

Renewal and continuity in Italian LIS Journals

Andrea Capaccioni

Dipartimento di Lettere-Lingue, Letterature e Civiltà antiche e moderne
Università degli Studi di Perugia

Introduction

In recent years, there have been significant transformations in the field of Italian LIS journals. New journals have been created (such as JLIS.it and Bibliothecae.it) and journals with a great tradition (e.g. AIB Studi) have undergone considerable changes. For example in this new phase you may notice an increased focus on the use of open access, a wider involvement of young researchers (PhD students, librarians, etc.) and a heightened sensitivity to a more careful assessment of scientific publications (particularly peer review). This process of renewal has been in great part encouraged by the new reform of Italian University (2010) and the acknowledgment of the importance of an international comparison. The proposed poster intends to provide a first overview based on the analysis of four important periodicals, of the Italian LIS journals, pointing out protagonists, topics, trends and data, to be able to put in evidence the elements of renewal and those characterizing the continuity.

Methodology

In this poster four prestigious Italian LIS journals born after 2010 are examined: AIB Studi. Rivista di biblioteconomia e scienze dell'informazione (1/2012-1/2015); JLIS.it. Rivista italiana di biblioteconomia, archivistica e scienza dell'informazione (1/2010- 1/2015); Bibliothecae.it. Rivista di studi semestrale (1-2/2012-2/2014); TECA, Testimonianze, editoria, cultura, arte. Rivista internazionale di arte e di storia della scrittura, del libro, della lettura (0/2011- 6/2014).

The purpose of the poster is giving information for each journal concerning the composition of the scientific committee (and direction) with special reference to the number of teachers, librarians, other figures, international members and gender, as well as the total number of articles published (not including reviews), the number of authors, the annual article average, the average number of authors per article, the language of publication, the authors' profession (teachers, librarians, etc.) and gender (as I can deduct from the name).

Journals

JLIS.it (2010-), <<http://leo.cineca.it/index.php/jlis/>>, is an academic, peer-reviewed, open access journal, since 2015 with a four-monthly distribution of international scope which valorises the international research in Library and Information Science. JLIS.it secures: open access to contribution; peer-review by Italian and international experts; wide dissemination of published contributions.

AIB Studi (2012-), <<http://aibstudi.aib.it/>>, formerly Bollettino AIB, is a four-monthly, peer-reviewed, hybrid journal of the Associazione Italiana Biblioteche, it deals with the research in LIS and analysis of facts developing theoretical reflection, methodological experimentation and professional practices concerning the sphere of library, documentation and information services. It also contains a current bibliography of the Italian professional literature.

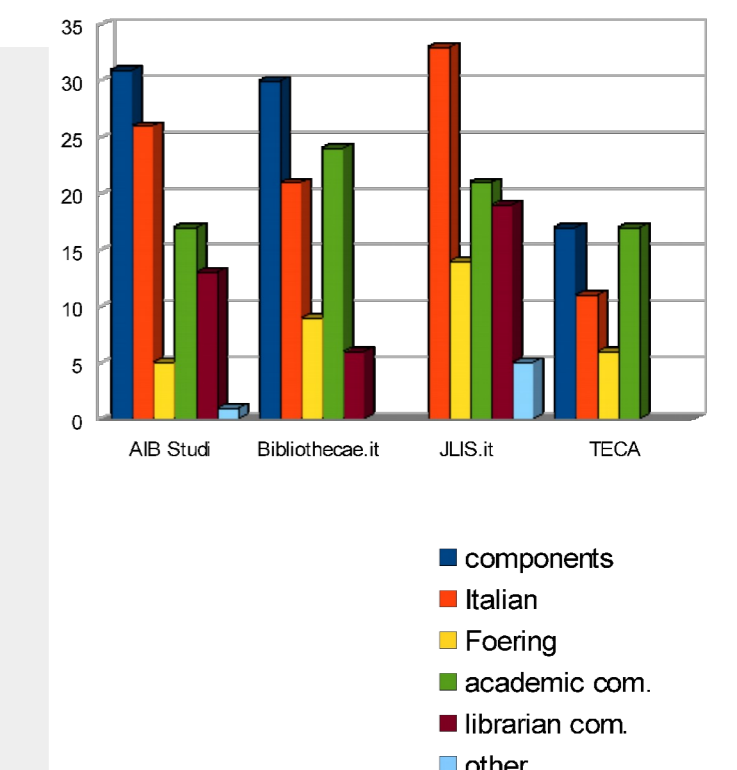
TECA (2011-), <<http://www.teca.patroneditore.it/>>, is a semestral online subscription journal that deals with the history of the book from manuscript to book print and ebooks. a particular interest is reserved to the history of the image and the arts, the illustrated book, the "book of art". TECA is a blind peer-reviewed journal.

Bibliothecae.it (2012-), <<http://www.teca.patroneditore.it/>>, mainly deals with bibliography, books and libraries history, all the "disciplines of the book". It's a subscription journal with some open access articles. Contributions are subject to peer review.

Tab. 1 Scientific committees and directions

	components	Italian com.	Foering com.	academic com.	librarian com.	other
AIB Studi	31	26	5	17	13	1
Bibliothecae.it	30	21	9	24	6	—
JLIS.it	47*	33	14	21	19	5
TECA	17	11	6	17	—	—

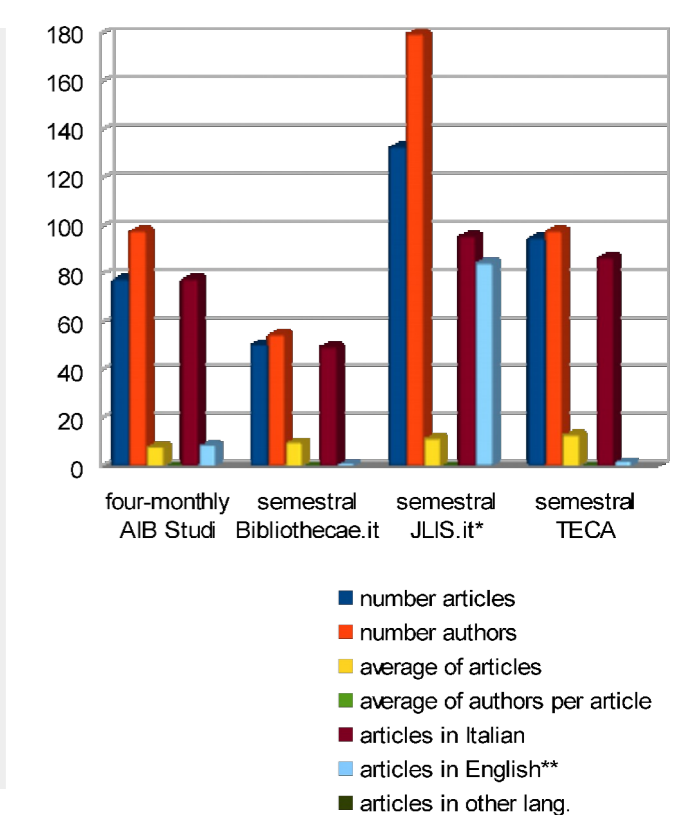
* One direction with two committees for archival and library science; only the library science committee has been considered.



	periodicity	number articles	number authors	average of articles	average of authors per article	articles in Italian	articles in English**	articles in other lang.
AIB Studi	four-monthly	78	98	8,6	1.25	78	9	3***
Bibliothecae.it	semestral	51	55	10,2	1.07	50	1	—
JLIS.it*	semestral	133	180	12	1.35	96	85	—
TECA	semestral	95	98	13,5	1.03	87	2	6****

Tab. 2 Articles, authors

* From 2015 is a four-monthly. ** Some articles are both in Italian and in English. *** 1 Spanish; 2 French; **** 4 Spanish, 2 French.



Tab. 1: it is interesting to note the presence of some members (only Italian) in two or more scientific committees related to the journals examined. In this particular ranking AIB Studi presents ca. 35% of shared components, followed by JLIS.it (ca. 25%), Bibliothecae.it (ca. 23%), and TECA (ca. 6%). As to the gender, the women's presence in TECA reaches 47.06%, followed by JLIS.it (31.91%), Bibliothecae.it (30.33%), AIB Studi (25,81%). The 56.10% of the women are academic teachers; the 43,90% are librarians.

Tab. 2 shows data on patterns (authorship, use of English, etc.) and productivity (number of articles, ecc.) of journals and authors. In particular, the average of the authors per article is able to determine a value which can be considered a kind of indicator of the journals co-authorship's rate. JLIS.it has an average of 1.35 authors per article, followed by AIB Studi (1.25), Bibliothecae.it (1.07), TECA (10.3). The majority of the articles is in Italian (87.11%), followed by English (27.17%, some articles are both in Italian and English); the articles in Spanish and French are at a considerable distance.

Conclusions

The analysis of the four publications can supply information about the emergence of new practices and the persistence of certain habits in the Italian LIS journals. The composition of the scientific committees confirms the relationship between continuity and renewal: the members are mostly Italian, but there is a good presence of components from other countries; there are many academics but also librarians are present. The number of members present in more than one committee shows an old habit. The presence of women goes from 47.06% in the committee of TECA to 25.81% of AIB Studi, with an average of thirty percent. An unsatisfactory value? Yes, if you consider the strong female presence in libraries, not if you consider that the percentage of women in the Italian university (LIS studies) is ca. 47%. The authors prefer to use Italian (even if there is a good number of articles in English) and to write contributions without collaborations, but a timid opening to the co-authorship is worth of note. Finally, some signs of a change are evident: the use of digital formats and Internet; the widespread use of a more transparent peer review; an increased willingness to accept contributions against the self-referential practices of the past; the will to publish articles in more languages.

