Every year when our Convention comes round it seems impossible that 12 months have passed since the last one. What an incredible year 2015 that marks TESOL Italy’s 40th anniversary. Everyone at TESOL Italy has worked hard to make this convention an interesting one and of high quality.

Speakers from all over the world have come to honor and celebrate and I’d like to thank each and every one of them together with the over 300 teachers and publishers from Italy and abroad that have taken part in our convention for their continuing support and involvement.

Special thanks go to the U.S. Embassy and MIUR, the British Council, Oxford University Press and Norwich Institute of Language Education for sponsoring our speakers and convention and for supporting TESOL Italy in its mission to promote teacher professional development in Italy.

Michael Joseph Ennis, the Val d’Adige LG coordinator, has sent us a heartfelt report on our convention for this issue of the Newsletter. Advocacy for professional development is what TESOL Italy

On TESOL International website a virtual seminar is advertised which caught my attention and might actually interest all of us: “Using Formative Assessment in the Classroom to Monitor Student Learning Development”. It will be held on January 13, 2016 from 4.30 to 6 PM (Rome Time) by Lorraine Valdez Pierce. The seminar aims at helping teachers

- to go “beyond pencil-paper tests”;
- to use scoring guides and exemplars to illustrate learning targets;
- to provide scaffolding to increase validity of assessment results;
- to give focused, descriptive feedback to guide student learning;
- to find time for formative assessment.

“The presenter will lead participants in examining how, when, and why they use assessments and propose using formative assessment to monitor and improve student learning. Teachers use summative assessments at the end of an instructional unit or course of study, to assign a grade, or for annual evaluation of language proficiency. This webinar addresses what to do in between summative assessments to determine and promote student progress toward learning targets.

Whether or not we can register and follow the seminar, I suggest that we all consider the importance of formative assessment and plan to incorporate some formative (continued on p.9)
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TESOL Italy membership dues for the year 2015:
1) ordinary members: • 25,00;
2) students under 30: • 15,00;
3) supports, schools, universities, agencies: • 60,00
   (including subscription to English Teaching Forum).
Subscription to English Teaching Forum (4 yearly issues): • 15,00.

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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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Enjoy your reading!

From the editor
Rethinking education: New Year’s resolutions
Daniela Cuccurullo

A New Year’s resolution is a popular tradition in which a person makes a promise to do an act of self-improvement or something nice, when the New Year is just around the corner.

General goals may include resolutions to:
• Improve physical or mental well-being
• Improve education
• Volunteer to help others
• Spend quality time with family members and friends
• Settle down, get engaged/get married, have kids
• Be more involved in sports or different activities
• Enjoy life more

As teachers, we should always strive to improve. Reflection is a necessary part of being a teacher; however, there are many other possible resolutions for teachers that can drive improvement. The current issue of the newsletter offers food for thought to set your own resolutions in the educational field: from ‘Using Formative Assessment in the Classroom to Monitor Student Learning Development’ to ‘find resources for exams preparation’, from ‘rethinking education to promote transversal skills’ to keep moving on as a Tesoler. Or just to join new courses to enhance lifelong learning. Plenty of ideas and experiences to make you reflect and set your plans. We hope you’ll share them within the community.

Enjoy your reading!
In this Christmas time devoted to feelings and wishes let’s have a look at what kind of daily life feelings – interiezioni del sentimento - were considered worth expressing in this grammar book dating back to 1896.
has promoted since it was founded by Mary Finocchiaro in 1975. Please have a look at the article that one of Mary Finocchiaro’s friends, Mrs. F. Pierleoni Menichelli, former U.S. Cultural Affairs Assistant to the Cultural Attache’, wrote for us in memory of this marvelous woman and teacher. Throughout these 40 years TESOL Italy has increased its membership even if there have been drawbacks in the years of recession. It seems from our records that the trend is changing and teachers are more and more willing to get involved and they are showing serious concern for professional and language development.

This was also underlined by the LG coordinators that had two luncheon meetings during the convention. They discussed some relevant issues, especially how to reorganize and give new energy to those groups who had been at a standstill for some time. I’m sure that the New Year will carry new ideas on how to succeed in promoting professionalism and excellence in language teaching. I had the pleasure to meet teachers who I hadn’t seen for some time and new comers who showed great enthusiasm for the thought-provoking sessions they had attended. It warmed my heart to know that the call for attending the convention became a must for so many committed teachers.

By the time this issue comes out, with all the hustle and bustle of the end of term at school and the holidays round the corner, I know that it’ll be difficult to find time for reading this Newsletter, but I do hope that you make some ‘me time’ in order to receive my best wishes for a Wonderful Holiday Season and a Bright and Happy New Year.

Lina Vellucci
President TESOL Italy

Who’s who?
NILE 1st prize winner at 40th TESOL Italy National Convention

My name is Gun-Marie Larsson and I was born in Sweden, where I grew up. I have always loved travelling and learning languages, so the choice to become a teacher was an easy one. I spent 13 summers teaching English in Finland, working for the Swedish language school EF (Europeiska Ferieskolan), where the students had lessons, spare time activities and excursions. They all stayed with host families and so did I.

I have masters in the following languages: Swedish, English, and German. I have written course books in Swedish and English in Sweden for high school students. In 2005, I moved to Hanoi to teach Swedish at UNIS (United Nations International School) and I stayed there for four years, fully enjoying the life in an Asian country and all the exciting travelling in the region.

In 2009, I moved to Belgium, where I teach Swedish, English B (1B) and EAL at St. John’s International School in Waterloo, south of Brussels. I still enjoy travelling, a nice dinner with friends, books and films and I miss not being able to have a dog.

Kind regards,
Gun-Marie Larsson
Who’s in the Classroom? (4)

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 interview takes us to the University of Siena, where Maryann Montesanto teaches EFL. Originally from Ontario, Canada, Maryann has two Bachelor degrees, one in English and French and the second in Education in ESL, FSL (French as a Second Language) and English, and a Post Graduate Diploma in TESOL/Applied Linguistics.

Although Maryann became a teacher mainly due to pressure from her parents, she now finds being in the classroom with her students her greatest reward. She enjoys her students’ looks of attentiveness and the pleasure of creating good rapport and familiarity with them, reporting that she feels “like a proud mother hen” when her students go abroad to further their English studies. One of her most gratifying moments was when she found a tiny, folded-up piece of paper left by one of her students, thanking her for being the first teacher who showed her how learning English could be enjoyable and doable. Maryann still keeps that piece of paper with her to remember to be “faithful to those kind words”.

Maryann finds that students arriving at the university speak better English than they did back when she began teaching in Italy in 2001, and she is certain this is thanks to the improvement of elementary and secondary English language teaching. Her only doubt is whether students are being encouraged to consider English studies realistically. For example, she too often has students who try to cram an entire academic year of English into a few weeks before the final exam, and then fail, because they don’t understand that language can only be learned over an extended period of time. For this reason, she hopes that her colleagues teaching secondary school English push their students to be autonomous learners, nurturing their students’ intrinsic motivation to learn continuously and independently.

Maryann is a reflective teacher who likes to try out a new activity and then consider if it went well and how it could be recycled. At the same time, she never reuses entire lesson plans, but creates a new one for each lesson. This pleasure in the “freshness” of her teaching means that she dislikes teaching to standardized exams, where she finds the listening components to be particularly unrealistic. On the other hand, she greatly enjoys learning new facets of grammar or language while teaching, and states that she believes in “lifelong learning”.

Lifelong learning does indeed go hand in hand with good teaching, and we thank Maryann for reminding us of that!

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.
Languages and employability in Europe

by

Letizia Cinganotto
Researcher, INDIRE

The development of transversal skills is considered a priority in the European educational systems, considering the multiple intelligences\(^1\), the skills and the fluencies of our students, new millennium learners. Among transversal skills, a key role is played by the acquisition and promotion of language competences in more than one foreign language, as pointed out in the Communication from the European Commission “Rethinking Education”\(^2\) (2012), which underlines how proficiency in more than one foreign language can make the difference in the labour market.

The study carried out by the European Commission in 2011, titled “PIMLICO: Promoting, Implementing, Mapping Language and Intercultural Communication Strategies in Organizations and Companies”\(^3\) was the first phase of an initiative aimed at promoting the greater use of language management strategies by European small and medium-sized enterprises. The report collects examples of best practices in 40 European SMEs, selected for their important trade growth as a result of progressive language strategies. Recruiting multilingual staff features prominently among these strategies.

The report from the Thematic expert group of the European Commission "Languages for jobs"\(^4\) (2012) includes policy recommendations which can bring about a better match between demand and supply of language and communication skills on the European labour market. The report collects and describes examples of good practice, studies and relevant policy developments and challenges at European level.

Strongly connected with language competences, employability and entrepreneurship education is transnational mobility, which is being promoted by Erasmus+, the EU funding programme for education and training 2014-2020, highlighting, among its priorities, the key role that transversal skills can play for employability and creation of new ventures. Considering the above mentioned European Commission’s initiatives and reports, the link between language competences and employability is evident and effective.

The European Commission, upon agreement between DG Education and Culture (EAC) and DG Joint Research Centre (JRC), has recently published a report, titled “Technical report on foreign language skills and employability”\(^5\), which focuses on the relationship between foreign language skills and the likelihood of being in employment.

Using data from the Adult Education Survey (AES 2011) concerning 25 Member States, Italy included, the main focus of the report is to show how skills in foreign languages increase the employment rates of 25-64

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year-old adults. Moreover the report shows different relationships between language skills and employment for specific languages (English, French, German, Russian and Spanish) and age groups (25-40 and 41-64).

Main findings state that the competence in foreign languages is an important factor for being employed, although with different patterns, according to specific languages, proficiency levels and age groups. Across EU Member States, in general, employed people master more foreign languages than those who are unemployed or inactive. English, German and French are the best known foreign languages in Europe.

Figure 1 clearly shows that the link between language knowledge and employment status is positive in 17 Member States.

Figure 2 – Positive associations of the number of languages known and language proficiency with employment status – significant results

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Figure 2 shows in an effective way that being proficient in at least one of the two best known foreign languages is positively linked with employment chances in 6 Member States.

In particular, as far as the English language is concerned, in 13 Member States knowing English is associated with higher chances of employment.

In 10 Member States (for the age group 25-40) and in 16 Member States (for the age group 41-64), there is a positive association between knowing a foreign language or being proficient in English and employment status. To sum up, it is evident that language competence is a key factor for being employed, even with different patterns and modalities, according to specific languages, age groups and level of mastery. These findings should be widely spread among our students in order to get them aware of the importance of language competences later on in their lives.

The Thunder and Lightning Professor

John Rassias, former holder of the distinguished William R. Kenan Chair and recipient of several Outstanding Teacher of the Year awards, passed away on 2 December at the age of 90.

I met him back in 1997, when he generously funded my visit to Dartmouth College via the ALPs scholar and Jessie Matthew Diffley Scholar awards. An article in TIME magazine in 1978 read, "In a large sense, language study is thriving at Dartmouth because of the ebullient personality and unique teaching method of John Rassias." And literally overflowing with enthusiasm and vivacity was he at all moments, reaching out to touch his students in class for 'awakening' and even occasionally dropping to his knees - below the student - to both highlight and hint at the need to overturn power relations: "Acting and life are inseparable from effective teaching."

His unique method to teach languages, that was adopted by the Peace corps, revolved around the idea that "there is no such thing as a bad student. There are only bad teachers. And they're bad because they don't care enough. They don't put enough energy into it, they don't show respect for their students, and they don't prepare their lessons."

Goodbye, John. You will be fondly remembered.

Emilia Di Martino, Università Suor Orsola Benincasa, Napoli
Food for thought
by Franca Ricci Stephenson

(continued from p.1)

assessment activities into our classroom activities in between assessment dates. Such activities focus on
the learning process and offer teachers and students vital information about teaching and learning; they
give students chances to participate in modifying or planning the upcoming classes, and, as we well
know, participation in the learning process improves motivation and raises awareness. We should
inform students that formative assessment is not included in their grades and it should not be used to
calculate a teacher’s performance, but that it is very helpful to direct the teaching/learning process.
Example of formative assessment can easily retrieved from our memory or found in the internet. They include, among others: Keeping individual and
class logs, discussions, peer observation, peer correction, creating a picture to illustrate a story,
asking students to write feed backs on lessons, metacognition activities allowing students to process
what they did and why it was done.

While the goal of formative assessment is to gather feedback that can be used by the teachers and the
students to guide improvement, the goal of summative assessment is to measure the level of
success. However, the outcome of a summative assessment can be used formatively to help improve
the learning process.

As teachers we need to share knowledge and experience with other teachers, not just at the
beginning of our teaching career, but throughout our entire teaching life, and bringing the teaching and
learning process back into the foreground would be a deeply rewarding topic for study groups in any
school, or in more formal study groups such as our TESOL Groups in Italy. Let’s make it again a point
of investigation and on-going study.

December 2015

Mary Finocchiaro award

Mary Finocchiaro was an honored TESOL legend. Teacher, supervisor, principal, professor, author,
lector, and consultant, she served TESOL, the organization and the profession, with unbridled
enthusiasm and consummate professionalism.

Dr Finocchiaro served TESOL first as member of the Executive Committee, then as First Vice President,
as President from 1970-1971, and then for two years as ex officio member of the Executive Committee.
Her principal concern was always the classroom language teacher. Her respect and love was for
language teachers and revealed in all her speeches and publications.

During TESOL conventions, always surrounded by admirers, she was affectionately called “The Queen
of TESOL”. If she were Japanese, she would have been proclaimed a ‘National Treasure’. She was
TESOL’s treasure and an award was created in her name in 1989. The award was designed to recognize
the inspiration and dedication of a creative classroom teacher who had developed innovative materials.
A Tribute to Mary Finocchiaro

from a dear friend

It’s incredible, but still today after my four years of retirement and forty years of service for the Cultural Office of the American Embassy, whenever anyone talks about TESOL, the very first image that quickly comes to my mind is Mary Finocchiaro. About a week ago, I learned from its president that TESOL Italy had recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. There, I spontaneously thought I should remember Mary in some way and that I actually owed her a little homage. When the president encouraged me to write a short article about Mary for TESOL’s newsletter, I gladly accepted knowing however, it was not going to be easy to summarize in a short article the experience of coming to know Mary and the many qualities that characterized this very special woman. Having shared the Cultural office space with Mary for some time, many fond memories come back to mind. As time passed, our friendship became strong and precious. During our long conversations, I appreciated the values possessed by this “wonderful human being.” (This is how she often referred to persons she really liked.) The many anectodes I could recount would be amusing and descriptive of Mary’s rich and vigorous personality. In addition to her unique and high professional skills, her determination in carrying out the projects that were so dear to her heart, I particularly appreciated her deep passion for life in all its various aspects. Undoubtedly, Mary was blessed with a natural inclination for learning and teaching languages but what impressed me most was her ease and way of coming across when speaking publicly. She was a master in disseminating and transmitting all her wealth of knowledge to the educators, scholars and colleagues around the globe. Indeed, Mary’s generous contributions were instrumental in promoting and achieving TESOL’s worldwide objectives. In a time when women were practically not represented or fatigued to enter the working world, Mary was already then a leader, a dedicated career woman. Still today, her success stories represent a genuine example for every woman to follow. I could continue to praise Mary’s qualities and values but we all know that the numerous works and publications she has left with us speak for her.

No doubt, we will always treasure Mary’s tireless efforts in instituting and promoting TESOL Italy. A precious legacy she left behind not only for friends and members of TESOL Italy but for TESOL worldwide.

Mrs. Federica Pierleoni

Mrs. Federica Pierleoni was Assistant to the Cultural Attache’ at the U.S., Embassy in Rome for many years and worked at the Cultural Office for 40 years. Before retiring 4 years ago she was the Cultural Exchanges Specialist.

We warmly thank Mrs. Pierleoni for her kind contribution to TESOL Italy’s Newsletter and for extending Mary Finocchiaro’s memory to future members of our association that was so dear to her.

Lina Vellucci

President TESOL Italy
Is it possible to find resources for exams preparation? Where can you find them? First of all, which exams?
Of course we talk about external boards of examination and these are the institutions recognised by the Ministry of Education in Italy: Cambridge ESOL, City and Guilds (Pitman), Edexcel /Pearson Ltd, Educational Testing Service (ETS) http://www.ets.org, English Speaking Board (ESB), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Trinity College London (TCL) www.trinitycollege.it, Department of English, Faculty of Arts - University of Malta, National Qualifications Authority of Ireland - Accreditation and Coordination of English Language Services (NQAI – ACELS), Ascentis; AIM Awards; Learning Resource Network (LRN) http://www.lrnglobal.org/.

As you can see there are too many boards so this month we will take into consideration only Cambridge English Language Assessment (Cambridge English) that provides the world's most valuable range of exams and qualifications and the most popular too. Here is the list of Cambridge English exams: IELTS - International English Language Testing System; First (FCE) - First Certificate in English (B2); Advanced (CAE) - Certificate of Advanced English (C1); Proficiency (CPE) - Certificate of Proficiency in English (C2); Preliminary (PET), PET for Schools - Preliminary English Test (B1); Key (KET) - Key English Test (A2); BEC - Business English Certificates (B1, B2, C1); BULATS - Business Language Testing Service http://www.examenglish.com/cambridge_esol.php

Here are some useful links.

| Cambridge English: KEY (KET) | • A2 Elementary  
|• http://www.examenglish.com/KET/ 
|• KET  
| Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET) | • B1/ Intermediate level of English  
|• http://www.examenglish.com/PET/ 
|• PET  
| Cambridge English: First (FCE) The First Certificate in English | • B2/ Upper Intermediate  
|• http://www.examenglish.com/FCE/ 
|• FCE  
| Advanced (CAE) | • (C1) Certificate of Advanced English  
|• http://www.flo-joe.co.uk/cae/students/tests/  
| IELTS Academic | • http://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/prepare-test/free-practice-tests  
|http://www.examenglish.com/IELTS/IELTS_Academic.html  
| IELTS General | • http://www.ieltshelpnow.com/free_ielts_lessons.html  
| Business Certificates | • http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/business-certificates/
TESOL Italy’s 40th National Convention: Observations of a “newer” Tesoler
by Michael Ennis

A community of practice that keeps on moving

TESOL Italy celebrated its 40th anniversary at the National Convention in Rome on November 13 and 14, 2015 and there were no tell tale signs of a midlife crisis. The Convention still resides in the same old Polo Didattico, and TESOL Italy publicly “renewed its vows” with the likes of the British Council, the Italian Ministry of Education, and the Cultural Affairs Office of the U.S. Embassy in Rome. As always, the TESOL Italy leadership put together a very impressive lineup of plenary talks (Paul Braddock, Diane Larsen-Freeman, Russell Stannard, and Henry Widdowson) and welcomed parallel session speakers from all corners of Italy as well as from other countries. The buzz at the Convention was that over 300 people attended this year!

In the eternal city, 40 years may seem insignificant in the grand scheme of things. When in Rome, one is reminded around every corner of the fragile and temporal essence of everything we humans do. But one is also reminded that when we find a way to cooperate and collaborate in spite of our many differences in opinions and motivations, we can change the course of history and leave a mark for posterity.

For any non-profit professional organization to sustain itself for 40 years is no small feat. For an organization of English teachers to sustain itself for 40 years in Italy (a nation which, justifiably or not, has been accused on multiple occasions of not adequately supporting ELT) is an extraordinary accomplishment.

What is the source of TESOL Italy’s longevity? Diane Larsen-Freeman might argue that the answer to that (and any other) question is “complex”. The aspiring applied linguist in me would tend to agree. But the language teacher in me always wants to provide clear and simple answers, and as someone who is still relatively new to TESOL Italy (without first-hand knowledge of the organization’s “complex” history), I can perhaps offer one such answer. To put it as simply as possible, everyone involved in TESOL Italy is passionate: passionate about teaching English, passionate about becoming better teachers, and passionate about continuously improving the quality of ELT in Italy. The only way I can describe this passion is to share my own encounters with it.

My first TESOL Italy National Convention was in 2012. My motivation for attending was, frankly, to add another conference presentation to my curriculum vitae and to establish a few new professional connections in Italy. I had attended and spoken at a few large (primarily academic) conferences and conventions before and the experience was becoming rather routine: perhaps you receive a few insightful comments or challenging questions about your talk and afterwards you might exchange contact information with someone who is studying or experimenting with something similar. But if it is not an event which you have been attending for many years or were involved in organizing, then attending or even speaking at a convention can be a very anonymous experience.

My first TESOL Italy NC did not follow this routine. For example, I still recall when Lina Velluci, who was then the second vice president and the chair of the Convention, introduced herself while I was sitting in the hallway after my workshop in 2012. She remembered my name from the list of speakers, apologized for not attending my workshop, and explained that she had thought it sounded very interesting and had supported its inclusion. All three years I have returned to the Convention I have met at least one person who remembers my first workshop in 2012 – a workshop given by your average English teacher who was (and is!) unknown in Italy and everywhere else in the world.

At many conferences I have attended, it seems that both speakers and participants are there mostly to demonstrate how smart they are in a public forum. During the discussion after a presentation, an audience member may attempt to deconstruct the talk or will spend ten minutes giving their own talk in response.
Speakers and audience members almost seem to be talking to themselves rather than with each other.

This has never been my experience at TESOL Italy. After my fourth NC, I am convinced that the vast majority of Tesolers, both speakers and participants, are professionals who attend in order to share with and learn from each other. Questions after talks ask for background information, details and advice; comments are about sharing similar or dissimilar experiences or to propose solutions to challenges the speaker presented during the talk. If an audience member disagrees with a speaker’s statement, they do not hesitate to express their disagreement freely and openly!

In the Spring of 2014 I decided that I wanted to found a local group in Val d’Adige in order to create a similar dialog amongst professionals in the area where I teach. The Executive Committee invited me to the National Committee Meeting in Rome to give me the opportunity to meet them in person and to explain the procedure for starting a new group. Without my notes I can remember only two things that were said at the meeting. The first was the decidedly formulaic (and ominous!) greeting from one of the ex-presidents: “Welcome to where old TESOL Italy presidents go to die!” The second is that at some point during the meeting another ex-president turned to me with a mixed expression of disapproval and embarrassment (and a touch of pride) and said “I am sorry you have to experience this.” Presumably both were alluding to the fact that, to an outsider, the meeting might seem to consist mostly of bickering about inconsequential details. I do recall on more than one occasion seeing then president Beth Ann Boyle, who presided over the meeting, shake her head and grin with resignation each time a simple announcement or some seemingly insignificant detail spawned ten minutes of heated debate.

But what I observed was neither bickering nor a failure in the art of decision-making and consensus. I saw a group of professionals engage in an intense discussion of issues, ideas and plans about which they hold strong opinions and in which they all hold a personal stake. At times, I witnessed some of them on the verge of arguing over something as seemingly mundane as the shade of color of the font on a flyer. But I also saw them make many crucial collective decisions (not always unanimous), and twenty minutes later I saw them laughing and joking with each other over a potluck meal as if nothing had happened, before continuing the process shortly thereafter. I then saw them hug and kiss each other as they left the meeting. What I witnessed was open and passionate dialog, something that so many of our institutions lack nowadays. What I witnessed was a community of practice at work, and I knew I wanted to be a part of it.

My humble opinion is that as long as this passion burns openly at meetings and conventions, TESOL Italy will keep on moving...

**Trying to move on...**

There is one particular event that occurred during this year’s Convention that I do not want to write about, not because of its complexity and not because TESOL Italy members in all likelihood have very strong and diverse opinions on all the related issues. I am not afraid of complexity or controversy. I do not want to write about it because just thinking about it makes me want to cry. But I am compelled to write about the terrorist attacks in Paris, because, for me, they will always be a defining moment of the 40th Convention.

On the evening of Friday November 13, 2015, I had the privilege of attending the social dinner for the second year in a row. The meal was once again both pleasant and productive. I sat with the founders of the newest local groups from Bologna and Marche and we discussed many of the themes of the day. We chatted about the real-world practicalities of embracing English as a lingua franca in our profession (as Henry Widdowson had suggested a few hours earlier) and whether or not we should still be permitted to use terms such as “input”, “output” and “acquisition” (terms which Diane Larsen-Freeman believes to be outdated oversimplifications). We also discussed numerous potential ways in which LGs could collaborate in the future.

As we were drinking wine and eating TESOL Italy’s birthday cake in one European capital on the evening of Friday November 13, unbeknownst to us a senseless massacre of innocent people was underway in another
European capital. I briefly watched a news report about the terrorist attacks when I arrived at my hotel lobby, but did not hear specifics until the next morning, and had no emotional response until the evening of Saturday November 14.

As I often do when I am alone in another city, I took a stroll through Rome after the conclusion of the Convention on Saturday and around 9PM found myself in Campo de’ Fiori. I was unaware that the French embassy was located in a smaller adjacent square. When I came upon the intentionally darkened (and heavily guarded) square and the spontaneous candlelight memorial, my eyes watered... (I am not comfortable crying and less comfortable admitting that I did. But the last time I had an emotional response like this was when as an undergraduate university student I overslept for class on September 11, 2001 and as a result watched a live feed of the second plane crash into the World Trade Center while I ate breakfast alone.) The thick melancholy in the square overwhelmed me. People of different nationalities were lighting candles, embracing each other, weeping to themselves, or just staring in silent disbelief. For me it was a cathartic experience, the likes of which we rarely experience when tragic events are mediated after-the-fact on television or the internet.

Via social media and the news media I heard and read a broad range of responses to this atrocity in the immediate aftermath. Some advised caution and patience as we determine what actually happened and why it happened. Others called for “swift justice” and “all out war” on ISIS, which of course our elected leaders are already pursuing. Some tried to remind us that these murders were committed by a few and do not represent the majority of Muslims. Others called for complete bans on refugees from the Middle East and even the mass deportation of all Muslims.

I have plenty of informed opinions on these ideas, but I am not an expert on international politics, national security or military strategy... My path in life was to become a language teacher, but, as a language teacher, I am convinced that our profession plays a crucial role in the “war on terror”. In fact, I believe we find ourselves on the front lines of that war.

Our job is clearly not to seek out and eliminate existing threats to national security or world peace. But I do believe that part of our job is to contribute to their prevention. As Henry Widdowson suggested at the Convention, as a community of practice we are gradually (and admittedly with some reluctance) abandoning the idea that we are to teach our students how to become “near native speakers” of English. The emerging goal of language instruction is instead to teach our students how to become life-long language learners and more effective communicators in multi-cultural and multi-linguistic societies, where most of this learning will occur outside formal education. To accomplish this we must instill in our students love and respect for foreign languages and cultures, and we must guide them in developing their ability to use English to communicate with people from linguistically and culturally different backgrounds. In short, it is our duty to teach our students how to engage in passionate and open dialog about complex issues with people who have divergent opinions and motivations, just as we Tesolers do at least once a year.

We may never be able to convince policymakers or military and national security advisors of our vital role, but we are all aware of it on some level. We are being forced to come to terms with it in our increasingly multi-lingual and multi-cultural classrooms. Our task is complex, and perhaps never-ending, but being part of a community of professionals who are passionate about teaching language and culture should give us some solace and help us move on...
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).

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