



NewsLetter

Vol. XX, No. 5, November-December 2010

A message from Stefano Mochi TESOL Italy new President

Dear Tesol-Italy's members.
Dear Friends,

As a new President, I wish to thank all those who participated in our Convention in Rome last November and contributed to its success. Working for our association has always been an honour and a privilege for me and it will be all the more so in the future. I do really hope to be equal to the task.

My first thoughts go to Tesol-Italy's past President, Marina Morbiducci, with whom I shared many decisions over the last two years and whom I heartily thank for her complete dedication to Tesol-Italy during the period of her Presidency. Like her, I will do my best to work hard for the growth of our association. My acknowledgments, naturally, also go to the Executive Committee for having once again drawn a programme capable of addressing the numerous issues at stake in EFL teaching. This year's convention, like the past ones, has had the pleasure of hosting outstanding scholars and teachers from all school grades, as well as a wide representation of publishing houses. There are numerous activities and projects awaiting our association in the near future and I firmly believe that we will be capable, as we were in past years, of making EFL teaching more up-dated and attractive, always ready to address crucial problems in our educational system. These being our aims, as an association we will continue to pursue our mission to improve professionalism in language education

To do this we need your collaboration, in order to expand our interests and explore new fields. I feel it my obligation, then, as well as my honour and privilege, to ask all your support. As Tesol-Italy's President I know that I have to be above all a listener and a moderator, sharing my ideas with you. This is precisely the reason why I am looking forward to a challenging and exciting two years with all of you.

Stefano Mochi
Tesol-Italy President

Time flies and language flows

TESOL Italy 35th National Convention Opening Address

by Marina Morbiducci

President, TESOL-Italy

That is the incipital line which you could read in the call for papers of our 35th national conference, a statement which well embraces our current beliefs.

Regarding the fact that time flies, no one could argue against it: time is going so fast, these days; one year has passed since November 2009, when we presented our conference entitled "Multiplying Voices"; going back to it, we must admit that it has been a long year, full of significant events for TESOL-Italy: just to name a few: L'Aquila

Action, the Spellevent, Sirio Di Giuliomaria Award, the Communication Committee, New local groups, Language Improvement courses for primary teachers, and so on, these are some of the diverse actions which characterized our activity as an association of volunteer teachers during the year.

Last year, with "Multiplying Voices", we meant to stir up more voices, in a sort of *crescendo*, to encourage participation and communication from different parts and agents.

Today, with "Language Flows", we would like to blend all the different voices which have emerged in some kind of expansive harmony; if you look at the logo that we have chosen for the conference – the logo is well visible in the front cover of the programme booklet that you

have been given at the entrance - you will notice the stylized representation of a colourful wave: each chromatic shade, each stream of colour, can represent an individual and differentiated voice mingling with the others, all advancing in fluid progression and fusion (not confusion, we hope!).

"Language flows": the double meaning is evident. We enjoyed the play with words where the key-term, "flow", could be intended both as verb and noun, at the same time; we thought that the richness of the *double entendre* could be stimulating and representative

of a certain attitude we adopt in our approach to language.

The first inspiration for "language flows" was actually derived from "Global Linguistic Flows", edited by H. Samy Alim, Awad Ibrahim and Alastair Pennycook (2009) where you find specific references to the globalization of language and culture, hip hop poetics and pedagogies, in connection with youth identities and politics of language; but the subsequent reflection was that with the term "flow" we could also represent our vision of language.

In fact, it is in the condition of fluidity that lies the essence of our present lives: merging forms, diluting borders, and joining lines. It is through language that we express our inner changes, but

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TESOL-Italy membership dues for the year 2011:

ordinary members: € 25,00;

students under 30 and SSIS

students: €15,00;

supporters, 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-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.

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, 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.

Officers: Stefano Mochi *President*, Beth Ann Boyle *Vice President*, Lina Vellucci *Second Vice President*, Raffaele Sanzo (MIUR) *Honorary President*, Patrizia Petrucetti *Office Assistant*.

Ex officio members: David Mees, Cultural Attaché, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Rome; Maria Paola Pierini, Cultural Affairs Assistant, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Rome.

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From the Editor

Changes in continuity

Time flies as Morbiducci's article reminds us. The passage of time in TESOL Italy is marked, among other things, by the turnover of roles in the presidency every second year. Stefano Mochi, after two years as Second Vice President and two as First Vice President is now President, and Beth Ann Boyle has moved up to First Vice President; Lina Vellucci was elected Second Vice President in November and in four years she, in turn, will take charge as President. This is the voyage every future president of TESOL Italy embarks on when elected vice president; it is also the way in which TESOL Italy intends to guarantee continuity in its governing bodies, while ensuring a dynamic renewal.

Also the Executive Committee was partly renewed as a result of the elections last November, thus creating a new work group where the experience of the older members and the freshness of the new ones will hopefully create a fruitful atmosphere.

November was the month in which the annual convention took place; it offered food for thought, stimulated discussions and raised new questions as the evaluation papers filled in by most participants show. In the next issue of the newsletter a report on the results of the feedback will be published portraying the multifaceted community of EFL teachers in Italy.

In this issue Stefano Mochi and Marina Morbiducci in their addresses deal with the recent activities and the changes in TESOL Italy; Lucilla Lopriore in her "Buzz Word" discusses the apparent dichotomy between theory and practice - an issue which was brought up in the participants' evaluation forms; Nasoni and Francesconi in their "Hopscotch" article report on an interesting Comenius project in primary schools; Letizia Corbucci, now in charge of the "Webwatch" column, taking hints from the convention, invites teachers to flow on the net, and Ninfa Pagano reports on the activities of the Palermo local group.

One more matter is worth considering carefully: it is the announcement of the Sirio Di Giulio Maria Award for this coming year and the proclamation of the 2010 winner, Attilio Galimberti. The award is meant to honour the memory of Sirio and to reward and promote the work of committed teachers. Still "treasuring the old and challenging the new" as the title of the year 2000 convention in Assisi stated, ready for change in continuity; with this perspective, the editorial board of the Newsletter welcomes the new officers and Executive Committee members and wishes them and all TESOL Italy members a serene and fruitful year.

Annarosa Iraldo



Buzz-words

Lucilla Lopriore

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 Buzz-word: 'a word or phrase that people
 in a particular group start to use a lot
 because they think it is important'

Buzz-word of the day:

Theory & Practice

There has always been a general tendency to consider theory and practice as two separate entities, one, theory, preceding the other one, practice. Practitioners tend to refer to theory when they perform their practice, they tend to rely upon theory as the only dependable source of information and they tend to regard their practice as the direct implementation of their theoretical studies. Theory is - in almost all cases - based upon the observation of practice, but practice is not just the implementation of theory. It is the practitioner's individual response to the context he/she is working in, it is his/her personal elaboration of a set of personalised theoretical assumptions.

So what is theory? A theory is a set of assertions, usually developed by scholars on the basis of research studies, about the nature of reality and the way the world works. It is a set of propositions used as principles of explanations for a set of phenomena.

If we look at the field of second language learning and acquisition (SLA), one of the most renowned scholars, Stephen Krashen (1981), writing about the theories underlying SLA, states that "What theory implies, quite simply, is that language acquisition, first or second, occurs when comprehension of real messages occurs, and when the acquirer is not 'on the defensive'".

What about teachers and their use of theories? As a matter of fact, extensive theoretical knowledge which precedes classroom experience often remains too abstract for teachers to see its relevance for their own context. And, as a consequence, they tend to regard it as irrelevant for their own practice, something they can do without.

In deciding how to develop language teaching methods and materials, practitioners can take three approaches: make use of second language acquisition theory, make use of applied linguistics research, and make use of ideas and intuition from experience. It is this last approach that has been more thoroughly investigated, particularly since the work of scholars such as Bourdieu (1977) on the theory of practice and the fallacy of the rule, Argiris & Schön (1978) on the cycle of reflective practice and action-research, and Clarke (2003,2007) on workable theories in teacher education.

Language teachers need to think about what they do and how and why they do it. Every teacher starts with an initial theory of language teaching and learning, based on personal experiences as a language learner and, in some cases, reading or training. In reflective practice, the teacher applies this theory in classroom practice, observes and reflects on the results, and adapts the theory. The classroom becomes a kind of laboratory where the teacher can relate teaching theory to teaching practice. The theory provides a unifying rationale for the activities that the instructor uses in the classroom; classroom observation and reflection enable the instructor to refine the theory and adjust teaching practice. Concepts that the teacher acquires through reading and professional development are absorbed into the theory and tested in the reflective practice cycle.

As Mark Clarke (2007:52) suggests, teachers should start considering themselves as theory-builders, continuously challenging theories in their own practice. Because "...if you do not build your own theory you have to use someone else's and very likely this will be filtered through the lens of your administrators, a textbook selection committee, or distant policy-makers".

Theory informs practice, but practice informs theory, and we need both.

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TESOL-Italy Sirio Di Giuliomaria Award

SVILUPPARE LE COMPETENZE COMUNICATIVE NELLA CLASSE DI LINGUE

TESOL-Italy ha istituito un premio annuale per onorare la memoria di uno dei suoi soci-cardine, Sirio Di Giuliomaria, che con intelligenza ed entusiasmo ha dato un contributo sostanziale ed imprescindibile al rinnovamento organizzativo e allo sviluppo delle attività di TESOL-Italy. Sirio ha creato le basi dell'assetto organizzativo dell'associazione, promuovendo proficui e duraturi rapporti di collaborazione al suo interno, indispensabili a garantirne l'efficienza e la capacità di operare concretamente, per dare impulso alla didattica delle lingue straniere in Italia e per migliorare la professionalità dei docenti e la qualità del nostro sistema educativo.

Di Sirio vogliamo ricordare l'intelligenza e l'entusiasmo che hanno sempre caratterizzato la sua opera di insegnante e di innovatore, il suo significativo contributo alla glottodidattica in Italia, le sue numerose pubblicazioni, tra le quali rimangono memorabili libri di testo di assoluto rilievo metodologico.

Destinatari del premio:

Possono concorrere:

Docenti di Lingua Inglese,

- di ruolo o non di ruolo,
- italiani o stranieri,
- in servizio presso una Scuola Media Statale o un Istituto di Istruzione Secondaria Superiore Statale.

(N.B. Non sono ammessi a partecipare i membri del Consiglio di Presidenza e del Comitato Esecutivo di TESOL-Italy.)

Obiettivo

Valorizzare e premiare un'esperienza di insegnamento condotta con i propri studenti, esplicitata in un resoconto scritto che indichi in modo chiaro il conseguimento di esiti di profitto nello sviluppo delle competenze comunicative in lingua inglese.

Modalità di partecipazione

Gli aspiranti dovranno presentare il resoconto della loro esperienza di insegnamento, in italiano o in inglese, attraverso una relazione

scritta, corredata da supporti audiovisivi e/o multimediali che contribuiscano ad evidenziare il valore e la qualità dell'intervento condotto. La relazione dovrà essere inviata per via elettronica a: tesolitaly@gmail.com. I supporti audiovisivi e/o multimediali dovranno essere consultabili on-line o inviati all'indirizzo di TESOL Italy:

TESOL-Italy, Sirio Di Giuliomaria Award, Via Boncompagni 2 00187 Roma

entro e non oltre il 1° ottobre 2011. (per gli invii postali farà fede la data del timbro postale)

Il resoconto, riferito ad una esperienza didattica maturata preferibilmente a partire dall'istituzione del premio, nell'anno scolastico 2008-2009, dovrà contenere:

- illustrazione del contesto educativo e didattico in cui l'esperienza è stata condotta;
- obiettivi educativi
- obiettivi linguistici
- descrizione delle attività
- breve descrizione dell'approccio metodologico utilizzato
- tempi e modi di realizzazione
- registrazione audio e/o video della produzione orale e dell'interazione
- commento dell'insegnante riguardante la verifica e valutazione dell'esperienza didattica e degli esiti di profitto nelle competenze comunicativa in lingua inglese.

Sarà escluso il materiale che non si attenga a queste regole.

Il premio sarà assegnato a giudizio insindacabile della giuria, la quale terrà conto in particolare delle seguenti caratteristiche:

- Congruità degli obiettivi, dello svolgimento delle attività, della verifica dei risultati,
- Attendibilità dei risultati come documentata nel resoconto e negli allegati.

Consistenza del premio

- iscrizione per un anno a TESOL International (valore complessivo, euro 130 circa), comprendente l'abbonamento alle riviste "Essential Teacher" e "TESOL Quarterly";
- iscrizione gratuita al convegno annuale di TESOL-Italy e contestuale membership dell'Associazione della durata di un anno, con diritto a ricevere le relative pubblicazioni più l'abbonamento gratuito per un anno al trimestrale English Teaching Forum; (valore complessivo € 85 circa)
- libri utili per la formazione professionale e culturale del docente di lingue, a scelta del vincitore, fino ad un valore complessivo di € 400,00 (I libri verranno acquistati dal vincitore in una libreria di suo gradimento, e la relativa fattura, con il dettaglio dell'acquisto, verrà pagata direttamente alla libreria stessa da TESOL Italy).

La giuria sarà composta da 4 membri facenti parte degli organismi direttivi di TESOL-Italy e presieduta dalla Prof.ssa Maria Cirelli Di Giuliomaria.

La cerimonia di assegnazione del premio avverrà nell'ambito del convegno annuale di TESOL-Italy 2011.

Roma, dicembre 2010

Sirio Di Giuliomaria award granted to “Tandem Project”

The winner of this year's Sirio Di Giuliomaria Award is **Attilio Galimberti** who at present teaches English at the Istituto Superiore “Natta” in Bergamo. He was awarded the prize for his “**Progetto Tandem Italia-USA - Learning English and Italian**”.

The project was carried out in the school years 2006-2009 with students of Liceo Scientifico “Amaldi” in Alzano Lombardo, of Istituto Superiore “G. Carducci” in Ragusa e of Liceo Scientifico “Volterra” in Fabriano who were engaged in online written and spoken language exchanges, both in Italian and in English, with students of Eugene “Oregon University”.

A detailed description of the project by Attilio Galimberti will be published on the next issue of the newsletter.

The award was presented to the winner by Paolo Coppari, one of the members of the evaluating committee of the “Sirio Di Giuliomaria Award”, along with Paola Mirti, Marina Morbiducci, Franca Stephenson and the committee President Maria Cirelli, and by Lucilla Lopriore, Rosanna Morozzo e Cosma Siani, who edited a special issue of TESOL Italy's journal *Perspectives in memory of Sirio di Giuliomaria*.

Paolo Coppari's address given in memory of Sirio on the occasion of the award presentation is reported below.

The “Sirio Di Giuliomaria Award” was created in 2008, it is presented every year at the TESOL-Italy National Convention and is intended to honour the memory of Sirio Di Giuliomaria, who passed away two years ago, here in Rome.

My task here is to briefly introduce Sirio, for those of you who didn't have the chance to know him during his lifetime, and briefly explain the reasons why it was decided to create this award.

We decided to create this award and entitle it to the memory of Sirio because all of us, who have taken part in the building and the development of TESOL-Italy as a professional association feel indebted to him. One of the reasons is - simply put - because he was one of the founders of TESOL-Italy, as far back as the 1970s, and, in the following years, gave a crucial contribution to the growth and the success of the association.

In many ways all of us, senior members of TESOL-Italy, feel as we have been – as we all are - Sirio's pupils.

A lot could be said to introduce Sirio Di Giuliomaria.

He was a very rich and intense person, who committed himself into several walks of life, but no doubt his most remarkable contributions were made to the field of language education.

He was highly regarded as one of the leading figures in this field, both in Italy and abroad, and was appreciated for his qualities as a brilliant speaker at meetings and seminars, or as a trainer at teacher development courses, or as a successful writer of language pedagogy books, textbooks, articles in professional journals, and so on.

However, we like to remember Sirio for what perhaps he wanted to be more than anything else, that is as a school teacher, and a colleague among colleagues.

As a matter of fact, though he could have aimed to some more influential or prestigious positions in the profession, he never wanted to leave his job as a teacher, his school and his students.

And his main concern as a foreign language school teacher was always focused on improving the learners' proficiency in the use of English.

He considered the battle against communicative incompetence as the most important task of the language teacher, and to such battle he devoted the best of his professional skills and efforts, as a teacher, as a teacher trainer and as a writer.

And that also explains the rationale of the Award, which TESOL-Italy has entitled to Sirio.

In fact, as it is clearly stated in the “*bando*”, the award is to be given to an in-service English language teacher, working in an Italian state school, and is meant to

“*Valorizzare e premiare un'esperienza di insegnamento condotta con i propri studenti, esplicitata in un resoconto scritto che indichi in modo chiaro il conseguimento di esiti di profitto nello sviluppo delle competenze comunicative in lingua inglese*”.

I am very pleased to say that all the papers we received for this year's award are highly commendable.

They all show evidence of both the enormous amount of extra work that was involved, and of the high standard of professional commitment of the teachers who submitted them - in times in which the hardships of the job have increased exponentially - and they all deserve to be praised by the evaluating committee.

Unfortunately, there can be only one winner.

However, on behalf of the committee and of TESOL-Italy, I want to formally say thank you to all these colleagues.

Thank you, for sharing and supporting Sirio's belief that good school teaching is possible, and that a school teacher's efforts and professional dedication are worth the while.



Web Watch

by Letizia Corbucci

DIGITAL LEARNERS

As a follow up to TESOL-Italy's National convention in Rome this year I'd like to reflect on the use of technology in the classroom. It will be for those of you who enjoyed the convention and would like to learn more about what the speakers talked about, as well as those of you who were not able to attend. The following links then provide more info on digital learners, blogs, wikis, social networks and so on. Firstly I would like you to watch this video at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_A-ZVCjfWf8.

This is a vision of K12 students today that I saw during S. Licciardi's talk on Saturday morning and that I found particularly inspiring. Our students are already using engaging technologies as learning tools and they are in urgent need of teachers who are willing to use technology's power to help them while learning, this is why it is really important to bear in mind that "we have to change our mind set", as D. Crystal emphasized during his plenary the same day. All of our students are currently using wikis, podcasts, blogs, instant messages, text messages, emails and just a small percentage of us teachers are aware of what they are referring to. With these tools, though, they share their experiences daily. This video reminds us that we all are digital learners and that it is our job to teach our students "to think, to create, to analyze, to apply, to evaluate" but most of all we must not forget to *engage them* as much as we can. For more inspiring ideas about this issue you can watch:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEFKfXiCbLw> or Traditional learner vs digital learner: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBFcZVTagWs>.

David Crystal's plenary focused on "language flows going into new directions". The new tributaries of language flows are not like the old ones. The old ones were very specific and came from masters like Shakespeare but now everything has changed: the Internet is a total change. The Internet contains the largest corpus of language that has ever been created and it is becoming more and more a collection of spoken language. For teachers, the Internet is at the periphery of the learning process while the book is at the centre. On the contrary, for our students the Internet is at the core of their existence and the books are on the edge. For this reason we should try to deal with what we see our students using every day such as Facebook, Twitter, mobile phones and so on. *Our teaching practice has to relate to what is primary and fundamental to them.*

After you finish reading this article you should watch the following video at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NzQqPH3JRw&feature=related>

(a view of 21st century learners) and then surf the net and try to understand how the following sites work - that is if you have never visited them before - because YOU are a digital learner more than anybody else. The first site to visit is:

<http://blogger.com>

a **blog** is an easy to use website where you can post thoughts, interact with people and more. You can use it with your students to organize homework, tests, writing projects and so on. Or you can ask your students to create their own blogs to post their thoughts. The second site is: **www.twitter.com**;

twitter is without a doubt the best way to share and discover what is happening right now. Twitter is a service for friends, family, and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent messages. People write short updates, often called "Tweets" of 140 characters or fewer. All you need to use Twitter is an Internet connection or a mobile phone. Take a look at the following website to find out *nine good reasons for using twitter in your classrooms*: **<http://mrslwalker.com/index.php/2009/03/29/nine-great-reasons-why-teachers-should-use-twitter/>**. - **<http://www.wiki.com>**:

a **wiki** is a database of pages which visitors can edit live. A wiki makes it easy to swap ideas and information on projects.

- **www.facebook.com**:

facebook is a social networking website. Dear *Tesolers*, I'll leave you to do a bit of surfing and remember: *flow* forward not backward!

Save the Date



TESOL Greece, 32nd Annual International Convention

Theme: Taking Every Single Opportunity to Learn (TESOL)

Date: Saturday March 12th and Sunday March 13th, 2011

Venue: Hellenic American Union, 22 Massalias St., Athens, Greece

Event Coordinator:

TESOL Greece 17, Kapodistriou str. 10677 Athens, Greece

Tel/Fax: (+30) 210.7488.411

Website: <http://tesolgreece.org>

E-mail: tesolgreece@gmail.com

Event link: http://tesolgreece.org/convention_2011.htm

TESOL 2011 Annual Convention and Exhibit Examining the 'E' in TESOL March 16-19, 2011

The 45th Annual TESOL Convention and Exhibit will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana in the United States. The convention will take place March 17-19, 2011; with the opening plenary taking place on the evening of March 16, in the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center & the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel. Visit www.tesolconvention.org to download a copy of the Advance Program.

Registration opens on November 17, 2010 for members and on December 1, 2010 for non-members.

Full pre-registration is \$320 for members and \$535 for non-members until February 1, 2011.

To contributors

Please send your contributions in Times new Roman 12 to annarosa.iraldo@fastwebnet.it or tesol@tesol.it

The deadline for submitting articles for the 2011 January-February issue is January 31st



HOPSCOTCH

Resources for teachers

This section addresses issues that are of interest
for teaching English to young learners

Why is a Comenius project useful? Introducing a Comenius project in a primary school.

* * * * *

by Antonietta Nasoni and Antonella Francesconi

This is the second time we have worked on a Comenius 1.1 project with fifth graders at our Istituto Comprensivo “Giò Pomodoro” in Orciano Di Pesaro (PU). A Comenius project¹ is an important experience for children, teachers and everyone involved.

Working on a European project is a unique opportunity for students and teachers to learn about other countries, their customs, food, folklore; and one of the end results is to become more open-minded towards people all around us. Another accomplishment is for children to focus on their own culture and be able to compare it with others across Europe. Through participating in a European partnership – like Comenius – students and teachers learn to challenge stereotypes: by working collaboratively with pupils from other countries children begin to appreciate how much they have in common with their European partners.

Some specific objectives for students are to

- become aware, to varying degrees, of how geographical and historical similarities and differences influence the lifestyles of young people in each country
- approach learning European languages in a fun way
- understand why it is so beneficial to be able to communicate, even at a basic level, in other languages
- understand the importance of effective communication in achieving results and establishing friendships across boundaries
- grasp a greater understanding of what it means to be a member of the European Community and the value of working with others in that community
- understand the importance of developing the skills to work in a group and how these skills can be used throughout their lives
- develop the ability to make decisions as a group
- develop the skills for creating a presentation as a group

The last Comenius project we did was “Case di terra, di pietra, di mattoni... Le case d’Europa.” Our pupils worked together with other pupils from France, the UK and Poland. First, we planned activities in which children created houses made of wood and paper with their parents in order to build their own or their ideal home (see pictures below). We had really wonderful villages. During the Comenius visit we brought these houses with us and exchanged them with our European colleagues. As a result, each child from each country was able to “touch” the house made by their partner, not only see it in a photo! Our French partner gave us some slate tiles from their roofs and children could learn another use of the word “lavagna”.

During the three years of this experience, all the children involved learned to speak with architects, with masons, with people who work on houses. They got to understand new technologies like home automation, they worked using pc technologies surfing websites about houses all around the world; but most importantly, they looked at their own homes with new eyes: not simple walls, rooms, furniture and so on but beyond that too. They reflected on other aspects as well. Long ago the time necessary to build a house was very different from today; and they were also amazed that once people cooked without gas and didn’t have running water in the house. In fact nowadays they don’t know much about fireplaces because they live in small flats.

(continued on p.8)



These houses were made by children and their parents with different materials: paper, small pieces of wood, plastic...real pieces of trees... It was a great way to co-operate in a family!

Activities in chronological order

1st year 2003-2004

- Sharing the exact geographic position of each town participating in the project;
- the “Comenius week”. Each school produced: photos, maps, posters about their towns that were sent to the partner schools;
- the weather: comparing charts that schools had produced in the same period of time and connecting them to the types of building techniques;
- research, study and drawings of proverbs about the weather in L1 and L2;
- study of building materials used in each town: dirt, slate, wood, tile, brick, stone,...
- the “Comenius suitcase”with: building materials, some house models created by students with the help of their parents; photos of details (windows, roofs, doors...)

2nd year 2004-2005

- My house, your house: a survey on the interiors/exterior of students’ homes;
- art and history: houses and monuments, comparing new and old houses; study of historical and artistic buildings;
- natural resources (wood, bricks), visits to museums, factories, quarries...
- interviews to architects, various experts...

3rd year 2005-2006

- Our ideal house. Students imagine and design their future houses, interview an architect, do research on the internet, talk about these houses’ features (solar panels, floor heating system, water and energy recycling and reuse, PVC...) make modifications on the initial projects taking into account the architect’s suggestions and the information they found on the web...), they learn about a domotic house.

Our Comenius project did not just involve our small village, it involved the whole area around, as well, since it examined the different ground in which it is possible to build safely.

Our children met their French friends in our school and they experienced playing together for a day: their minds were open, they had no problems with the language, there was no racism, they were simply children playing with a ball and singing together:

Children learned that outside Mondavio, our small village, there is a world with different houses and with children like them, who go to school everyday, and play and study for a good and positive future.

In ricordo di Giuliano Iantorno

Mario Papa

Giuliano Iantorno, mio amico di una vita e coautore di corsi di lingue innovativi sui quali una generazione di studenti ha imparato l'inglese, se ne è andato con la stessa discrezione che lo ha sempre contraddistinto.

Dotato di vasta cultura, attento a tutte le novità, aveva un carattere buono, semplice e disponibile. Prima e, a volte, durante la sua attività di insegnante di lingua inglese sempre seguito e amato da alunne e alunni, fu anche un valente musicista. Suonava la chitarra in modo magistrale, oltre al piano, e ricercava sempre esecuzioni raffinate.

Lo avevo conosciuto quando avevamo 19 anni. Insieme ad altri amici, scadentissimi musicanti, mettemmo su uno spettacolo al teatro dei Salesiani di Salerno. Un suo amico lo invitò e Giuliano con umiltà e pazienza si unì a noi, lui che suonava già da professionista con il gruppo dei G-Men, sollevando con il suo talento e la sua bravura le sorti dello spettacolo.

Poi diventò insegnante di lingua inglese. Nel 1978 fu nominato aggiornatore dal Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione nell'ambito del "Progetto speciale lingue straniere" e nello stesso anno frequentò un corso di specializzazione in metodologia dell'insegnamento della lingua inglese presso l'Ealing Technical College di Londra. Negli anni successivi è stato aggiornatore e direttore di numerosi corsi di aggiornamento per insegnanti di lingua e letteratura inglese.

Aveva contribuito al movimento Lend scrivendo anche alcuni articoli per la rivista. Un articolo di Giuliano, in particolare, "Lingua e Cultura", divenne molto popolare e punto di riferimento su quell'argomento per molti insegnanti. Insieme, siamo stati più volte relatori ai convegni del TESOL, sia in Italia sia all'estero.

È stato, inoltre, autore e coautore di articoli di glottodidattica su riviste specializzate, come "Lingua e Nuova Didattica", "Scuola e Lingue Moderne", "Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata", di libri di testo di civiltà, di sussidi audiovisivi e di corsi di lingua inglese e francese, alcuni dei quali sono stati pubblicati anche all'estero da prestigiose case editrici straniere.

Ulteriori informazioni su Giuliano Iantorno si possono trovare in:

- Federico Enriques, *Castelli di carte*, Zanichelli 1959-2009: una storia, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2008
- Mario Papa, *A modo mio ...*, Zanichelli, Bologna, 2004

e nel sito: <http://online.scuola.zanichelli.it/multicolour-visions/pagine/gli-autori/>

Time flies and language flows

by Marina Morbiducci

(continued from p.1)

also the fast mutations of the reality surrounding us; it is through the plasticity of language that we give shape to the needs and desires of our inquiring minds. It is in language and through the dynamism of language that the perennial resource of communication thrives, thus maintaining our hope and trust in the community of human beings.

Language is flux; it teaches us the secret energy of transformation and growth; in an epoch of global cultural migrations, language leads the way towards fulfilling potential.

As you can see from the programme booklet, 66 different talks will cover the issue that TESOL-Italy has chosen for its 35th annual convention.

We have thought that devoting attention to **Fostering learner progression** was an appropriate way to care for the learners' linguistic growth and improvement. The learner, the learning environment, the approaches, the materials, the curriculum, and the language content, are all elements in the process. But what are the learners' true needs and how do we meet them? How can we promote critical thinking? How do we sustain continuity? What language do we teach and how do we teach it? How is progress assessed? These and many others are the questions that we daily pose.

At the same time, we felt the urge to focus on the promotion of **intercultural communication** in an age of globalization. There is a growing need to understand and interact with people of diverse cultural, religious, ethnic, social, political, and economic identities. The English language is often a means for this interaction, and communication is the key. What can teachers, schools and students do to understand, accept and even celebrate cultural diversity?

Enhancing new media literacy is a must: technological devices like Smartphones, iPhones, iPods are tools we see students handling with confidence everyday. The increasing use of technology poses a crucial challenge to the language teacher: to what extent have these new tools changed our students' way of learning? How effectively can they be used to enhance motivation and interest? How can teachers strengthen their own abilities to design new ways to cope with the new technologies?

Finally, **implementing effective language policies** offers an opportunity to reflect on the set of choices which determine how and why a second or foreign language is taught: these choices can be affected by ideological issues, by the status of the L2 in the non-native environment, by financial problems, and by national and/or local policies. These are the main issues that have inspired our 35th conference.

We hope you will find some inspiration, too, in the questions we have raised covering such themes: but TESOL-Italy's mission (you can read it in the back cover of the programme), is not to provide answers, but rather to stir ever new queries, among language teachers, collaborating in a global community and interacting in research and reflective practice.

Finally, let me conclude by saying that during this conference I will also conclude my time as president of the association; it has been a very demanding task, but also a highly rewarding experience; it is a multifaceted form of leadership one has to cope with; but I've learned a lot, in different respects. So thank you for having ideally and/or concretely supported me. I pass it on to Stefano Mochi, and after him, to Beth Ann Boyle; and I'm sure that you all TESOLers will strongly support them too in the role they are going to embrace.

Truly, "time flies" and... language flows!

Enjoy the conference!



NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

CREATIVE WRITERS ON TRANSLATION

by Ninfa Pagano

Coordinator of Palermo TESOL-Italy group

On October 25th and 26th the seminar on ‘Creative Writers on Translation’ took place in Palermo at Palazzo Chiamonte-Steri, organized by prof. Eleonora Chiavetta, associate professor of English Language and Translation, University of Palermo, Department of Linguistic and Philological Studies, in cooperation with the TESOL-Italy group of Palermo.

Visiting speakers were poets, like **Mimi Khalvati** (Anglo-Iranian author, among the founders of the School of Poetry and Translation in London), **Stephen Watts** (School of Poetry, London), Italian poets like **Roberto Deidier**, **Aldo Gerbino**, **Stefano Vilardo**, **Cristina Viti**; **Sarah Maguire** was invited but she was unfortunately unable to come.

On the first day the session was opened by Mimi Khalvati who read some of her poems, translated into Italian by prof. Eleonora Chiavetta.

The audience was made up of school and university English teachers as well as students both at university and at Masterly School for Interpreters and Translators, Palermo.

Mimi Khalvati started her talk with some references to an old Persian form of poetry called ‘ghazal’ – on which she shaped some of her compositions - that developed during the 10th century and were devoted to women; they used a lot of symbols to communicate and express feelings to the ‘beloved’, as it was not possible to talk to her directly. The woman was considered as on the top of a hierarchical structure – which bears some resemblance with European courtly literature during the 11th-12th centuries.

Mimi Khalvati managed to involve and fascinate all the participants with her sweet although strong and passionate personality, with her powerful poems, dripping with sorrow, nostalgia, hope and faith in life at the same time; in some of her poems she seemed to give voice to all those women – not only Iranian – who over the centuries have been emarginated, hurt, annihilated, deprived of their lives, identities and nature, as in the poem *The Woman in the Wall*.

Other poets, like Deidier, technically analysed the process of translation by identifying two basic moments which he calls: addomestication and foreignerization: to this purpose Saint-Exupéry was quoted as an example of addomestication, in the sense of coming closer to the object – in our case the text to be translated – not trying to make it closer to yourself; by foreignerization he meant, on the other hand, a way to translate a world into another.

Being translation a creative process, he also defined it as a ‘Charon’ of language and added two other basic phases: an intrinsic one, which moves from the language towards itself, and an extrinsic one, from the language to its translation.

During the debate that followed the reading of poems it was also emphasised that some completely new parts are often introduced in translations, parts which were not in the original text: they seem like ‘external bodies’ but they turn out to be absolutely necessary and unavoidable, thanks to the ‘re-generative power’ of translation which requires a sort of ‘empathy’ with the text, i.e. getting closer to it, not trying to bring it next to ourselves.

I find it appropriate to conclude with a quotation by poet Stephen Watts: after reading his poems and discussing his production he stated: “Poetry is my mother tongue: English is the way I use to translate it on the page”.

⇒ ***Intercultural language teaching*** ⇐

Ninfa Pagano

Coordinator Palermo TESOL-Italy local group

The latest activity organized by the TESOL-Italy local group of Palermo took place on November 4 2010; it was a workshop on “English in Action: drama techniques for confidence, spontaneity and creativity in the classroom” held by Mark Almond, Senior Lecturer at the University of Canterbury and teacher trainer for Pilgrims.

The activity was possible also thanks to the cooperation with prof. Renata Barbagallo – who had personally contacted the speaker – and with Oxford University Press (especially Pino Vittorietti), Zanichelli, Longman and Cambridge University Press. The number of participants was around 50, as it has been usual during all our past activities this year.

The subtitle of the workshop was: “The teacher is essentially an actor”.

Mark Almond started with drawing the participants’ attention to the skills that teachers and actors share and to those which teachers can learn from actors. Just as actors need stage or screen presence, teachers can develop classroom presence through a similar kind of training.

He showed us what he calls “The Magic Ten”, a sort of Decalogue that allows teachers to work on and improve their presence in the classroom; they are: facial expression, development of voice, correct posture and breathing, humour, presence, gesture, movement and creative use of space, eye contact, being observant, being energised and fresh, arousing curiosity, improvisation skills.

In order to develop the participants’ awareness about such issues, he asked us to carry out some activities which could better clarify the relevance of such skills; he especially insisted on the use of voice and correct breathing and the right exploitation of the space in the classroom. He showed us how different positioning can help maintain interest and motivation during lessons and control dynamics. He also urged us not to disregard the role of eye contact.

All his assertions were ‘practically’ shown to participants: he himself ‘acted’ or ‘mimed’ all the situations connected to the issues he wanted to raise in the workshop.

He insisted on the urgency of being always passionate and interested in our job and of having a good rapport with our students as the basis of any fruitful teaching: these are all aspects that he considers of primary importance, of course, before any consideration about methodology, technology or any other means that may help us in our daily practice.

He poetically concluded with a quotation by Henry Adams (1838-1918): “*A teacher affects eternity: he can never tell where his influence stops.*”

CLIL e dintorni

Debora Infante (USR Basilicata)

Il **CLIL**, acronimo di *Content and Language Integrated Learning* (apprendimento integrato di lingua e contenuto), è un approccio metodologico che prevede l’insegnamento di una disciplina non linguistica attraverso una lingua diversa da quella materna al fine di integrare l’apprendimento della lingua e l’acquisizione di contenuti disciplinari.

Alle scuole italiane è stato permesso di attivare autonomamente moduli CLIL flessibili grazie all’introduzione della Legge sull’autonomia scolastica e del suo regolamento. In particolare, una serie di iniziative, attivate dagli uffici periferici del Ministero dell’Istruzione e da singole scuole e insegnanti, sono fiorite in diverse aree del Paese, specialmente grazie al progetto *Lingue 2000*.

Nelle *Indicazioni per il curricolo per la scuola dell’infanzia e per il primo ciclo dell’istruzione* (D.M. 31.07.2007) si afferma che attraverso l’apprendimento di due lingue europee, la prima a partire dalle prime classi della scuola primaria e la seconda dal primo anno della scuola secondaria di primo grado, l’alunno sviluppa la capacità di studiare altre discipline. Tuttavia, è all’interno dei più recenti Regolamenti dei Licei e degli Istituti Tecnici, che riprendono quanto contenuto nel DL 17.10.2005 n. 226, che si dichiara in modo esplicito quando avviare l’insegnamento, in lingua straniera, di una disciplina non linguistica: nell’ultimo anno dei Licei e degli Istituti Tecnici e negli ultimi tre anni dei Licei Linguistici.

In virtù di tali Regolamenti, delle Linee Guida degli Istituti Tecnici e delle Indicazioni Nazionali per i Licei, all’inizio del corrente anno scolastico, il MIUR ha avviato una rilevazione delle esperienze CLIL realizzate nelle istituzioni scolastiche di secondo grado del territorio nazionale al fine di monitorare tutte le sperimentazioni CLIL affettivamente attivate negli ultimi cinque anni scolastici. Nell’attesa di diffondere i risultati di tale rilevazione, il MIUR, con una nota del 09.12.2010, ha invitato le scuole secondarie di secondo grado a comunicare i nominativi dei docenti di discipline non linguistiche a tempo indeterminato, in possesso di competenze linguistico-comunicative (certificate o auto dichiarate) nella lingua veicolare almeno di livello B1 del *Framework* europeo. Nella stessa nota si invitano gli Uffici Scolastici Regionali a comunicare i dati del personale docente a tempo determinato. Ciò al fine di attivare specifici percorsi formativi finalizzati all’acquisizione di competenze linguistiche (livello di arrivo: C1) e metodologico-didattiche per l’insegnamento CLIL che possano porre l’Italia in linea con altri paesi d’Europa. Tali percorsi avranno la durata di almeno quattro anni per coloro che sono in possesso del livello B1 (da verificare in caso di autodichiarazione) e di almeno due anni per coloro che partono dal livello B2. Sono allo studio del MIUR altre iniziative di formazione per coloro che sono privi di competenze linguistiche o in possesso di un livello inferiore al B1

È possibile presentare la propria istanza di candidatura entro e non oltre il 20 gennaio 2011.

A few notes on “Precariato”

by Marcella Domitilla Montanaro

Precariato has long been a buzz-word here in Italy but even if everybody knows and uses it, someone may possibly not understand what it exactly entails in a teacher's life. Being 'precarious' means being un-stable, swaying with no possible grip on anything on earth, e.g. a house, a car, tech tools etc. You cannot develop projects, neither in your life nor in your school. Some of us work for three hours a week, until the end of June when they are really lucky, until Christmas when they are lucky, for a fortnight or so in most cases. Some of us have been working for more than twenty years and yet, when they are eventually enrolled no seniority will ever be taken into account : it will be considered as their first day of work, no matter how much they will have given to the State school till then (while, were they teachers of Roman Catholic Religion, their right to seniority would ever be taken into account). Some of us are sent to several different schools during the same school year, and Continuity becomes another buzz-word.

Tesol Italy Groups

Si raccomanda a tutti i colleghi impegnati o che intendono impegnarsi nella costituzione di un gruppo provinciale TESOL 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.*
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 Simonetta Romano, simonetta_romano@infinito.it

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