



News Letter

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From theory to practice: the saliency of input in L2 acquisition

by Stefano Mochi

Many of the participants who filled in the feedback forms in TESOL-Italy last convention in November 2010, expressed - following the input provided by the convention itself - the need to find a link between theory and practice in the language classroom.

I strongly believe that no effective practice can be carried out without the sound awareness of how language works since, as Lucilla Lopriore wrote in her buzzword column in the November/December 2010 issue, 'in reflective practice, the teacher applies theory in classroom practice, observes and reflects on the results, and adapts the theory'.

This is the reason why in what follows I'll try to give just an example to show that teachers can really 'adapt' theory to practice by focusing on the importance of input.

The input that learners of a foreign language are exposed to is considerably different, both in quantity and quality, from the input speakers of a native language receive. There is no doubt, in fact, that the child acquiring his/her native language is exposed to an incredible number of stimuli from a wealth of sources which foreign language learners lack. This is especially true when learning takes place in the language classroom.

Yet, more than input *per se* what is really crucial in Second Language Acquisition is the *saliency* of the input, that is to say, the ability L2ers have to capture cues at various levels: phonetic, syntactic, morphological and informational-structural (Carroll 2008:18). In the light of this, the skill of segmenting words appears to be one of

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Food for thought From TESOL publications



About Critical Thinking

by Franca Ricci Stephenson

"Critical thinking skills remain at the forefront of educational discussions. These higher order thinking processes, including but not limited to reflection, inference, and synthesizing information, enable individuals to make reasoned judgments not only in the classroom but in everyday life". These are the opening words of the article "Critical Thinking Tasks" by John Beaumont¹ on Dec. 2010's TESOL Journal. Food for thought indeed!

Mr. Beaumont describes a sequence of tasks created by Carol Numrich at Columbia University which can guide teachers to practise critical thinking in language classes at any level. He writes that English Language Teaching has seen different trends and methodologies, from grammar translation to audiolingualism, total physical response, and others. According to him, however, critical thinking is not a fad or trend and needs to be studied and developed, as it represents a real challenge to teachers.

Mr. Beaumont defines the term "critical thinking" as "the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action"².

The main point of the article is that meaningful exposure to carefully prepared pre-reading and while-reading tasks helps develop critical thinking and linguistic competence. To help teachers cope with the challenge of preparing critical thinking tasks, Mr. Beaumont offers a table listing critical thinking tasks that students can carry out.

Perspective	Critical Thinking Tasks	Skills Practised
Focus on the students' world	1. observing	looking, listening, sharing background, expressing opinions, clarifying
Focus on the text	1. understanding and organizing 2. interpreting	distinguishing relevant details, ordering, classifying, comparing and contrasting, explaining cause and effect interpreting meaning, hypothesizing, theorizing
Focus beyond the text	1. inquiring further 2. analyzing and evaluating 3. making decisions	surveying the public, interviewing a specialist, researching, synthesizing information, critiquing, reflecting on related ideas, making logical conclusions, evaluating assumptions, proposing solutions, problem solving, taking action, participating

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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 .

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From the Editor

Critical thinking jigsaw .

by Anna Rosa Iraldo

What is a jigsaw? According to the Oxford Dictionary it is “a picture cut into various different shapes that have to be put together again”. In this case it is the short note below, made of sentences from the different articles in this issue which, though referring to different fields, appear to have a common focus : the need of a critical attitude in the teaching and learning processes.

Here is the jigsaw. It’s up to the reader to break it up and fit the quotations into the original articles (which are not quoted) finding the context for each statement. Only the italics are mine, all the rest is taken from the different articles.

Higher order thinking processes, including, but not limited to, reflection, inference, and synthesizing information, enable individuals to make reasoned judgments not only in the classroom but in everyday life. Teachers need to keep their own critical thinking skills ‘on’, maintaining an open, reflective awareness of what they think, do, and say: *in fact* human nature is [...] a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing.

Critical thinking skills remain at the forefront of educational discussion.

In this perspective CLIL supports the development of cognitive, studying and learning abilities in order that students use them to transfer strategies to other disciplines.

As for technology, media education must relate to students’ own experience and identities: bringing into the classroom media creation activities that youth do in their personal lives brings in “a range of potentially sophisticated analytical and creative skills youth already have” .

The final aim should be to help students choose a direction for their future [...] by getting them involved in their own personal growth. Awareness is a crucial step into the process of autonomous learning, because it engenders critical thinking.

Ultimately, critical thinking involves developing the capacity to make reasoned judgments and choices at school and in life. And we need it now more than ever.

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.



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: Digital Natives

“Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing.” John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859)

The Internet has modified in an unprecedented manner the way information, knowledge, and entertainment are created, accessed, distributed and exploited. The changes occurred in the last 30 years have not only led to an unparalleled amount of information available online, but have also modified the information ecosystem and the ways people store and retrieve information.

In 1995 Liam Boyle coined the term ‘digital natives’ to refer to the students who were native speakers of technology, fluent in the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet. At that time he wrote that our students are no longer “little versions of us”, as they may have been in the past, and that they would have continued to evolve and rapidly change in a way we would have not been able to keep up with. How far have they got? How distant are we from them? What are the implications for language educators? The ACMA Research project carried out in Australia in 2007 studied young people’s use of electronic media and the way parents mediate that use. They studied over 1000 young people aged 8 to 17 and as a tool asked their informants to complete a diary. In their report, among several facts, they showed what 14-15 year olds did online (ACMA, 2007).

- 45 % used the internet to complete homework
- 41 % used the internet for messaging and chat
- 32 % used a mobile phone for texting
- 28 % engaged in social networking
- 27 % used the internet to play online games against other players

- 26 % used a mobile phone for talking
- 21 % used the internet to watch/listen to media.

What about the use of media and the Internet in the learners’ exposure to the foreign language?

In a recently concluded longitudinal project on young learners’ achievement in the foreign language (ELLiE, 2010) statistical analyses indicate the use of Internet out-of-school has a positive effect on children’s listening and reading skills. In particular, the use of Internet for listening positively affected reading skills, and the use of Internet for watching, playing and listening has a positive effect on listening skills

There are, though, some myths circulating about media education: for example about young learners’ ability to find information online, research has proved that “without the skill to search and navigate mass information mindfully and effectively, it is increasingly difficult to locate reliable sources necessary to fulfill civic roles and life-long learning needs” (Cheney, 2010). Children under 11 are unable to appropriately choose among websites, as the study carried out by Metzger and Flanagin proves (2010); even more worryingly, university students tend to access the Internet for their studies without being able to discern among relevant and qualitative reliable sources of information.

As Flanagin and Metzger (2008) write “The limited number of standards for quality control and evaluation, the convergence of media and the shifts in context are complicating features of the new environment that make quality judgments for youth more challenging and respective evaluation skills more important”.

One of the emerging facts revealed by recent research work is young people’s ability in content creation through media technology, but while very few young people are good at creating sophisticated remix of videos or writing fanfiction, what is seldom observed is that even simple acts as posting to friends’ walls on social networking sites are acts of writing and creation that might be enhanced by educators (Gasser et al. 2010).

One opportunity for teachers is using such content creation for engagement and about the whole range of learning opportunities for information literacy that can derive from activities like communication with peers on social networking sites, self-expression through online journals, and the sharing of media via platforms such as YouTube.

Too often, though, what we as adults tend to do is to set up learning activities, select media and develop learning objectives with an adult’s perspective, while media education must relate to students’ own experience and identities. Bringing into the classroom media creation activities that youth do in their personal lives would, in addition to bringing in “a range of potentially sophisticated analytical and creative skills youth already have” (Gasser et al, 2010), give a chance of breaking down contexts and the divide between adults and youth.

References

- Boyle, L., Stanford, J. (1995). *Digital Media. Authentic English for Media Studies*. Perugia: Morlacchi.
- Buckingham, D. (2003). *Media Education: Learning, Literacy and Contemporary Culture*. UK: Polity.
- Cheney, D. (2010). “Fuzzy logic: Why students need news and information literacy skills.” *Youth Media Reporter*.

From theory to practice

by Stefano Mochi

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the first tasks L2ers have to be capable of coping with in order to transform input into *intake*.

The role played by the cues mentioned above has been studied especially in phonetics. Altenberg (2005) for example, found that Spanish learners of English performed worse than English native speakers in the perception of cues signaling word boundaries like the ones below:

- 1a keeps parking
 - 1b. keep sparking
 - 2a. a nice man
 - 2b. an ice man;
 - 3a. like old
 - 3b. lie cold
- (from Altenberg 2005)

What is worth highlighting in the study carried out by Altenberg is that the difference in the level of language competence within the Spanish group (intermediate Vs advanced) did not affect results significantly.

The considerations above about phonetics also hold for syntax, where input can be ambiguous regardless of the saliency and the frequency with which it is conveyed, especially when surface sentences in the L1 and the L2 appear to have the same word order.

To see what this implies in practice, consider the English and the Italian sentences below:

- 4a. John plays tennis.
- 4b. Giovanni gioca a tennis.

In both sentences the inflected verb appears to the right of the subject. Hence, the Italian L2er of English receives a cue from the input telling him that English verbs occupy the same position as Italian verbs in the sentence. Yet, when the L2er is faced with a negative sentence containing an auxiliary verb plus negation, he/she receives a different (syntactic) cue which 'tells' him/her that inflected verbs in English do not always behave like Italian ones. In fact, in the English sentence (5a) the inflected auxiliary *does* occupies the position to the left of the negation,

while the uninflected lexical verb *plays* occupies the one to the right of the negation. Conversely, in the Italian sentence (5b) the inflected lexical verb *gioca* occupies the position to the right of the negation:

- 5a. John does not play tennis.
- 5b. Giovanni non gioca a tennis.

When the Italian L2er of English realises that, with reference to the negation, the position occupied by the English inflected auxiliary *does* in (5a) does not match the position occupied by the inflected Italian lexical verb *gioca* in (5b), a restructuring process takes place.

The learning problem that sentences like (5a) and (5b) pose is quite common in the EFL classroom, where input is mainly provided by course-books which, in the vast majority of the cases, present positive sentences before negative ones. When the syllabus is designed in such a way, L2ers can build up a wrong representation of the position English lexical verbs occupy in the sentence. This may explain common errors like the one below, which Italian L2ers very often make while learning to form negative sentences in English:

- 6a. *He plays not tennis.
- 6b. *He not plays tennis

To conclude, from what has been very briefly illustrated above, it appears clear that the building up of an L2 grammar consists of a series of choices made at various levels: an innate mechanism that makes learning possible; another which allows the learners to select among certain options provided by the data; a parsing system capable of processing the input and, finally, a restructuring process which allows to pass from a certain state of grammar to the next.

It's up to the teacher, then, to guide these choices connecting his/her theoretical knowledge with her/his knowledge and perception of the learners' needs and level of language competence.

References

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- Carroll, S.E. (2008) 'Salience, Awareness and SLA'. *Proceedings of the 8th Generative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition conference* (2006), ed. by M.G. O'Brien, C. Shea and J. Archibald. Somerville, MA: Cascadia Proceeding Project, 17-24

Food for thought

by Franca Ricci Stephenson

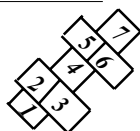
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The author concludes his long article on critical thinking tasks (of which I hope I have given you a hint here) recommending teachers to integrate critical thinking into their lessons, and to do so "mindfully". "They need to keep their own critical thinking skills 'on', maintaining an open, reflective awareness of what they think, do, and say."

Most of what Beaumont writes is not new to EFL teachers, what I have found meaningful for teachers of all ages is the special emphasis on the need to include the conscious development of critical thinking in our teaching, as, ultimately, critical thinking involves developing the capacity to make reasoned judgments and choices at school and in life. We need it today more than ever before.

¹ Assistant professor of developmental skills/ ESL Borough of Manhattan Community College, City University of New York

² Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2009, para. 2



HOPSCOTCH

Resources for primary school teachers

This section is dedicated to primary school teachers. It will address issues that are of interest for teaching English to young learners.

* * * * *

CLIL in action

an experience at primary school

by Cinzia Masia

For its innovative and effective aspects, CLIL methodology is highly motivating for those teachers who choose to make use of it, since it offers opportunities to improve their quality of teaching and give students a further chance of exposure to a foreign language. Furthermore, this methodology supports the development of cognitive, study and learning abilities in order that students use them to transfer strategies to many other disciplines. CLIL offers pupils different situations to learn a content through a foreign language in a natural way carrying out meaningful activities.

In this article I want to illustrate some activities I carried out with 8 year-old students in one of my classes of the Primary School. I wanted to involve the pupils in action and activities providing them with an interesting way of learning, for this reasons I chose a science topic with the following objectives:

- To teach the structure of the seed and germination
- To reinforce their skills and concepts already developed in science
- To create a positive attitude toward language learning
- To encourage children to interact by communicating in English in authentic situations.

Because of their weak level of English, tasks were very simple but practical so all the students had the chance to participate actively bringing their own support through activities which integrated language and content. Many researchers agree that a comprehensible input is a necessary condition in order to obtain successful language learning, so we started our CLIL adventure by ex-

ploiting a story "The Tiny Seed" by Eric Carle. Visual supports were necessary to pre-teach key vocabulary but also essential to stimulate and support their learning. Firstly, the students were involved in a game "What's Missing?" to help them to memorize the main topic vocabulary. Using the key word-flashcards (sun, wind, seed, root, flower...), they had to learn vocabulary by matching and naming the corresponding pictures. In order to develop listening, the pupils were provided with a worksheet with the story pictures. At the same time as I was reading the story, they were asked to identify the corresponding picture, to number it and to put them in sequence. I wanted the students to interact by reporting orally their own proper order. Then I supported them with simple language functions such as: Firstly there is.... /It's.../Secondly.../Then..., .../ Finally.....

Working in small groups was exciting and most of the activities were mainly carried out following this classroom management so to encourage them to talk and to collaborate. In fact, in the following activity the class was divided in groups of three, each one had to select and classify different kinds of seeds. The pupils started touching, observing and comparing the different varieties. The speaker of each table reported the characteristics of a seed: "It's tiny, it's oval...it's big and light brown..." Finally, looking closely at the seeds the pupils had to draw, to colour the seed coats and to record three main aspects: size, colour and kind of fruit or plant in a worksheet. To be aware of the seed structure, I thought that a practical work was an effective way to provide an authentic context

to define and describe. Then, after having distributed some soaked seeds the students were asked to open gently them to distinguish coat, embryo and cotyledon. To help them understand the definitions previously introduced, they were asked to match the key words with the descriptions. In pairs, the pupils had to unscramble the seed related words (seed/eeds, coat/otac...), afterwards they had to match them with the proper definition: (es: embryo..... it's the first leaf, stem and root support...). As follow up, while I was reading a simple text on the seed structure, the children labelled a seed -composition picture developing spatial skills because they had to follow my directions (es: coat is outside the seed) too. The aim of the following activity was to revise the short definitions of the seed structure. The students were divided in small groups and each one was provided with some cards with questions. In turn, I read a sentence on the seed -structure definitions which represented the answers. The children had to compare the question - cards and try to find the corresponding one. The winner was the group that gave the correct answer firstly.

Many other activities were carried out and I could realise that the pupils were always curious and highly motivated. Engaging and challenging activities involved them physically while developing their cognitive skills. They could activate their own existing knowledge of the target language and the subject exploring, identifying, comparing, classifying and describing while trying to improve their English in a natural way.

That's the reason why I think that CLIL methodology works!

LANGUAGE FLOWS

What participants said about the TESOL-Italy National Convention 2010 in Rome

by Letizia Corbucci and Maria Pia Foresta

Dear Tesolers,

we are pleased to inform you that this year the convention was a real success! The positive feeling that we all got throughout both days has been confirmed by the feedback sheets filled in by the participants at the end of the TESOL-Italy National Convention 2010 last November. The TESOL- Italy annual convention provides an important moment for everyone to be motivated professionally and to become aware of new trends in teaching and school organization. You may find all kinds of material on the web now, but you can't find or replace the experience of actually meeting and speaking with the outstanding scholars who have contributed to a specific ELT field. The TESOL-Italy convention is the perfect opportunity for meeting teachers from various places and sharing ideas with them on matters of professional concern.

The Convention featured four plenary lectures with speakers from both Italy and abroad and over 100 concurrent sessions which addressed a wide range of issues in four session formats: talks, workshops, demonstrations, panel and poster sessions.

On the whole, most parts of the convention were appreciated, but this year two things struck our membership more positively than ever: the plenary speakers and the cultural events. All our plenary speakers, David Crystal, Sarah Phillips, Rob-

erta Facchinetti and Steven Thorne were most appreciated. They addressed the wide audience reaching primary as well as university teachers straightforwardly. They were also absolutely brilliant at sticking to the theme of the conference which is something our participants really longed for. There was an extensive range of topics and activities; the presenters were highly qualified in the field of teaching and learning. There were a lot of foreigners as well as Italians, and everyone did a great job.

An area of great interest at the convention was that of approaches, methodology, and teaching techniques. The speakers provided practical ideas and activities to change and enhance students' learning, using new technologies such as wikis, mobile phones, film clips, film dubbing, games, poetry, body language, vocabulary development, theatre, NLP, yoga meditation, culinary experience. A number of presentations dealt with Technology in ELT; assessment was another key area. The *L'Aquila Action Notebook* was presented in a panel session and CLIL was the focus for many speakers.

The cultural events were excellent, too: the harp concert, dancing and cinematic wine tasting and the final raffle were attended by a large audience. Many of you wrote that the concert at lunch time was wonder-

ful and that on the whole everything was well organized. Your cheerful faces during the cinematic wine tasting after an intense day of lectures and workshops spoke without need of writing feedback! So, we would really like to thank all those who made this happen.

We also think that the Tesol-Italy conference offers another unique opportunity - something a teacher should not miss: the chance to meet about 30 publishers and exhibitors, all at one time. This year 78% of the participants found the publishers' exhibition beneficial. We would like to thank all the publishers who make this possible every year!

Not all the statistics are reported here but what is reported is representative of the whole and all exceptionally positive: 91% found the range and relevance of the topics effective; 84% appreciated the premises; 91% find the value of TESOL-Italy to be positive and 95% want to come to TESOL-Italy 2011 next year. These positive results give us enough strength to start working right now for the next convention, always trying to improve and taking your needs into consideration.

Dear Tesolers, we would like to leave you now with Sandra Harwell's words: please do remember this about TESOL-Italy convention: "It's Not (we would say "just"!) an Event, It's a Process".





Web Watch

Job Interviews

by Anna D'Aloisio

When surfing the vast sea of Internet it is always important to have a map and a life jacket at hand in order to avoid getting lost or drowning.

Whereas this is true for every Internet user, this is even more so for a teacher.

As teachers we face a double challenge when using the net. While we are responsible for the authenticity and reliability of what we bring into the classroom, we also need to constantly update our material in order to bring new and fresh energy in our lessons keeping the student interested and active.

For an English teacher the fact that the web offers millions of sites and tons of material can be a double-edged sword.

When using the Internet, the key word is "selecting" and knowing your way around the net by knowing which sites can be trusted.

Topics related to students' interests, hobbies, free-time activities are definitely the key to a successful lesson. However, it is also necessary and recommended to sometimes choose topics that might not be fun at first but are nonetheless fundamental for students' growth and development. Our aim as teachers then becomes making these topics fun by using all the tools we can; the web becomes our best friend!

I would like to focus on the difficult and delicate topic of job search and job success.

In a competitive world like ours, knowing your strong points and knowing what you are good at is essential. Many students have hidden talents that they are not aware of. The teacher can help students release these talents by inviting them to reflect on what they would like to do when they grow up and by showing them what their job prospects are.

Teenagers need to get the tools to succeed in searching for a job and learn how to feel confident about themselves by learning how to focus on their strengths and deal with their weaknesses day by day.

Thinking about their future career should become a part of their everyday life so that students can focus on the links between the now and the future and see how subjects in school and real life are related.

<http://www.usingenglish.com/resources/letter-writing.html#layout>

http://esl.about.com/cs/onthejobenglish/a/a_basbletter.htm

These two links offer advice on how to write a formal letter in English to prepare students for life.

They both contain a summary of writing rules including outlines for cover letters and letters of enquiry, and abbreviations used in letters. The pages are very clear and well organized. You can easily skip from one topic to the next, the language is simple and clear. These two links are a great way to show how to write a formal letter, what rules should be applied, what abbreviations should be used. They also provide outlines for a cover letter or a letter of enquiry.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Prepare-for-the-Job-Interview>

www.careercongierge.co.uk

This is the second step: the students have been invited for a job interview as the cover letter was successful and they got their foot in the door. Now it's time to get ready for their job interview.

Job interviews are very similar to exams and therefore produce the same feelings: anxiety, fear of failure, emotional stress, worry. Practicing job interviews aims to make the students stronger and build confidence.

The wiki link above shows students through the delicate process of preparing for a job interview following some easy steps: research the company's profile and background, try to impress the interviewer, explain what you can do, show that you are the best candidate for the job, learn to listen, know your strengths and weaknesses, prepare to defend them.

At the same time the site gives advice to students on their posture, on how to mentally prepare for the interview, how to focus on a positive result, take deep slow breathes to ease anxiety, be distinctive, dress professionally; it also gives a list of "do not" like playing with one's chair while waiting to be called, going to bed late before the interview.

<http://www.eslprintables.com/rulesofthewebsite.asp>

This web-page is a great tool as it offers printing materials regarding every type of topic.

The interesting thing is that it is 100% free and all you need to do is create an account and submit some material in order to get credits you can then spend on obtaining other teachers' materials.

An excellent way of sharing knowledge and experience with teachers all across the world!

<http://www.videojug.com/film/how-to-prepare-for-an-interview>

This should probably be the last step. The students can watch the video and will find many sentences they are already familiar with, making them gain greater confidence and self-esteem.

If possible, I would suggest trying to bring some people in (parents, friends) who can really explain students what a job is like or take them to their workplace.

The final aim should be to help students choose a direction for their future and career by getting them involved in their own personal growth.

Practice, practice, practice your script to boost self confidence. You will shine!

Translation in Love

by Marina Morbiducci

Crossing legs

It feels so good to be back to this column, after some time spent on other tasks; the time seems ripe to retrieve the space previously accorded to translation in our newsletter. The world of linguistics shows renewed interest in this area from a pedagogical point of view: in the latest ESSE conference in August 2010, Sara Laviosa's seminar highlighted TILT (Translation in Language Teaching) as advocated/ supported by Guy Cook, along with other researchers all over Europe. Also in the world of journalism, translation is considered a captivating branch of learning and culture as a recent article "Tradurre Culture", *Il Sole 24 Ore* shows.

Translating poetry is perhaps the hardest work for a translator (we all remember the famous quote by Robert Frost: "poetry is what is lost in translation" – with which I totally disagree, by the way). The reason is very simple: translation requires estrangement from one's own language, or better, a sort of schizophrenic alignment of two languages (the mother tongue and the target language), two parallel idioms which are probably equally loved and necessary to the person dealing with them. This is difficult to handle, in cognitive and psychological terms; if to such hardship, we juxtapose the devious nature of the language of poetry (Widdowson, 1992, Leech, 1969, Mukarovsky, 1970) we create an explosive alchemy. It is, indeed, easily igniting and quite inflaming, but in a good sense, I would argue. I would like to draw attention to some poems taken from the bilingual edition of Karen Alkalay-Gut's *Danza del ventre a Tel Aviv* (original title: *Belly Dancing in Tel Aviv. Poems of Love and Survival*), edited and translated by Joahna Bishop and Andrea Sirotti, Kolibris Edizioni, Bologna, 2010). It is a fine bilingual edition, containing forty-four compositions drawn from eight different collections of poems; Alkalay-Gut is professor of English Literature at Ramat Aviv University, but she is also committed to writing criticism and poetry. One would not hesitate to define her poetry quite erotic, too, in the etymologically pure sense of the word: endowed with creative and propulsive power. She also speaks of physical love, indeed, of the intensity of passion, but everything is always imbued with irony, self-sabotage, on one side, and generous vitality in sharing values and discussing the basics of life, on the other; that is, she combines comicality with serious matters.

Let's consider the opening poem of the collection: "Crossing Legs" (Accavallare le gambe):

*So much of poetry depends
On keeping legs crossed
At the right moment
But whether at my knee
Or your neck
That
Is the question.*

*Don't waste time
Wondering when our paths
Or legs will cross.
They won't or if they do
It won't because
Of a promise
In a poem.*

I always suggest "gridding" the poem to my students, however un-poetical or cruel that mechanism might seem; we learn much more if we organize the text in space. In this case, the result would be as follows:

<i>So much of poetry depends</i>	In poesia tanto dipende	Riferimento intertestuale a W.C. Williams: "So much depends upon a red wheelbarrow". NB: inversione e trasposizione.
<i>On keeping legs crossed</i>	Dal tenere accavallate le gambe	Si noti la funzionalit� sintetizzante dell'ing form in inglese, un problema nella resa in italiano.
<i>At the right moment</i>	Al momento giusto	In questo caso nessun problema di resa, tranne che inserire magari un termine diverso per motivi fonetici
<i>But whether at my knee</i>	Ma, al mio ginocchio	Parte fisica che crea un chiasmo col successivo "collo", come i due aggettivi possessivi "my" "your".
<i>Or your neck</i>	O al tuo collo?	in vista del suono di "collo", forse il precedente "giusto" = right due righe sopra, si poteva rendere con "bello"?
<i>That</i>	Questo	Altra citazione colta; essendo gi� due, il fatto diventa un tratto dominante della poesia, non una casualit�.
<i>Is the question.</i>	E' il problema.	Grazie alla famosa citazione amletica, la parola "problema" fa parte della semio sfera collettiva.

(continued to p.9)

<i>Don't waste time</i>	Non sprecar tempo	NB: la troncatura del verbo in italiano appare tratto fisiologico in poesia, anche in contesti poco formali.
<i>Wondering when our paths</i>	A domandarti quando le nostre strade	Diversa sintassi per la forma verbale, di nuovo con la -ing form in inglese che in italiano diventa subordinata; si perde allitterazione
<i>Or legs will cross.</i>	O le nostre gambe si incroceranno	Si perde il gioco di assonanze in "l" e "s" nella resa italiana; difficile rendere il valore polisemico di "cross" legato a "gambe" e "strade".
<i>They won't of if they do</i>	Non lo faranno, e se succederà	Felice rima col verso precedente per il suffisso del futuro.
<i>It won't be because</i>	Non sarà certo	Singolare caso in cui l'italiano è più sintetico dell'inglese.
<i>Of a promise</i>	Per una promessa	Si recupera allitterazione precedente in altro caso (compensation in place)
<i>In a poem.</i>	In una poesia.	La serie allitterativa in "p" continua felicemente; coincidenze, ma anche giochi alchemici nel passaggio da una lingua all'altra.

You will have noticed the three columns, respectively for:

1. the so-called "prototext" (Popovi
2. , 1975, 2006), that is, the original or "source" text;
3. "metatext 1", or "target" text, the text that derives moving from the source language to the target language: here the changes are immediately visible. They take place following specific "adjustments" that are differently defined, and usually naturally occurring due to the different texture of the two languages. In the specific case at hand here we have "transposition" and "compensation in place". "Transposition" is the change of one element belonging to one class, in favour of another, that is one part of speech for another: noun instead of verb, adverb instead of adjective, and so on (this is the most common device). As for "compensation" Hervey and Higgins, (1992: 34-40), distinguish four categories: "compensation in kind, in place, by merging, by splitting", as it is well explained in Baker, 1998. "Compensation" occurs when we transfer or "translate" one effect produced by one element through another element in the text, so that there is a change and a shift in the factors, but the final result is the same in terms of impact and overall meaning;
4. "metatext 2": not the translation, as a product, but the description of processes, or thinking-aloud protocols, that track down the transformation of the prototext into metatext (Osimo, 2001). This portion is essential because it explains what the "residue" is in the passage from one language into another. It is an interesting part of the translational process, because it represents the most fertile pedagogical ground, from my point of view: the student discusses her/his own limits, failures or successful solutions. Being aware of that breakage in the chain of the one-to-one correspondence, makes it explicit that "meaning" or "equivalence of meaning" lies elsewhere. This awareness is a crucial step into the process of autonomous learning, because it engenders both critical thinking and the love, or urge, for revision, which are time-consuming, excruciating, and usually scrupulously avoided by young generations. So, it's a short step between "crossing legs" and remaining seated at our desk – to work on language and translation!

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Tesol Italy Groups

REQUISITI PER IL RICONOSCIMENTO

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 TESOLItaly sono a disposizione per qualsiasi eventuale richiesta di ulteriori informazioni.

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The deadline for submitting articles for the 2011 March-April issue is March 30th