

ARE YOU A CREATIVE TEACHER?

by Beth Ann Boyle

Do you teach in Italian public secondary school?

Is there something that you have been doing in your classroom this year that has been particularly useful in developing your students' ability to communicate in English?

Would other teachers benefit by knowing about it?

If your answers to these questions are "yes", then please consider applying for the **Sirio di Giuliomaria Award**. This honor is granted a teacher who has been engaged in innovative and effective classroom teaching and who is able to illustrate this experience in order to share it with others.

Not only will the recipient of this award receive a prize valuing approximately €255, but they will also be able to present their project in their own session at TESOL Italy's National Convention in November.

For more details, please consult the [rules and regulations](#) for application details. We would really love to give a deserving teacher this award so please apply! Any questions about the application process can be referred to our office.



Food for thought From TESOL publications

Considering bilingualism and CLIL

by Franca Ricci Stephenson

In Italy as well as in other countries including the United States, it is a common belief that multilingual young people have by far greater job opportunities and more brilliant careers than those who master only one language. For this reason parents who can afford to pay very expensive tuition fees send their children to language immersion schools. Not many, however, are familiar with the results of studies in recent years indicating that multilingual speakers have more focused brains and higher processing abilities.

Though as a teacher of English I have been aware for a long time of the positive impact of bilingualism and multilingualism on children, I found the article "*Bilingualism Can Help Close Learning Gaps for Immigrant Students*"¹ by Elehe Isadi² interesting. She writes that according to decade-long studies by Ellen Bialystok, a cognitive neuroscientist at York University in Toronto "Being bilingual improves the executive functioning processes that manage things such as attention, working memory, planning, and problem-solving. The bilingual mind experiences a workout from constantly suppressing one language while

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activating another, which builds up the brain's cognitive processes."

Other studies show that while children from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds usually tend to perform worse than wealthier children on executive functioning measures, bilingualism seems to help compensate for that

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¹ Published in the "National Journal" of April 30, 2014, and included in the "TESOL English Language Bulletin" of May 6, 2014

² Staff Correspondent, "National Journal"

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TESOL Italy

Via Boncompagni, 2
00187 Roma.

Tel 06 4674 2432

fax 06 4674 2478

e-mail: tesolitaly@gmail.com

web page: www.tesolitaly.org

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Editor: *Daniela Cuccurullo*
danielacuccurullo@virgilio.it

Editorial board: *Beth Ann Boyle, Lucilla Lopriore, Marina Morbiducci, Stefano Mochi, Franca Ricci Stephenson, Patrizia Petrucci, AnnaRosa Iraldo.*

DTP: *M. Rosella Manni*

TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Italy

TESOL Italy, an affiliate of TESOL International, founded by Mary Finocchiaro, is a non-profit organization of teachers of English in Italy. Its purposes are to stimulate professional development, to disseminate information about research, books and other materials related to English, and strengthen instruction and research.

TESOL Italy organizes a national convention every year .

Members receive TESOL Italy Newsletter and Perspectives, the academic journal of the association.

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TESOL Italy's mission is to develop the expertise of those involved in teaching English to speakers of other languages, and to foster professional growth and active participation in language teaching. Its mission includes promoting community understanding of the role of language in a progressively changing environment while respecting individuals' language rights.

To achieve this TESOL Italy

- encourages access to and standards for English language instruction, professional preparation, continuing education and student programs;
- links groups to enhance communication among language specialists;
- produces high quality programs, services and products
- promotes advocacy to further the profession.



From the editor

When innovative projects are on the agenda
Managing new teaching and learning processes

Daniela Cuccurullo

Some of the key issues facing educators and policymakers today include the following:

- how much do we value and promote bilingual education in Italy?
- how can teachers and students rise to the challenge of Content and Language Integrated Learning and put it into practice?
- how fast is the teaching/learning process changing due to the development of new technologies?
- how might the growing force of

Englishes change the way we teach and students learn?

These are only a few of the leading themes of this issue of the newsletter; in addition, two great opportunities are on offer for Tesolers:

mark your calendar now and save the date for the 39th Annual National Convention 2014 and be a creative teacher, consider applying for the Sirio di Giuliomaria Award.

Don't miss them and enjoy your reading!



Translation in Love

Language and Culture Awareness through Audiovisual Translation

by Margherita Dore

(PhD, MSc, BA)

Part-Time Lecturer in English and Translation Studies

"This time the section Translation in Love features Margherita Dore, an expert in Audio/Visual Translation"

What do Audiovisual Translation (AVT) and young TESOL/TEFL learners have in common? For both, the fast development of new technologies has profoundly changed the way they are and the way they tackle the fast changing reality they are part of.

Although the term 'media culture' (or 'image culture') was first coined towards the end of the Twentieth century, it is the Twenty-first century and its new generations that really deserve to be dubbed in such terms. "Digital natives" are around us, whether we like it or not, and they conceive reality in terms of images and audiovisual texts.

Similarly, the turn of the century has brought major changes in the field of translation in general and AVT in particular. Unlike the past, movies for cinema, TV series, documentaries, etc. are transferred across languages and cultures via ever-changing software programs that translators have had to quickly get used to. In Italy, most of the audiovisual material broadcasted daily by TV networks and cinemas comes from the USA and it is usually dubbed. However, subtitling and voice-over are gaining ground due to the increasing number of digital channels and programmes.

In light of this, it seems fair to enquire as to how language courses can cater for these new generations of learners and their needs. For the matter at hand, we need to understand whether AVT can become a tool to enhance TESOL/TEFL learners' language and culture awareness. Language courses already include CALL modules that aim to develop students' skill via IT methodologies. However, they rarely make use of AVT as part of their laboratory

activities. The reason for this may lie in the fact that AVT may be seen as a complex and time consuming process to be taught at Master level. This is certainly correct if we consider the type of equipment (dubbing studios, subtitling programmes, respeaking software) needed for professional results. Yet, it would be worth considering how the end product can be integrated into TESOL/TEFL teaching. For instance, video clips taken from an entertainment programme such as a popular TV sitcom could be used during CALL sessions. The tutor could select some excerpts that are characterized by punch line based fixed expressions or puns exploiting idioms or cultural references. *Friends* (M. Kauffman, D. Crane, 1994) is loaded with such humour triggers, which are usually supported by canned laughter. Students may be given the original English version to watch at first, which could provoke their curiosity about the reason why that particular part is considered to be humorous because of the canned laughter that follows. Speculating on what each student might have heard and understood could lead to fruitful discussions, internet searches could corroborate or refute their hypotheses, etc. At a later stage, the students could be asked to translate that expression in their own language, whether they could use a literal translation of an equivalent expression or cultural item, and so forth. Students could be finally allowed to watch the dubbed or subtitled version for further discussion and analysis. A couple of examples come to mind, which can better exemplify the idea expressed here. In Episode 18 of *Friends*, Monica, Ross's sister, comments on her brother's competitive behaviour. Phoebe, who knows how competitive Monica herself can be, in turn sarcastically replies: "Oh, hello, kettle? This is Monica. You're black." This creative exploitation of the original idiom "pot kettle black" can foment fruitful discussion among students and can make

them aware of language similarities and differences in terms of collocations and fixed expressions (e.g. in Italian the equivalent expression replaces the pot with an ox and the kettle with a donkey and the ox accuses the donkey of having horns). In Episode 1, Rachel has just run away from her wedding and describes her ex-fiancée Barry by saying: “And then, I got really freaked out, and that’s when it hit me: how much Barry looks like Mr Potato Head. Y’know, I mean, I always knew he looked familiar, but...” Mr Potato Head is very popular in the United States but virtually unknown in Italy. Therefore, in order to understand the humorous potential of the source text, the students should have to find an image of it and learn more about this potato-shaped children’s toy. Subsequently, the students will need to question the feasibility of transferring this cultural item into the target culture so as to produce a similar humorous effect. Alternatively, what could they do? They could maybe use the E.T., the extra terrestrial character of the anonymous Steven Spielberg movie, just as the Italian translators did for dubbing, as it is very well known in Italy and is still part of the source culture. The students may or may not find the activity interesting, but it is undoubtedly a thought provoking topic and at the very least a humorous area bound to create discussion.

Food for thought

by Franca Ricci Stephenson
(continued from p.1)

gap. However, wrong ideas still persist around bilingualism. It has been a common belief that it takes bilingual children much longer to develop language skills, but this belief also has been proved false.

How much do we value bilingual education and CLIL in our school system? In Italy relevant projects in bilingual education have been carried out in recent years and on April 15 the Ministry of Education has organized a meeting to report on the very successful IBI/BEI project in Primary School³, and to discuss possible future developments in Secondary School. As for CLIL, a recent reform has included it in the curriculum of part of our

Secondary Schools (Licei and Istituti Tecnici)⁴. On May 8, MIUR invited all the teachers associations to a national meeting to inform about the state of the art of the national project of teacher training for teachers of non-linguistic subjects (DNL) in which TESOL Italy is actively involved, running courses of language improvement in Rome, Latina and Frosinone. The methodological training is being carried out by Universities.

As all the parties involved in the CLIL project agree in considering the CLIL experience extremely relevant for the teaching approach it involves, I believe TESOL Italy should pursue the task of stimulating our members and teachers in general to consider the positive aspects and potential developments of the CLIL methodology and get involved in experiencing it. As Lucilla Lopriore⁵ writes in one of her recent articles⁶:

Le innovazioni, nel bene come nel male, ci costringono a riflettere, a rileggere abitudini consolidate, a risvegliare muscoli intorpiditi, a trovare nuovi equilibri e a scoprire nuove relazioni.

[...]I docenti DNL durante il corso sono stati coinvolti in una progettazione didattica che, di fatto, richiede una continua riflessione linguistica, ponendo in primo piano il ruolo della lingua nel e per l'apprendimento e nel "dare significato" a ciò che si apprende. Nel CLIL confluiscono di fatto le teorie Vygotskiane sulla zona di sviluppo prossimale recentemente riprese dalla prospettiva socioculturale sull'apprendimento (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) e dagli scritti di Do Coyle et al. (2010) sul ruolo della lingua nella strutturazione di percorsi didattici fondati sulle cosiddette 4 C, ovvero: Contenuti, Comunicazione, Cognizione, Cultura. Il fatto di dovere usare un'altra lingua per insegnare ha costretto i docenti di diverse aree disciplinari a ripensare il ruolo della lingua da loro utilizzata in classe, in particolare dell'italiano, nell'insegnamento e nell'apprendimento. Il CLIL sembra quasi avere messo a disposizione dei docenti un potente strumento di riflessione comune, trasversale alle discipline che ha le potenzialità di una lingua franca in quanto valorizza l'efficacia comunicativa della comunicazione didattica e ne mette in luce la ricaduta sugli apprendimenti.

A lot to think about and debate for all of us.

May 2014

³<http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/dg-ordinamenti/bei-ibi>

⁴<http://hubmiur.pubblica.istruzione.it/web/istruzione/dg-ordinamenti/clil>

⁵ President of TESOL Italy in 1996-1998, Professore Associato

The way they learned

by AnnaRosa Iraldo



Here is some food for thought on translation inspired by a few pages of the second year (1906) of the “Poliglotta Moderno” .

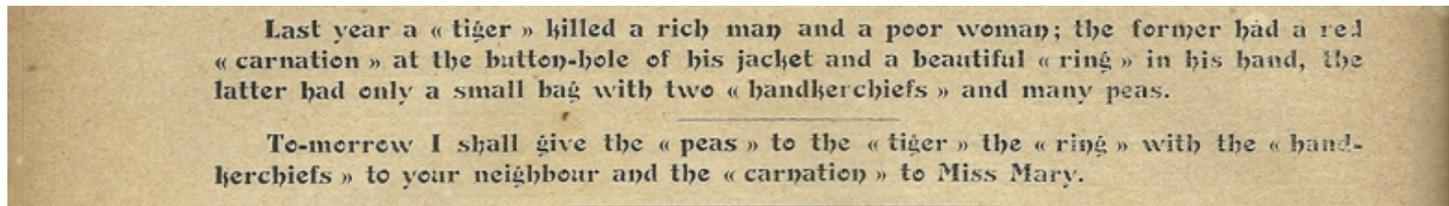
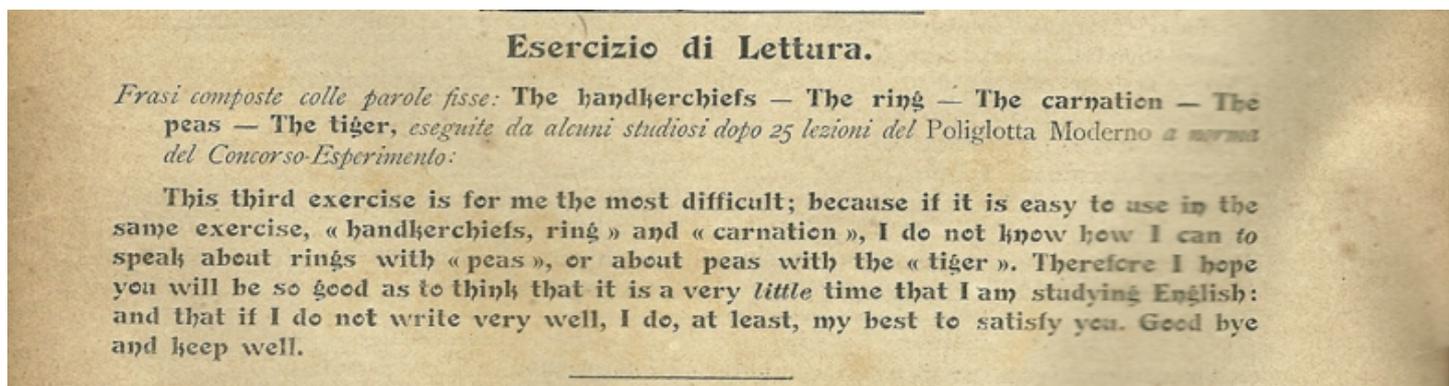
In the conversation about the weather just notice the translation of “it” into “esso” and of the interrogative “does” into “fa”. The “studioso” of the “Poliglotta” was confronted with a far-fetched instance of literal translation i.e. “ a translation which approximates a word-for-word representation of the original” (Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied

Linguistics) , actually a free translation “reproducing the general meaning and intention of the original not following its grammar or organization” would have been difficult for chunks so short and disconnected in meaning .

However, it seems the “studiosi” were equipped well enough to take part in the *Concorso Esperimento* as shown in the *Esercizio di lettura* and give meaning to apparently



meaningless word sequences. A proof that playing helps learning.





Web Watch

by Esterina La Torre



Finding new activities is one of our constant worries and we always dream of finding something ready to use, a site that offers the complete lesson plan we need, excellent resources to practice a specific topic, an online place that covers breaking news on books and the latest thoughts in education. Of course this is utopia, because we know how difficult it is to find something that perfectly suits our class and our students, as there is always something the resource misses or something we want to change adapting it to the level and interests of our students. How can we easily organize a lesson that can be interesting and new?

Presenting images or new forms of art.

Reading images can be a nice and useful activity, of course not the mere description of a picture or the mechanic description of a photo, I mean something else, for example, why don't we start using provocative images that use satire or that are truthful and can lead to discussions thus improving different language skills? Here are a few proposals:

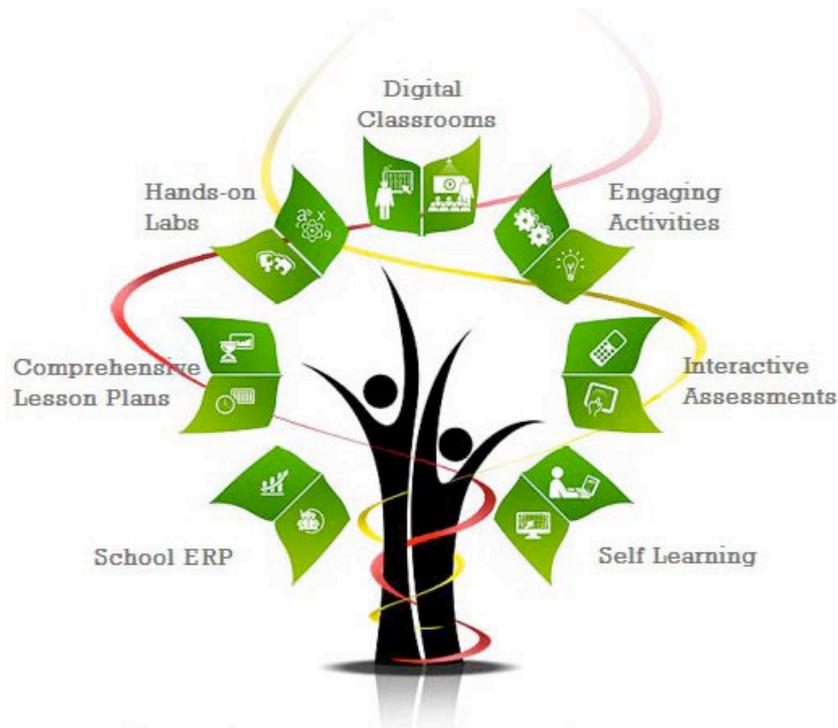
<p>Polish illustrator Pawel Kuczynski cleverly uses satire to portray today's social, political and cultural reality. At first sight, his illustrations might seem funny, but when you look closer, they actually show some serious problems of today's world.</p>	<p>http://dashburst.com/illustrating-world-issues-satirical-art/</p>
<p>Angel Boligan Corbo is a Cuban artist, he has received lots of international awards for his work, his political and social cartoons are an example of just how expressive and critical art can be. His huge collection of comics provides a sharp commentary on our society.</p>	<p>http://www.mymodernmet.com/profiles/blogs/angel-boligan-sad-surreal-illustrations</p>
<p>Japanese artist Nagai Hideyuki is a master of fine art illusion who uses perspective-based sketches so his works are three-dimensional drawings, his works are nice to see and full of details to be discussed.</p>	<p>http://nagaihideyukiart.jimdo.com/gallery/</p>
<p>The same type of three-dimensional drawings, but with different subjects and results, can be found in the works of the young Sirian artist (20 years) Muhammad Ejleh. Using both these resources we can invite students to compare and contrast the two artists and their works.</p>	<p>http://www.wikilinks.fr/incroyables-dessins-en-trois-dimensions-par-muhammad-ejleh</p>
<p>Some more activities, ideas and techniques to use images in class.</p>	<p>http://usingpictures.blogspot.it/2009/07/warming-up-with-pictures-using-pictures.html</p>

Round Table Discussion

New Directions in Online Publishing

Rome, April 10, 2014

by Enrico Grazzi



TESOL Italy and the Dept. of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures of Roma Tre University organised a round table discussion entitled *New Directions in Online Publishing*, which took place at the Faculty of Humanities, on April 10, 2014. The aim of this initiative, which was officially recognized as a teacher-training activity (*Autorizzazione MIUR, Direttiva 90/2003*), was to focus on the future of textbook publishing and share fresh data about the way Italians react to the introduction of e-books in education, both at school and University level. Over the last few years, the advent of hypermedia has deeply affected our culture and the way knowledge and expertise are shared and handed over from one generation to the next. Digital devices like Kindle and e-readers are a case in point, as they are slowly subsuming the printed format as the preferred vehicle for reading, and the Web has become one of the primary sources of information, which interconnects its users globally. These technological innovations have had a strong impact on education publishing too, both in terms of a reconceptualisation of traditional school books, and

in terms of the new challenges for the education publishing industry. Hence, this round table was conceived of as a unique opportunity to bring together experts from the world of school education and the world of University research and teaching, in order to carry out a joint discussion on these key issues, with a view to the future.

This panel session was chaired by Enrico Grazzi, one of TESOL Italy's past Presidents and a researcher in English Language and Translation at Roma Tre University. Three guest speakers joined the discussion: Roberto Baldassari, vice President of the Istituto Piepoli S.p.A. and contract professor at the Roma Tre University; Claudia Rebesani, a member of the board of directors of INDIRE, the Italian Institute of Research in Educational Innovation; Giulia Staccone, the coordinator of the team that works at RomaTrE-Press, i.e. Roma Tre University's on-line publisher.

The opening address was given by the President of TESOL Italy, Beth Ann Boyle, and by the Head of the Dept. of Foreign Languages, Literatures and

Cultures of Roma Tre University, Professor Giuseppe Grilli. Ms. Boyle welcomed the presenters and the participants, and thanked the aforementioned University Department for hosting the round table discussion and for video-recording it. Professor Grilli expressed his appreciation for the topic of the round table and underlined the great importance of the cooperation between TESOL Italy and Roma Tre, because it shows that it is possible to bridge the gap between the Italian school system and the Italian University and find a common ground for cooperation. Therefore, Professor Grilli continued, further initiatives of this sort are welcomed.

The round table programme included a twenty-minute presentation for each presenter, followed by an open discussion between the participants and the three panelists. Here is a short report of their presentations and of the concluding debate.

Baldassari's talk was entitled: *Schooling and New Technologies: What the Italians Think*. Baldassari presented the results of a recent national survey that the Istituto Piepoli has recently conducted in Italy to collect quantitative and qualitative data on what people think about the use of digital technologies and e-books for learning. The survey was conducted on March 10, 2014. Respondents are a representative sample of the Italian population. Interestingly, 45% of respondents believe that in thirty years from now the great majority of readers will use e-books. Moreover, 47% think that the Italian educational system is receptive to new technologies (e.g. Web 2.0 and e-books), while 41% think that the school system is slow in coping with innovations. However, 35% complain that very little money is invested to provide schools with computers and digital technology. 79% believe that schooling should implement digital devices to improve teaching methodologies. Quite unexpectedly, respondents suggested that the school subjects that should first of all benefit from the implementation of digital technologies are: Italian (29%) and foreign languages/English (28%). Maths comes third (24%). As for the advantages of implementing e-books for learning, respondents think that this would make schoolbags lighter (33%), and textbooks cheaper (32%). Instead, as for the disadvantages of e-books, most respondents fear that they could cause sight problems when reading for long hours (26%). Besides, 21% dislike the fact that e-books are a sort

of virtual objects. These are the main results of the survey, and we can conclude that most Italians are in favour of updating the Italian school system by taking advantage of the great educational potential of digital technologies and e-books.

Rebesani's presentation was entitled: *Digital textbooks versus printed schoolbooks: is this the real challenge for education in the 21st century?* The speaker believes that e-books are making a big impact. They are new, different, fun to use and light to carry. It should be no surprise that they are becoming more and more popular among students, teachers and parents. However, the reaction from the education world is mixed; at one end of the spectrum we are wildly enthusiastic while at the other end we are highly critical. The real challenge is to bring the current debate on digital education beyond the argument on whether media rich text books are better than traditional textbooks and to seize the opportunity to reconceptualise the delivery of educational content.

Staccone's talk was entitled: *The scientific publication network: the role of Roma TrE-Press*. First of all, the presenter observed that the networked circulation of academic publications in electronic format allows a more timely exchange of information within the scientific community, compared to the traditional paper version. This entails the opportunity to benefit from richer forms of communication through hypertext and hypermedia, and also to have a quicker and more effective access to updated sources for scientific research. The strategies of open access to scientific communication promote the creation of tools, such as magazines and open archives of publications and data, that offer wider access to the results of academic research, without any technological or commercial barriers. Hence, the scientific publication network also provides e-publications with a greater impact within the community of scholars. The editorial policy of Roma Tre-Press, Ms. Staccone concluded, is to support and promote cultural and technological access to the scientific community by focusing on the publication of texts in electronic open access.

Following these three talks, which approached the theme of e-publishing and education from complementary points of view, the round table chair

thanked the speakers for their contributions and invited the audience to start an open discussion. Participants' questions and comments mainly focused on the survey conducted by Istituto Piepoli and on the advantages of academic online publishing. Data concerning the use of digital technology to improve the teaching of the humanities were particularly stimulating, for they led to further observations about teaching Italian and foreign languages in a world where Chinese and English are going to be the main L2s of the future. Interestingly, Ms. Staccone contended that e-publishers like Roma TrE-Press play a fundamental role in proving free access to academic sources that contribute to the diffusion of minor languages. For example, Roma TrE-Press has recently published the e-dictionary of the Somali language, which has proved to be a successful editorial project, with several contacts from abroad. This shows the strong impact of e-publishing on the worldwide dissemination of knowledge and academic research, especially in fields like medicine and scientific research, where the immediate sharing of data and expertise is crucial.

As a final comment, I should say that the round table discussion was very stimulating and thought provoking, as it contributed to a deeper understanding of the great changes that digital publishing and e-books are expected to bring in the world of school and University education. This session was video-recorded and it will hopefully be made available to all TESOL Italy members on our website.

To contributors

Please send your contribution in
Times New Roman 12
to

danielacuccurullo@virgilio.it
or
tesolitaly@gmail.com

The deadline for submitting articles for the
2014

May-June issue is 30th June



CEFR Web Conference
28-29 March 2014 (Fri-Sat)

A two-day web conference for language teaching professionals on the
Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

An online conference on the CEFR took place on 28 and 29 March 2014 with the participation of the Council of Europe (Language Policy Unit and European Centre for Modern Languages).

The two-day conference aimed to create a platform for all stakeholders (policy-makers, test organisations, teachers and learners across and beyond Europe), in order to promote an exchange of ideas on where we now stand and where the CEFR could/should be going over the next ten years. The CEFR Web Conference was an opportunity to share ideas on how the CEFR can be used effectively in all classrooms across all continents.

There were additional social objectives: developing open-mindedness among European citizens; encouraging co-operation and mutual respect for different cultures; promoting autonomy and responsibility. But overall, the result was a practical document that can be used by all language educators to develop syllabuses and courses, design language tests and to provide a foundation for supporting language learning and enhancing language learning awareness with the help of Language Portfolios (<http://elp-implementation.ecml.at/>).

Over the two days of the CEFR Web Conference, experts discussed how to use the CEFR to design courses and tests and how to use it to promote the teaching and learning of languages, not least to answer the fundamental question: "What does it mean to learn a language?"

[Summary and Recordings](#) are available on the website





ISTITUTO ITALIANO
DI STUDI ORIENTALI ISO

SAPIENZA



International Symposium

April 3-4, 2014

Aula Magna, Sapienza Rector's Building

Piazzale Aldo Moro, 2 - Rome

Non-native speakers of English now outnumber native speakers three-to-one: What impact is this having on the English language? What happens to a language as it becomes a lingua franca? How can we, as researchers, teachers and policy makers, best employ these developments in our work?

This and other questions were addressed during the International Symposium "English, Globally. State of the Art and Changing Scenarios" which took place at Sapienza University (Aula Magna, Rector's Building) on April 3rd and 4th, 2014.

The Symposium - organized by Marina Morbiducci of the Dept. Of Oriental Studies, Faculty of Letters and Philosophy - brought together renowned experts in the specialized areas of Global English, World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca, in order to animate up-to-date discussions on one of today's most hotly-debated topics in English language studies.

The program presented eight plenary speakers and four respondents, who contributed in making the whole picture and present scenario more real and detailed.

After the official opening ceremony chaired by **Pro-Rector Federico Masini** (the other authorities were: **Prof. Roberto Nicolai**, Dean of the Faculty

Letters and Philosophy, **Frank Fitzpatrick** from the British Council, **Dr. Antonella Cammisa**, head of the International Office at Sapienza, **Prof. Letizia Cinganotto** from MIUR, and **Prof. Giorgio Mariani**), the works were opened by **Professor Emeritus H. G. Widdowson**, who presented on *ELF research: key issues and recent developments*, offering an overview of the main issues and challenges relating to the conceptualization of English as a lingua franca (ELF), rethinking radically the concepts of 'community', 'language/variety', 'native speaker' and 'competence' to make them relevant to the contemporary globalizing world.

The first session, chaired by **Prof. G. Mariani**, continued with **Prof. Shondel Nero** (New York University, Steinhardt, USA), who spoke about *Changing Englishes in the US and Caribbean: Paradoxes and Possibilities* and explained how these paradoxes offer many possibilities for researchers and teachers alike. Then it was the turn of **Prof. Gao Yihong** (Peking University, China) who, with her talk *Between Euphoria and Fear: Changing Emotions and Constant Complexes Concerning English in China* explored how the ever-changing viewpoint of Chinese authorities towards English is developing and proposed the mediator of a new L2 identity, the *dialogical communicator*.

The first session of plenary speakers was then followed by two respondents, **Dr. Katherine E. Russo** and **Prof. Liliana Landolfi** from Naples University, L'Orientale, who, with their remarks and questions to the plenary speakers, made the debate very lively.

The day was concluded with a Wine Tasting offered by Boccadigabbia winery and a buffet offered by Cambridge University Press and Cambridge English Language Assessment.

The following day, **Prof. Mary Wardle**, chair of the second session, introduced **Prof. Jun Liu** (Georgia State University, USA, and formerly TESOL International President), who, in his talk – which he delivered “viva voce” (no ppt or pc, but just his voice!) used the perspective of his many TESOL teaching, research and administrative positions to discuss *Changing Scenarios and Altering Perspectives: The State of the Art*.

Then it was the turn of another TESOL Int. key figure, **Prof. Donna H. Tatsuki** (Kobe City University of Foreign Studies, Japan) who talked about *English Language Education in Japan: In Transition or Intransigence?* and the complex interplay between the earnest desire to articulate ambitious objectives and the subtle resistance based on deep-seated beliefs about language learning/teaching, exploring some of the contradictions underlying the process. Her respondent was **Dr. Gianna Fusco**, from L’Orientale, Naples.

Finally, the second session in the morning of April 4th, was concluded by **Prof. Alemu Hailu** (University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) and **Mr. Ronnie Micallef**, MA TESOL (*Lond.*) (English Language Adviser, British Council, Ethiopia) who presented on the implementation of the British Council’s *Learn English Audio Pilot* (LEAP) and *English for Teaching* (Eft) pilot projects in their talk, *‘Dreams and Realities’: Confronting Multiple Challenges in Supporting English Language Teaching in Secondary Schools in Ethiopia*. They also presented interesting and rare videos on the real teacher training action in Ethiopia.

After the lunch break, it was the turn of **Prof. Maria Grazia Guido** (Università del Salento, Italy) who, in her talk *Power asymmetries in ELF immigration domains: changing social and ethical scenarios* engaged the audience presenting various case studies to explore communication failure and success in ELF and discussed how mutual intelligibility can be reached. Her respondent was **Dr. Jaqueline Aiello** from New York University.

This third and last session, chaired by **Prof. Marina Morbiducci**, was then concluded by **Prof. H. G. Widdowson** (Em. University of London, Vienna University), with his talk *The symposium in retrospect: perspectives and prospects* where he inter-related issues that had emerged as prominent during the symposium and considered what implications these might have for prospective work on English in its global role.

The final act of the Symposium was a question-and-answer session where the audience – made of professors, researchers and numerous students – could directly address the speakers and further animate the debate.

The day was concluded by a trio concert (featuring soprano voice Donna Tatsuki, harpist Claudia Pintaudi, and pianist and composer Kanji Wakiyama) where the sumptuous Aula Magna resounded, among other pieces, of the notes of 10 Tanka drawn from “Voices from Japan” (2011) for the Italian premiere of the pieces composed by Maestro Wakiyama. The concert, inspired by Japan’s tsunami, was dedicated to L’Aquila victims (exactly five years after the earthquake). After the musical event, refreshments were offered by EF Education First.

Other sponsors of the Symposium, beside the ones already mentioned, were: the British Council and United States Embassy in Italy, Confucius Institute, and AIA (Associazione Italiana Anglisti).

One special thank is also due to TESOL-Italy and Lend for spreading news of the Symposium in their websites and newsletters reaching colleagues in schools and other professionals interested in the topic.

Scientific Committee: Prof. Em H. G. Widdowson, Prof. B. Seidlhofer, Prof. Federico Masini, Prof. Giorgio Mariani, Prof. Marina Morbiducci.

Organizing committee: Marina Morbiducci, Frine Beba Favalaro, Melanie Rockenhaus

Web and Press Office: Stella Scarafoni (stella.scarafoni@gmail.com)

Logo designed by *Irene Canovari* (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/97992418@N05/with/9153476610/>)

A place for everything, or my experience working in an IEP (Intensive English Program)

by Melanie Rockenhaus

English Language Expert

Scuola Normale Superiore PISA

Many TESOL members teach in traditional educational settings where they accompany language learners throughout an academic year from September to June. TESOLers who work in schools and universities generally meet a new set of students in the autumn and are able to work with them over the next nine months as the learners improve. This typical organization has the advantage of allowing learners the time they need to learn and take in new language and structures (Saville-Troike, 2006), but in many situations it is not feasible due to scheduling constraints.

For example, annual courses are often not possible in English-medium universities which accept – and in many cases actively recruit – students from abroad for their academic programs. Many of these universities offer English language programs to bring admitted students' English up to an adequate level, and often these language programs are summer or pre-sessional IEPs. Curious about the differences between my annual university language courses and intensive language courses, I approached one well-known IEP, and in 2013 I was invited to teach in an intensive summer session at a major public university in the US.

The program lasted for eight weeks and offered 21 to 24 hours of intensive language instruction including reading and composition, listening and speaking, grammar, academic listening (lecture comprehension) and research writing. There were also elective courses in such areas as pronunciation, film, conversation, and TOEFL preparation. Instructors also of course had office hours and staff meetings to attend, as well as regular opportunities for professional development.

In my case, I taught reading, composition, academic listening and speaking skills to students at a high intermediate level (roughly B2), which corresponds approximately to the students I teach in an Italian university. Like my university students, the learners were primarily high school and university graduates who wished to complete a degree program at the university. Student entrance level and ages were therefore similar to my classes at an Italian university. There were, however, many significant differences between my experience in this program and in the program I run at an Italian university.

First of all, the students' first language varied much more than it does in my Italian classroom. In Italy, the vast majority of my university students are Italian, with less than 10% coming from other countries. In the intensive program, the students' first languages were Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Bengali and more. This mix of languages meant of course that translation was never an option, but it also made for some lively exchanges as students attempted to explain meaning to each other across languages.

Furthermore, students in the summer program were concentrating on English alone and were living in an English-language environment. Their contact with English was therefore more constant and much greater than that of my students in Italy, despite the fact that I have nearly 80 contact hours with each group of students over the academic year. In the summer intensive program in the US, students received twice that number of hours in eight weeks, and the majority was planning to complete another eight weeks of intensive English language courses before entering mainstream university programs.

Thirdly, my experience confirmed research findings that intensive programs may provide greater motivation to learn English (Alshumaimeri, 2013). In an intensive language learning situation, students are not distracted by other subjects and can focus on language learning alone. Most of our students in Italy cannot claim such a privilege, as they usually have to divide their time learning English with other subjects. In this case, English is often treated like the poor relative who receives some attention but not nearly as much as might be wished. All of us are familiar with this issue as we strive to maintain interest in English and motivation to continue

studying it throughout an academic year.

Lastly, no brief consideration of a program would be complete without considering efficacy. Research literature on the effectiveness of intensive language courses compared to traditionally-paced language courses is inconsistent and often discouraging. In one study, for example, the researchers report disappointing results in their study comparing two groups of first-year university students (Nasiri and Shokrpour, 2012). In this study carried out during an academic semester, a group of students with weaker English-language skills were provided with more than twice the hours of intensive English language instruction than other students. Unfortunately, the expectation that these students would improve much more rapidly than the group receiving fewer hours of English instruction was not confirmed.

Interestingly, the researchers in part blamed the very intensiveness of the English language courses themselves. Their conclusion was that students who were studying more than just English – the situation of most of our students – simply needed more time to assimilate their language learning. They recommended that if English must be studied alongside other subjects, it might best be taught non-intensively, to allow students to absorb with more leisure.

That is good news for those of us who teach in annual language programs. Intensive language learning can be very effective in certain fortunate situations, but most of us working in ELT in Italy are competing for attention with other subjects. While we organize our annual syllabuses and plan our year-long language learning programs, we can remember that our students are being given the time they need to learn English. Apparently, there really is a place for everything and everything can fit in its place.

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PERSPECTIVES

Editor: Lucilla Lopriore

e-mail: llopriore@tin.it

Editorial board: Elisabetta Burchiotti, Rosanna Fiorentino Morozzo, Mary Beth Flynn, Paola Mirti

TESOL Italy: www.tesolitaly.org

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REQUISITI PER IL RICONOSCIMENTO



Si raccomanda a tutti i colleghi impegnati o che intendono impegnarsi nella costituzione di un gruppo provinciale TESOL Italy di inviare all'Executive Committee la seguente documentazione:

1. Elenco nominativo degli iscritti (minimo cinque), con allegata fotocopia della ricevuta del relativo versamento sul c/c postale n. 15774003 intestato ad Associazione TESOL Italy, Via Boncompagni 2, 00187 ROMA.
2. Verbale dell'assemblea costitutiva del gruppo da cui risultino l'elezione e il nome di un Coordinatore.
3. Programma delle attività che il gruppo intende svolgere nel corso dell'anno scolastico.
4. L'Executive Committee, preso atto della documentazione prodotta dal gruppo, si riunisce per deliberarne il riconoscimento ed invia successivamente il testo della delibera al Coordinatore.

Il Coordinatore del gruppo TESOL Italy rappresenta a tutti gli effetti l'Associazione nell'ambito della provincia in cui il gruppo svolge la sua attività ed è tenuto a presentare una relazione annuale in sede di National Committee.

I membri del Consiglio di Presidenza e la Segreteria di TESOL Italy sono a disposizione per qualsiasi eventuale richiesta di ulteriori informazioni.

La collega incaricata dall'Executive Committee del coordinamento nazionale dei gruppi è Maria Grazia Maglione (e-mail: grazia.maglione@gmail.com).

1. AGRIGENTO

Co-ordinator: Christine Dowse
Viale L. Sciascia, 19
92019 Agrigento
Tel.: 3332151535
email: christinedowse@alice.it

2. BENEVENTO

Co-ordinator: Anna Mazzeo
Via della Città Spettacolo, 7
82100 Benevento
Tel.: 0824313376
e-mail: mazzeoa@yahoo.it

3. COSENZA

Co-ordinator: Anna Franca Plastina
Via XX Settembre, 19
87036 Rende (CS)
Tel.: 0984443427
e-mail: annplast@tin.it

4. FORMIA

Co-ordinator: Filomena Savore
Via Faraoni, snc
04023 Formia (LT)
Tel.: 0771770098
e-mail: menasavore@alice.it

5. L'AQUILA

Co-ordinator: Annamaria Nanni

Via G. M. Volontè, 1A
67100 Cese di Preturo (AQ)
Tel.: 3293484133
e-mail: am.ananni@libero.it

6. MESSINA

Co-ordinator: Irene Davì
Via Di Dio – Villaggio Sant'Agata
98166 Messina
Tel.: 3478704085
e-mail: iredavi@libero.it

7. MILANO

Co-ordinator: Rita Impagnatiello
Via Europa, 20
20010 Pogliano Milanese (MI)
Tel.: 333 4479497
E-mail: ritaimpa@yahoo.it

8. MOLISE

Co-ordinator: Laura Tommaso
Via Tanaro, 3
86.30 - Termoli (CB)
Tel.: 3493730432
e-mail: tommaso.laura@gmail.com

9. NAPOLI

Co-ordinator: Daniela Cuccurullo
Parco Grifeo, 63
80121 – Napoli

Tel.: 3355212156
e-mail: danielacuccurullo@gmail.com

10. PALERMO

Co-ordinator: Ninfa Pagano
Via del Fante, 56
90146 Palermo
Tel.: 3470649695
e-mail: n-pagano@live.it

11. ROMA

Co-ordinator: M. Antonietta Orteni
Via G. Lorenzoni, 20
00143 Roma
Tel.: 065916775
e-mail: maortenzi@gmail.com

12. VAL DELL'ADIGE

Co-ordinator: Michael Joseph Ennis
Via Gardesana, 507
00143 Roma
Tel.: 3337833271
e-mail: michaeljoseph.ennis@unibz.it

13. VENEZIA

Co-ordinator: Alun Philips
Via Favier, 20
31021 – Mogliano Veneto (VE)
Tel.: 0415906963
e-mail: alunphilips@alice.it

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