same copy. He then reported that he was not so sure that Gill should have been the only corrector. What he could assure was that the corrections could not have been made by the printer, or else there should have been consistency among copies. However, he admitted that at this time mass correction had been current as early as 1619.

5.2. *"Epistola dedicatoria" and Preface of the work*

As is often the case in printed books of this type, and often in other types of literature, the dedication is to a noble patron, often of court, be He/She actually a sponsor or protector. In this case he dedicated it to no less a personage than to the "*Serenissimo potentissimoq; Principi Iacobo*". So King James I is the target as the front page shows, together with the royal arms shield in the centre. Some relevant assumptions stated in the Preface and worthy of mention here are:

First, that English had noble origins, as history shows, and maintained the purity of the language, "aside from that change which I frequently lament and the change which time brings to all languages", as he rightly emphasized. In addition, he writes proud lines about British origins, making passing reference to "*inclytus ille Arturus gentem fudit, fregit, domuit; sed non deleuit tamen. Unde post Arturum ita inualuit eorum vis, ita*

smaller of tongues and to vaunt his proficiency in Latin, French (or any other language)." (translation by R. C. Alston, Facsimile Edit. 1975)

⁵² G.E. Dawson, Report on the first edition of *Logonomia Anglica* (1958)

⁵³ H. Nixon, *Report on Logonomia Anglica copies at the British Museum* (1965)

creuit numerus, ut uniuersam fere insulam sui iuris fecevit" (p. VIII). Coherent with this idea, he goes so far as to accuse G. Chaucer, (*infausto omine*: "star of ill omen"), of corrupting the language by letting in so many Latin and French words. Clearly, there he advocates the words that are faithful to English origins, and he writes descriptive paragraphs on this issue: "...so daily wild beasts of words are tamed, and horrid evil-sounding magpies and owls of unpropitious birth are taught to hazard our words".

Secondly, that the national language is the appropriate vehicle to communicate literature, intellectual ideas and manners: "neque enim bellica virtus, nec scientia literarum, nec candor ingenii, nec morum cultus, neque ulla rerum potentia adgentisalicuius gloriam tantum valet, quantum sermo".⁵⁴ Moreover, English bears a comparison with other languages and it can be a good choice as a *lingua franca*, since throughout the years it has been borrowing freely ("*alienas voces tam facile & admittit, & sponte adoptat*") from other languages. Not that borrowing itself is perverse but the use of traditional words "*sono gratas, & sensus plenissimas auersantur*" is to be encouraged instead of the use of new words "*auditu asperas, sensu dubias, pariant*". According to Gill, all human beings had one day one language and it would be desirable to achieve a universal vocabulary for all and supposedly the best candidate for that would be English. In effect, he adoption of polysyllables from Latin would be a good complement to the native monosyllabic thesaurus. In his view the only weak point and cause of corruption is the chaotic spelling that emerged with the printing of books. No previous English grammarian had placed his language so highly.

Thirdly, connected with the above points is the assumption that the English should become aware of the value of their language, so they should defend it against outside attackers, which are no other than neighbouring languages: "*Communiter audio komon, vises, envi, malis, etiam virtus, studi, iustis, piti, merci, kompassion, profit, comoditi, kulor, gras, favor, akseptans & c.*"⁵⁵

⁵⁴ A. Gill, *Logonomia Anglica*, part I, Facsimile Edition, annotated by B. Danielsson and A. Gabrielson, Almqvist & Wiksell: Stockholm, 1972. He cites here many famous people who showed respect for their native tongue. Outstanding is the case of Edward III who had decreed that no one should speak French and that the cases of law and judgements should be recorded in English and Latin.

⁵⁵ Gill reveals as a staunch supporter of the independence of English appealing to the call of the blood. Note his heated speech (in Latin, ironically enough): "At vero quo gentium cieicistis illa vocabula, quae pro his adulterinis maiores nostri usurparunt? Ut voces ciues exulent? Ut noua barbaries vniuersam linguam Anglica extirpet? O vos Anglos! Vos apello, quibus sanguis ille patrius palpitat in venis; retinete, retinete quae adhuc supersunt reliquae sermonis natui" (p. X)

5.3. *The parts of Logonomia Anglica*

The printed work of 150 pages *Logonomia Anglica* consists of four parts: first, "*Grammaticam*" which concerns the morphological word formati, "de literarum usu" which itself split into "sono, compositione, vocalibus, consonis, diphthongos & syllabas & voces". Second, "*Etymologia*" dealing with words (voces) and word classes: "nomine, verbo & consignificativis". Third, "*Syntaxis*" which in turn is either prose ("soluta") or poetic and the latter is broken down into either "simplex & ornata". Lastly, "*Prosodia*" both of accent and metre.

As I. Michael⁵⁶ assumes, in the determination of grammatical categories the classical tradition was more than a mere cornerstone of the whole building:

Linguistic study was confined to two languages, structurally similar: Greek, from which the main categories had been drawn, and Latin, from which they had been finally systematized. Broadly speaking, the classical languages, with no real rivalry from Hebrew, were Language, and their grammar was Grammar. (p.10)

Now a major issue remains, however, that a determination should be taken at the outset, namely, what is and what is not a grammatical category, and to answer that language historians must take into account both ancient and modern criteria for interpretation of the term "grammar".

Now the hardest and most important point in a grammar is supposed to be the verb system. It is notable that early English grammars lean too much on classical Latin grammars, or contemporary modifications of it. To what extent Gill copies from such unfitting scheme will be our next focus of attention.

5.4. *De Verbo*

Early grammars in effect attach two categories to the verb, one is 'mood' and the other is 'tense' which are explained to have so called "signes" that give visible evidence of their existence. Jacques Bellot⁵⁷, for instance, gives six moods, indicative, imperative, optative, subjunctive, potentiall and infinitive plus five tenses, the present, imperfect, perfect, plusperfect and the future. Typically he used "the selfe same signes" for the

⁵⁶ in *English Grammatical Categories (and the tradition to 1800)* Cambridge U. Press, 1970. Ian Michael's outstanding work studies all paradigmatic categories in depth of detail.

⁵⁷ Jacques Bellot, *Le Maistre d'Escole Anglois- The English Scholemaister*, published in 1580, (rpt 1967 by Scolar Press, Menston, England, is a manual of instruction for "natural borne french men and other straungers...")

indicative, the optative and the subjunctive moods. In his faithful imitation of the classical languages he goes on even to attach tenses to the verb *May* the perfect of which is, surprisingly enough, *might, would, should* or *ought to have*. Now Bellot's model is the famous Lily's grammar, later imitated, as I suggested earlier in this paper, by Thomas Linacre in his Latin grammar *Rudimenta Grammatices*.⁵⁸

Gill's chapter entitled "De verbo" takes up the traditional model when it deals with coniugatio: "variatio verbi per modos, tempora, et personas utriusque numeri" (p. 40). Then it splits modes into four, "ut apud Latinos". It is just as well he did not copy the Greek model imitated by his predecessors. The optative and the subjunctive were left out, but he still insisted on the *potential* as an attested English mood.

In the chapter "De signis modorum" he states: "indicativus signis caret: sed rem aperte esse, aut non esse; fieri, aut non fieri significat. Imperativi signa sunt in praesenti *let, sive aut fac*: in futuro *sal*. Potentialis signa *mai, mjht, kan, kuld, suld*, etiam & *wuld*. Infinitivi, *tu*. (p. 49). Likewise the number of tenses were five: "tempora itidem quinque: praesens, futurum, imperfectum, perfectum, et indefinitum" (p. 41) Now the inherent signs of the tenses are "*sal, wil, hav, had, du* and *did*" (p. 47). The tenses are somehow combined with the moods so that the potential mode is described as follows:

Potentialis modi:

Imperf.> {deberem, deberes = I *suld*, dou *suldest* etc.}

Praesens> {liceat aut possim = I *mai*, dou *maist* etc}

Also a little later he gives this type of potential:

Praesens> I *kan*, dou *kanst* etc.

Imperf.> I *kuld*, dou *kuldst* etc. (p. 50)

And shortly after this he gives still another paradigm:

Perf.> I *mjht* *hav* *laved*, dou *mjhtst* *hav* *laved* etc (p. 55)

Once again we are shown the inherent complexity around the paradigm of the tenses and moods of the classical grammars where the verb is both a complex network of signals having their relevance in the internal relations in the overall system. For didactic purposes the whole network is however a hindrance and an incomprehensible maze.

I. Michael has suggested that early grammar definitions based on formal criteria are to be found only in a small number of works that follow

⁵⁸ John O. Reed, "Englishmen and their moods: Renaissance grammar and the English verb" in G. Nixon & J. Honey, *An Historic Tongue, Studies in English Linguistics in Memory of Barbara Strang*, London: Routledge, 1988, pp 112-130.

P. Ramus closely. He mentions early 17th century authors like Greaves, Butler and Jonson. However, he mentions Gill's relevant and influential work when tackling the problem of tense classification. He assumes that Gill does not follow Ramus' scheme but rather Bullokar's and Lily's framework of five tenses⁵⁹. He is however ambiguous when he suggests that Gill is the first to propose that scheme (which one of them, Bullokar's three tenses and then one subdivided or Lily's) without qualifications. Gill, however, is quite clear about it, and he does say that "*tempora sunt quinque*" (cf. ut supra). Moreover, he also comments on some contrastive features that are specific to English and adds quite interestingly that:

Although our language does not have such a variety of endings for the persons and numbers as are found in other languages, nevertheless we express fully all the mind's conceptions through "sign-words" with verbs just as with nouns.⁶⁰

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Although the Humanist movement is far from having a clear, monosemic definition, most authors agree that in the 15th century some countries, notably Italy, had started a timid reaction against old modes of approaching philosophy and other issues that were determinant for Western human knowledge and traditions. This new knowledge was to a large extent imitated by notable thinkers who managed to break up the protective gates of their native countries boundaries. During the 16th century most western countries underwent a gradual shift towards a more independent, freer mode of thinking, which led some scholars to lay the stress on the intrinsic values of their native tongues. The spreading moreover of the excellencies of vernacular languages led some of the classical scholars to do relevant work on the description of their native grammars and thus a number of language learning manuals appeared in almost all European countries.

I have briefly examined one outstanding of the then emerging grammars, Alexander Gill's *Logonomia Anglica*, which, though first published in 1619, typically displayed genuine Renaissance grammatical ideas, notably Ramus'. Didactic in purpose, the author attempted to describe English as it was commonly used, and supposedly he succeeded in part. However, it is apparent, as I have attempted to show briefly in this paper, that he could not let his vernacular language free from the heavy fetters of the centuries-old Latin tradition.

⁵⁹ I. Michael, *English Grammatical Categories*. Cambridge: C.U.P 1970, p. 396

⁶⁰ A. Gill, *Logonomia Anglica* (1619) trans. by Robin C. Alston. . Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1972 p. 123