Dear TESOL members,

I hope you are all enjoying your well-deserved summer holidays. This time off to slow down and rest is what we teachers need to look back at what we have done during the past school year and begin thinking about new ideas that we would like to bring into our classrooms next year.

The theme of the TESOL Convention held in March 2015 in Toronto was ‘Crossing Borders Building Bridges’. We know that teachers are excellent mediators in doing so – building bridges to foster English teaching and learning through music, art, culture, technology and social networking.

Many teachers there have shared their ideas and expertise to help other teachers to build a Community of Learning. Teachers from all over the world will also be present at TESOL Italy’s 40th Anniversary Annual Convention on 13th-14th November 2015. Our plenary speakers this year are Diane Larsen-Freeman, Henry Widdowson, Russell Stannard and Paul Braddock.

Their participation has been made possible through the sponsorship (continued on p.10)

In the recently approved “La Buona Scuola” bill, we read about in-service teacher training what follows:

“la formazione in servizio dei docenti di ruolo è obbligatoria, permanente e strutturale. Le attività di formazione sono definite dalle singole istituzioni scolastiche in coerenza con il Piano triennale dell’offerta formativa…”

“In order to carry out such national training plan the considerable amount of 40 million euros will be authorized starting from 2016. As we try to figure out the role of professional associations like TESOL Italy and of individual teachers in the future training plan, we might be inspired by a more “modest proposal” suggested by Tomiko Breland1 in TESOL Connection Professional Development Special Issue, dated July 2015. His article: “Do-it-yourself ELT Professional Development” reminds us that teachers’ lifelong learning requires continuous dedication and effort and that Professional Development plans provided by institutions sometimes do not fit all teachers, sometimes they are too brief, too superficial or just irrelevant to individual teaching needs. Therefore, sometimes teachers may have to rely on their personal efforts, and here are some of Mr. Breland’s suggestions:

Create a Personal Development Plan, which should include:

- a self-assessment
- a list of resources available to you
- goals and actions
- a timeline
- assessment

(continued on p.6)

Tomiko Breland is TESOL editor & publications project manager. She received her BA in English from Stanford University, her MA in writing from the Johns Hopkins University, and her certificate in TESOL from Anaheim University.
From the editor

Meeting the challenges of change
Daniela Cuccurullo

Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.
—Dwight D. Eisenhower

Due to the recently approved “La Buona Scuola” bill, the forthcoming change in the National school system may present significant challenges for most of us as teachers. Instead of feeling defeated, why don’t we welcome the changes and take them head on?
“The bigger the challenges, the bigger the opportunities.”

Recognizing the issues involved with the change and viewing those issues as challenges can help us make the process an opportunity for professional growth and achievement. Experiencing challenges is a great way to learn and improve.
Resilience is the answer: “the ability to cope with change”. Some useful hints on how to go about it are given in this issue of the newsletter: Stephenson’s contribution indicates plenty of resources to build our professional development plans, while in the Webwatch column La Torre underlines the pedagogical value of videos as a great and interesting way to bring life into classroom so as to enrich the teaching/learning processes. A new perspective is given to translation by Morbiducci, through the exploration of audiovisual and multimodal messages coming from different cultural environments and/or points of view.

Last, but not least, the Learning to Learn perspective, dealt with by Claudia Valentini that I strongly welcome as an expert in primary school issues. Look forward to our next challenge. You never know, it may actually help us attain our goals.
Enjoy your reading!
Exactly five years ago, at ESSE 10 Conference in Turin, Sara Laviosa held a seminar on Translation Studies and its pedagogical impact on ELT. There were various participants to the initiative, and I was one of them, with my paper titled “Envisaging a Translational Pedagogy Through Experimental Texts”. The main idea underlying the whole seminar was that it is possible, as well as desirable, to use translation in language teaching, with pedagogical scope way far beyond the typical idea of exploiting translated texts for contrastive grammar purposes.

Here’s in front of me a copy of Laviosa’s recent book, *Translation and Language Education* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014) where the well-known Italian scholar – a recognized authority in Translation Studies - thoroughly approaches the engaging issue of applying translation to language education, particularly exploring its pedagogic potential. According to Zhang Meifang, of University of Macau, “Sara Laviosa has opened a dialogue between translation and foreign language education” connecting Claire Kramsch’s “ecological approach” to Translation Studies, and proposing a “holistic pedagogy” which “aims to harmonize these theories in the same learning environment” (from one of the text’s blurbs).

It would seem almost taken for granted that these two branches of learning and teaching were put in strict relationship nowadays, not just through theories but also applications, and yet we well know that this is not the case in our training courses or official textbooks. Translation continues to be viewed, for the majority of us, as an activity confined to skilled professionals or outstanding literary experts – exceptions, in other words! Whereas we are also deeply aware that translation can be of several kinds – not only literary texts should be deemed appropriate to translational purposes – and can be functional to various goals. In her book Laviosa starts providing a historical overview of the discipline which has gone through different stages: moving on from the traditional applications of translation at school with the Grammar-Translation Method – used for linguistic improvement – we now witness a surge of interest in translation for more widely pedagogical and cultural approaches thanks which language is viewed as an ecosystem and the culture of language teaching knotted to a larger perspective. Interestingly, Laviosa refers to Kramsch’s multilingual language pedagogy where the symbolic self, symbolic competence, and symbolic power of
language are all active participant factors in a *continuum* of knowledge, cultural awareness and exchange in late-modern societies. If we agree that “learning is a nonlinear, relational human activity, co-constructed between humans and their environment, upon their position in space and history” (Kramsch 2002b: 5, quot. by Laviosa, ibidem, p. 61) we cannot perform our role of educators without a constant reference to other cultures which are approachable through other languages, in whose process of “apprehension” (in both its etymological and common sense) we are - so to say - the leaders, guides, and orchestrators. A great responsibility lies in our choices in the classroom. Why not translation? Is translation so difficult? Is that Hamlet’s knot?

Books such as Laviosa’s are a “must” for teachers as they pave the way to a deeper understanding of the potential, and necessity, of translation at school. If you are not convinced, have a look at Chapter 7, where the author showcases real activities run in class geared to explore audiovisual and multimodal messages coming from different cultural environments and/or points of view. In the “Le Due Ali dell’Umanità” (“The Two Wings of Humanity”) activity, at item no. 4, we find the following text to be translated: “Per ogni donna stanca di essere considerata ‘troppo emotiva’, c’è un uomo al quale è negato il diritto di piangere e di essere ‘tenero’” (Laviosa, quot., p. 115). Here two different versions are bookmarked: a. “For every woman tired of being considered ‘too emotional’, there is a man who is denied the right to cry and (to) be ‘tender’; b. “For every woman tired of being considered ‘too emotional’, there is a man for whom the right to cry and to be ‘tender’ is denied”. Aren’t these two translations a terrific occasion to rehearse the passive form without even realizing it, and realize, at the same time, that humanity can have two wings? That is the “knot” we like: not only do we appreciate, through the agency of translation, the splendid metaphor of flight, but also the message of peace and harmony to reign on earth…

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**Note on 2015 Summer Camp**

**Dear All,**

Just a short note to let you know that the US-Sicily 2015 Summer Camp Organized by TESOL Italy successfully came to a close on 26th July 2015. Please visit our website: [www.tesolitaly.org](http://www.tesolitaly.org) and/or the [U.S. Embassy to Italy](http://www.usembassy.it) and [Facebook](http://facebook) page to see pictures and a brief summary of the daily activities of the Teacher Training Course that took place from 13th-17th July, and the Summer Camp Language Improvement Course that ran from 20th-26th July 2015.

**Best,**

Lina Vellucci
Summer Camp Coordinator

Summer Camp Committee:
Annarosa Iraldo, Enrica Flamini, Marina Morbiducci, Carroll Mortera.
When reading the lessons of the “Poliglotta moderno” we usually tend to point out the differences between the present and the past, but today the advertisement of the 1906 Milan Exposition suggests similarities with the present time: “The Milan International was a world’s fair held in Milan in 1906 titled L’Esposizione Internazionale del Sempione, or sometimes The Great Expo of Work. It received 4012776 visits and covered 250 acres.” (Wikipedia)

Quite similarly today great attention is given by the media to the current Milan Expo.

The other ads in the page show a picture of the cultural interests of the public the Poliglotta catered for. They seem to span from the different subjects dealt with in Biblioteca del Popolo to the Grammatica Italiana to history, as shown by the volumes on Garibaldi and the Russia-Japan war.

A varied public, as we have seen more than once in the corrispondenza column, seriously motivated to learn English resorting to the poor (if compared with today) communication channels available. We will see how they coped with teaching pronunciation.
Food for thought
by Franca Ricci Stephenson
(continued from p.1)

Find useful resources, and the following links may be helpful to improve your practice and keep up-to-date in the EFL teaching field:

- [http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/afterschool/events/Steps.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/education/students/safety/afterschool/events/Steps.pdf) (A guide from the New Jersey Department of Education,
- [http://www.britishcouncil.org/](http://www.britishcouncil.org/) which offers:
  - free podcasts of interviews with ELT experts and covering various topics and news in ELT. Most touch on classroom practice, activities, and resources.
  - free webinars for continued PD.
  - free seminar series, intended to provide a forum for ELT professionals to discuss the latest developments in the field; some include training materials.
- [http://web.stanford.edu/dept/gse/cgi-bin/clad/?q=public-video-library](http://web.stanford.edu/dept/gse/cgi-bin/clad/?q=public-video-library) (Stanford English Learner Library of Resources). This library hosts the course materials from Stanford University’s now defunct Cross-cultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) Program,
- [https://www.coursera.org/course/english](https://www.coursera.org/course/english), an education platform that collaborates with universities and organizations to offer free courses online. You can find courses such as “Shaping the Way We Teach English: The Landscape of English Language Teaching,” and “The Bilingual Brain.”

Teachers can use countless other sites and blogs, and all of them require effort; the effort of learning new technologies is only part of the job: “The more you put into your PD, the more you’ll take from it. Remember: Once you’ve achieved the goals you set for yourself in your PD plan, you’re not done. Continue to update your personal PD plan, and use it as a career-long tool for growth. A personal PD plan changes with your needs and your teaching context, and lifelong learning is never finished.”

Let’s reflect on the fact that no matter how good the training planned and organized in your school according to “La Buona Scuola” will be, it will never match a good personal professional plan.

July 2015
Video can be considered a great and interesting way to bring liveliness into the classroom, now we have more access than ever to videos of all kinds: songs, news, advertisements, comedies, documentaries, fiction, and even academic lessons are available online. Above all, this material wasn’t originally produced as teaching material, and this is an important point as it means it is authentic and can be adapted for teaching purposes. For teachers, a video becomes a powerful and engaging way to present places, events, situations and characters. For students, and our students are the essence of Generation V (the V means ‘video’), video isn’t just a form of entertainment, it’s essentially a way to share ideas, to communicate and to access information. Our students use and produce videos, and we teachers can use this ability to our advantage. According to the NTTI (The National Teacher Training Institute) “Teachers who use instructional video report that their students retain more information, understand concepts more rapidly and are more enthusiastic about what they are learning. On TED we can listen to an amusing tale about how Salman Khan developed his idea to create Khan Academy. Of course, TED represents excellence in each field We all have our favourite sites where we can find the video we are looking for, but for those who need a few ideas, there are some suggestions on this blog: http://blogs.techsmith.com/for-educators/ten-ways-to-use-video-in-the-classroom/ Anyway, a good start is always the list of the Top 100 Videos for Teachers it is a selection of YouTube videos and it is arranged according to the main school subjects so they are easily grouped and ready to use.

Of course a selection is always reductive and personal, but these could be very some very useful links:

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<td>2- A short love story</td>
<td>2- <a href="https://vimeo.com/877053">https://vimeo.com/877053</a></td>
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<td>A SELECTION OF SITES</td>
<td><a href="https://sites.google.com/site/aquestionofwill/links-of-interest">https://sites.google.com/site/aquestionofwill/links-of-interest</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGLISH THROUGH SONG AND ENGLISH THROUGH MOVIES</td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWyMyElbKPZRNEmbxeYBqNQ">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWyMyElbKPZRNEmbxeYBqNQ</a></td>
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Who’s in the Classroom? (2)
by Melanie Rockenhaus

What’s going on in English classrooms in Italy? Who are the teachers and what do they think of their jobs?
This series takes you through the classrooms of Italy to answer those questions.

This month we’re moving north and joining Betty Marcel’s classroom near Rovereto (TN). Originally from Calcutta, India, Betty is an English Literature graduate who studied to become a Social Worker, a profession she practiced in London for many years. When she moved to Italy in 1997, she took a TEFL course and has been teaching English ever since, in private schools, secondary schools, companies and at the university level. Currently she teaches Business English every morning for a training agency to adults who have just lost their jobs. Her lessons include English for Human Resources, for administrators, and for meetings, including listening and making presentations.

Working with the newly unemployed, she remarks, “requires one to be sensitive, good at motivating and engendering a positive attitude”. But staying positive isn’t a problem for Betty, since she can’t think of a single thing she doesn’t like about teaching. She gets a thrill from her students’ language progress, and she also enjoys helping students become independent learners by showing them how to access free specialist material online, such as the British Council language learning sites. Her success stories include many former students who wrote their first e-mail or participated in their first conference call in English, and thank her for helping them get to that point.

Concerning ELT in Italy, Betty says there are “loads of excellent teachers” but “there’s a terrible fault in the system”. In her opinion, the English secondary curriculum should be reviewed and an emphasis should be placed on communicating in English rather than on necessarily teaching English literature in English. This because she has found that students struggle so hard to understand Beowulf, Shakespeare, etc., in English that in desperation they just resort to summarizing, memorizing and regurgitating information on exams. She feels that it would be better to have “Italian kids study Shakespeare in Italian as opposed to just analyzing bits and pieces of the History of English Literature in a superficial dumbed-down version”.

She also wonders if the current ministerial emphasis on CLIL is having a negative effect on Italian students’ higher-level, specialist learning. Betty has worked as a language support teacher for CLIL classes and has found that too often teachers have to simplify and summarize the lessons in order for students to grasp the information in English. These same concepts would be easily accessible to the students in Italian, but their learning is being sacrificed to the necessities of the CLIL reform.

Betty’s interview ends with a wish. Her secret weapon is certainly her kindness to her students, and she asks TESOL members to remember to be kind. As Henry James said, “Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. The third is to be kind.” Let’s add additional kindness to our teaching toolkits when we return to class in the fall!

Do you know of an interesting English teacher who would like to be interviewed for this series? If you do, please contact me at rockenhaus@gmail.com.

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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 2015 September-October issue is September 30th
Learning to Learn English in Primary School
by Claudia Valentini [LaMaestrA.it]

Amid the important and often heated debate over ‘educational’ reforms, we are missing an obvious opportunity to use our best practice to improve the education our children receive dramatically: the Learning to Learn perspective, which is the creation of EFL environments and learning contexts that make learning, in general, and FL learning, in particular, more effective.

Learning to Learn is an umbrella term for a wide variety of activities designed to develop learning strategies. It is primarily focused on the processes of learning and aims to improve pupils’ attention on how they learn in addition to what they learn. It envisages that different learners have different ways of learning and different preferences regarding activities and learning resources. It therefore aims to develop self-awareness and, eventually, leads pupils to a conscious development of their own learning strategies, so they can become more autonomous learners.

The best practice to be taken into account is that our educational focus has to be shifted from the curricular subjects (Maths, History, EFL…) to a cross-curricular perspective, in which all school subjects contribute to develop fundamental skills and work together to offer children valuable learning experiences. Furthermore, school has to contribute to train this lifelong ability of Learning to Learn, that finds its grounds in the right of each child to be granted an effective education.

We have to look upon Learning to Learn as part of the purpose of a general language education syllabus. It should help learners to understand the nature of the activity they are engaged in better, and thus to have a clearer perception of what they are doing when they undertake the many diverse games and challenges that make up a language course. At the same time, it should help them to put the learning of the English Language into a wider context, this contributing to their general education, and, in particular, to their understanding of the nature of language and of themselves as language learners.

With a Learning to Learn perspective we create powerful learning experiences and hold that children’s autonomous use of a FL will be a crucial factor in future learning.

Classroom practice and lesson plans must, therefore, present activities geared towards the training of cognitive and metacognitive skills, such as monitoring their own work, self-assessment, or, simply, the training of cross-curricular skills such as attentiveness to tasks, active listening, self esteem and motivation.

Learning to Learn in EFL has to be linked to the curricular best practice so that each subject should develop metacognitive skills and train children’s skills with the aim of aiding learners to become autonomous and self-regulated in their learning experiences.

Metacognitive skills are not used by everyone, partly because they require considerable effort and hence motivation. FL teachers in Primary Schools must see their central role not as deliverers of linguistic knowledge but as facilitators of communicative competence in learners. Our crucial goal is to empower pupils to become autonomous learners. This happens most effectively when we tap into their needs and motivations, help them understand their own learning process, and allow them to take charge of their own learning from the very beginning. EFL teachers must, then, focus on creating an educational environment that supports inquiry-based, student-centered learning, where pupils are encouraged to find entry points into the mandated curriculum in ways that are meaningful to them.

A successful EFL learner, on the other hand, should be able to manage information, a crucial skill as life becomes more digital, too. Pupils should learn in ways that disregard traditional disciplines like English and Maths, instead focusing on real world problems that allow crossover and interplay. The focus should be on providing student-centered experiences that bring out qualities in students that aren’t necessarily measurable.

Learning to Learn competent pupils are aware,
curious, and interested in learning about the world and how it works. They can use the ideas, tools, methods, and languages that are central to any discipline (Mathematics, Literature, History, Science, and Arts) to engage the pressing issues of our time. They deploy and develop this expertise as they investigate such issues, recognizing multiple perspectives, effectively communicating their views, and taking action to improve the world we live in.

Perhaps, most importantly, kids should be taught how to learn, especially since the content or specific skills needed in the future are yet unknown.

Resources:
Cameron, L. (2001) Teaching Languages to Young Children. Cambridge: CUP

Dyslexia and Foreign Language Teaching

This free online course is designed for current and trainee teachers of additional languages. It offers you practical tools, as well as theoretical insights, to best accommodate and meet the needs of students with dyslexia in foreign or second language classes.

The course gives an up-to-date overview of current theoretical knowledge about the nature of dyslexia and how it affects the learning of additional languages.

You will learn about a variety of useful techniques, including recent computer-assisted tools, which you can take into your classroom, to help students with dyslexia in acquiring another language.

Practical guidance and advice is also provided on enhancing the phonological awareness, vocabulary knowledge and reading skills of dyslexic language learners.

The materials and tasks in the course are designed to be applicable for various age groups of dyslexic students and for a variety of language learning contexts. These include both the teaching of English as a foreign or second language, and the teaching of modern foreign languages.

Start date: to be announced
Register interest: https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/dyslexia

40 … and Moving On …

by Lina Vellucci

(continued from p.1)
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 relativoo 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 eventuali 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).

---

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TESOL Italy’s 40th Annual National Convention 2015

13-14 November

PLENARY SPEAKERS

PAUL BRADDOCK
sponsored by The British Council

RUSSELL STANNARD
sponsored by Nile

DIANE LARSEN-FREEMAN
sponsored by the Public Affair Section of the US Embassy in Rome

HENRY G. WIDDOWSON
sponsored by Oxford University Press
TESOL Italy’s 40th Annual National Convention 2015

13-14 November

40...and Moving On...

New Identities - New Englishes
Breakthroughs in Professional Development
Progression and Continuity in ELT

Talks—Workshops—Poster
Sessions —Book and Software Exhibit
Sirio di Giuliomaria Award
Raffle

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00145 Rome