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Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik (editors)

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This volume is the outcome of papers presented in Malta at two conferences: the Second International Conference on Knowledge and Diplomacy (February 2000) and the International Conference on Language and Diplomacy (January 2001).

There is a 7-page section on contributors (from Bosnia-Hezergovina, Brazil, Croatia, France, India, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Malta, Switzerland, the UK and the US), followed by a 9-page preface and by 20 papers (3 of which are by linguists) focusing on such timely topics/issues as Use of Language in Diplomacy (Stanko Nick), Language and Diplomacy - A Practitioner's View (Aldo Matteucci), Language and Negotiation: A Middle Eastern Lexicon (Raymond Cohen), Use of Ambiguities in Peace Agreements (Drazen Pehar), Pragmatics in Diplomatic Exchanges (Edmond Pascual), Applying the Pedagogy of Positiveness to Diplomatic Communication (Francisco Gomes de Matos), Setting Priorities for a "World Language" Initiative (Donald F. Solá), Interpretation and Diplomacy (Vicki Ann Cremona and Helena Mallia), Hypertext in Diplomacy (Jovan Kurbalija), Texts in Diplomacy (Dietrich Kappeler), To Joke or Not to Joke: A Diplomatic Dilemma in the Age of Internet (Peter Serracino-Inglott), Language, Signaling and Diplomacy (Kishan S. Rana), Historical Rhetoric and Diplomacy - An Uneasy Cohabitation (Drazen Pehar).

In their preface, Kurbalija and Slavik point out that "while this volume presents a number of significant first ventures into a variety of aspects of the vast field of language and diplomacy, this is a relatively uncharted topic with significant scope for future research and discussion" (19). Of special interest to document designers is Kurbalija's above-mentioned contribution, in which he shares his 10-year-research on the use of hypertext in diplomacy and international law. In the section on Criteria for Analysis of Hypertext Suitability, the director of DiploProjects states that "documents of diplomacy and international law are particularly suited to hypertext" (314). One of the analytic criteria he adopts in his approach is that "documents should be TRANStextual," since "transtextuality is a strong characteristic of diplomatic documents" (315).

A conspicuously absent index of topics/concepts would have enhanced the high informativity of this volume. Biodata features no e-mail contacts for contributors but interested readers can reach Jovan Kurbalija at diplo@diplomacy.edu. The online version of the book is available at http://www.diplomacy.edu/books/language_and_diplomacy/.

In short, a "must" for all those who wish to probe the complex and fascinating interface of language and diplomacy.