



# News Letter

Vol. XXI, No. 3, June-July 2011

## *Foreign Language Learning like moving to a new house?*

by Stefano Mochi  
TESOL-Italy President

In the concluding remarks to his seminal work, *Foundations of Language* (2003), R. Jackendoff rejects the idea that linguistic entities are instantiated in the brain as symbols or representations. He looks at them, instead, as structures which are 'built up of discrete combinatorial units' (p.422) of various kinds: phonological, syntactic, semantic and so on. What Jackendoff proposes is a view of language consisting of a series of independent components hierarchically aligned to each other and tied together by interface systems (e.g. the points at which these independent components interact among each other).

Borrowing a metaphor from house-building, the architecture of language sketchily illustrated above appears as a hierarchical configuration which the speaker sets up 'brick by brick', bricks forming walls, walls providing the pillars on which the upper floors rest and so on up to the roof. The metaphor from house-building must not be misleading since Jackendoff himself calls his work 'Foundations of language' and the chapter in which he presents it as a set of units 'Parallel Architecture'.

Let's see, then, in what way language acquisition - in particular second language acquisition - and house building may share common properties.

Different countries have unique ways of building houses but whatever country we think of, we expect houses to have foundations, pillars, floors, roofs and so on. Let's consider the latter to be the 'properties' of the house, not easily detectable from the outside. What we certainly know, however, is that various operations are needed to assemble all these elements into place, from the foundations to the roof.

We also expect houses to have spaces in which to sleep, to eat, to rest, to wash, be they straw huts in the savannah, igloos in the North Pole or skyscrapers in New York. However, what these houses differ in, is the

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## WORDS & WORLDS

by Beth Ann Boyle  
TESOL - Italy Vice President

It is my pleasure to share our excitement about TESOL-Italy's upcoming National Annual Convention. As you already know it will be held in November on Friday the 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday the 19<sup>th</sup> in Rome.

After a lengthy investigation of various centrally located sites, we opted to hold our convention at the same location as last year, the SGM conference center in Rome. This center is able to comfortably accommodate this event including all the plenary sessions, the numerous concurrent sessions, the social events and the book exhibition.

The title of this year's convention, *Words & Worlds*, highlights the dynamic relationship of "words" through language and communication, and "worlds" of diverse people all living and learning together. All language teachers know what this entails; in fact they are experts in connecting worlds through the use of language. The language classroom, a special culturally and socially diverse environment, is a place where words, their meanings and messages are investigated, challenged, understood, and shared.

The four subtitles, or subthemes cover different aspects of the world of language teaching that have been at the forefront of much recent discussion. *Content through language*, our first subtitle, looks at the trend in language teaching and learning towards more than just language. Many language courses also involve learning other things such as science, history, or art. *Identity and Diversity*, the second subtitle examines the human element to our profession: multicultural classrooms, intercultural communication, respect for community and individuality. *Primary Language Education*, our third subtitle looks at how initial language learning experiences pave the way to successful language acquisition. Language policies in Italy and throughout Europe are part of this scene as they affect the outcome. *Motivation in Language Learning*, our fourth subtitle, is linked to the other three in that motivation to learn must be continuously sustained and developed at all times in everyone and everywhere.

Now for a little preview of our plenary speakers.

We are pleased to announce that **Prof Deborah Short, Ph.D**, a senior research associate at the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington DC will be addressing the first and the third subtitle with a talk on recent research for teachers on how best to integrate language and content instruction from primary on up. **John Hird** is a teacher, teacher trainer and author based in Oxford, UK who is being sponsored by Oxford University Press. His talk will also address the first subtitle, Content through Language, by exploring words and grammar used in the real world. **Geraldine Mark**, an experienced teacher and author based in the UK is sponsored by Cambridge University Press. She will be addressing the second subtitle, Identity and Diversity, by looking at profiling grammatical competence through

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TESOL-Italy membership dues for the year 2011:

1) ordinary members: • 25,00;

2) students under 30 and SSIS students: • 15,00;

3) supportes, schools, universities, agencies: • 60,00

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DTP Claudio Giacinti

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, to disseminate information about research, books and other materials related to English, and strengthen instruction and research.

TESOL-Italy organizes a national convention every year .

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

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### From the Editor's Table

#### “In vacant or in pensive mood”

by Anna Rosa Iraldo Invernizzi

Which is the best word to use when we want to wish somebody a restful and happy period far from everyday worries? Browsing Wikipedia or a paper or online dictionary we find ‘holiday’: “the word *holiday* comes from the Old English word *haligdaeg*. The word originally referred only to special religious days. In modern use, it means any special day of rest or relaxation, as opposed to normal days away from work or school” (Wikipedia).

Or we look up the word ‘vacation’ in the Oxford Dictionary and we find: “(US) any of the intervals between terms in universities and law courts; the long vacation (in the summer)”. But the full meaning of what this period should be is conveyed by the Italian “vacanza: da *vacante*, dal verbo *vacare*, latino *vacāre*, esser vuoto” (Wikipedia).

It is this idea of ‘essere vuoto’ that I find most appealing.

If we are ‘vuoti’/void/empty, we can make room for the ‘new’ and get ready to start another school year with a renewed, refreshed attitude. We can get ready for the November convention as Boyle suggests in her article or, as Stephenson says in her ‘Food 4 thought’, look at news articles from the perspective of a teacher who wants to start a *process [which] may disrupt the normative patterns of society and open up spaces for new voices to be heard*; in this way we can keep motivation high as Lopriore’s ‘Buzz Word’ recommends.

Plenty of suggestions and materials can be found and critically read in this first newsletter completely under the responsibility of the new editor, ranging from the reflections of TESOL-Italy president’s article to the prompts for teachers of Corbucci’s ‘Webwatch’, and from the teachers’ manifold experiences with students – see the ‘Creative Writing Contest’ by Orteni and Maglione, the ‘Spellevent Report’ by Vellucci or Morbiducci’s ‘Parallel Stories’ - to the updating on technology by Ciaffaroni and by the EVO group.

All this needs new room in our minds. So, buone vacanze!



## ***Food for thought*** ***From TESOL publications***



### **More About Critical Thinking: Reading Strategies to Build a Critical Literacy Classroom**

*by Franca Ricci Stephenson*

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Throughout the years TESOL Italy has indicated teachers the importance of exposing students to meaningful activities with the aim of developing their language competence. We have focussed on the nature of reading and the process it entails, we have insisted on the importance of reading strategies in our training courses, we have repeatedly suggested integrating listening, speaking and writing with reading. Therefore, we are not totally surprised by the article published in the latest issue of TESOL Journal dated March 2011, “*Using News Articles to Build a Critical Literacy Classroom in an EFL Setting*”, by Yujong Park<sup>1</sup>, about developing reading strategies and critical thinking. What I found worth considering is exactly the fact that it links reading strategies and critical thinking. Not a new concept, but one teachers should not forget or neglect. As we wrote in February’s Newsletter, quoting John Beautmont on TESOL Journal of December 2010, “*critical thinking is not a fad or trend and needs to be studied and developed, as it represents a real challenge to teachers*”.

In her article Ms Park reports on a research carried in an EFL reading class in which students “read and respond” to articles from The New Yorker. The research shows that “*when taught to be critical readers of the text, the EFL participants were able to actively use linguistic resources from the article as well as their own cultural and personal experience to support their ideas and raise questions.*” Magazine articles supply the linguistic material to develop both the linguistic competence and the students’ culture and personal experience. EFL readers, therefore, far from being passive readers, can be stimulated to express their opinions through debates and response papers. Appropriate reading strategies may lead students not only to read a text, but also to respond to its challenges through writing or discussion.

The research was carried out in South Korea, with the assumption that teaching reading should involve meaningful practice. Newspapers and magazines were chosen as they offer interesting topics which can be discussed in critical conversations in class, with the possibility of developing various cultural and personal interpretations.

In South Korea English is apparently the most important tool for dealing with global communication, and one of the issues the research investigated was “*how including critical literacy pedagogy in the EFL classroom through a variety of textual practices, including reading news articles, interacting with peers, and writing reaction papers, may help create awareness of normative patterns of society [....] In fact, when teachers share critical texts with students and talk with them about the issues raised in the readings, the process may disrupt the normative patterns of society and open up spaces for new voices to be heard.*”

The research analyses the steps taken in the EFL critical literacy reading classroom, the way the students engaged in critical thinking through the processes of interaction and writing about the article, and draws conclusions about the benefits and challenges of building a critical literacy curriculum.

The articles selected contained several critical topics, but the report was limited to the discussion about the very delicate issue of “brain-enhancing” drugs. The students were asked to read articles about this topic, where different opinions were voiced: supporters of brain-enhancing drugs argue that these drugs allow people to reach their full potential, while critics warn that the drugs have not been tested for off-label uses and that some may be addictive or harmful.

The research followed the format of action research, as “*action research refers to the type of teacher-initiated research in which teachers look critically at their classrooms for the purpose of improving their own teaching and enhancing the quality of student learning*”. The critical issue presented in the article raised wide and active discussions, guided by questions prepared by the “discussion leaders” in collaboration with the teacher. “*Unlike simple comprehension questions, these questions<sup>2</sup> required students to be critically responsive to the issues presented in the article. Not only did students have to understand the article, they also had to apply what they read to their own situational contexts. In answering these questions, for example, students had to think about the differences and similarities between Korean and U.S. societies. In the process, they also became aware of the competitive Korean educational context.*”

The action research shows also that the students improved their use of the language in supporting their views; for example, they learned how to distance themselves from opinions through the use of conditionals and adverbs and included cultural and personal experience to support their main claim, while recycling lexical items from the article.

With her report Ms. Park strongly reinforces our belief that newspaper and magazine articles can be useful pedagogical tools for promoting critical thinking in the EFL reading classroom.

I would like to close quoting from the article a few lines I strongly agree with:

*“As society continues to evolve into a more globalized world, teaching higher order skills to students will be required for the workforce of the future. Because it is so important that students be able to think and process at the levels of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and interpretation, developing these skills must not be lost in the broader context of simple comprehension. In this sense, this article provides a meaningful contribution to future directions for teaching literacy*

*(continued on p.6)*



## 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:

**Motivation**

Motivation is among the factors that influence the outcome of foreign language learning and it has been widely acknowledged by both practitioners and researchers as a critical determinant of success in language learning. From the well known research studies by Gardner and Lambert (1972) in the last 40 years there have been several studies on learner motivation strongly supporting this evidence. Gardner and Lambert study showed that success in language acquisition is largely dependent upon the learner's affective orientation towards the target culture.

What is motivation? Well, in foreign language learning motivation is defined as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language. It is a variable difference as a learner's motivation may change over time as a result of external factors.

Gardner and Lambert drew a clear distinction between 'integrative' and 'instrumental' motivation.

Integrative motivation is "a high level of drive on the part of the individual to acquire the language of a valued second-language community in order to facilitate communication with that group" (Gardner, et al. 1976: 199). The learner's attitude to and interest in the target language is so strong that s/he would like to fully integrate into the language community. Instrumental motivation on the contrary refers to the learner's interest in the effects of learning a language, specifically that of an external reward such as getting a better job.

Up to 1990, L2 motivation was mainly researched within a social psychological approach and operationalized to subsume three components: desire, intensity, and attitude. During the 1990s, researchers started referring to cognitively oriented motivational theories. The construct of L2 motivation was then broadened to acknowledge and include concepts as self-efficacy belief, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and expectancy of success.

However, most of the motivational theories fail to take into account the dynamic and temporal nature of motivation. Learners' initial motivation to learn an L2 is difficult to be sustained and often declines over time (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002). "Motivation is more than simply arousing interest. It also involves sustaining that interest and investing time and energy into putting in the necessary effort to achieve certain goals" (Williams & Burden, p. 121). In summary, motivation is multidimensional in nature and it rarely remains constant in practice.

New theories about motivation have shifted towards the analysis of language identity, a tendency welcome by those who asked for more qualitative research. "It would be important now to focus on the close relationship between identity processes and motivational processes and on how engagement in learning might be linked to membership in an imagined or real community". (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2010)

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## 42 students compete in local round of Third Annual Global SpellEvent Championship

by *Lina Vellucci*

On 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011, TESOL-Italy hosted 42 students in the local round of the Global SpellEvent, a worldwide English language spelling competition. This year students from 7 schools from Rome, L'Aquila, Orvieto and Latina participated in the event, which took place at I.T.T 'C. Colombo' in Rome, Italy.

The local champion of this year's event was **Nicola Bovenzi** from liceo Artistico Statale di Latina

Students from around the world will compete during the months of April and May to earn the opportunity to participate in the Third Annual Global SpellEvent Championship, to be staged in August 2011 in New York City, New York, USA.

The Global SpellEvent Championship is sponsored by Franklin Electronic Publishers, Inc., in partnership with Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL), and TESOL-Italy.

The Global SpellEvent began in 2009 with seven participating countries and has grown to 15 countries in 2011. The participating countries for 2011 are Argentina, Brazil, Czech Republic, Chile, China, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Russia, Senegal, South Korea, Turkey, and the United Emirates.

In order to compete at the local event, the students, age 15 and under, qualified for participation by competing in some initial rounds of competition in their schools. To prepare for the event, Franklin provided each school with a participation kit, which included Franklin handheld electronic English dictionaries and copies of Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's Dictionary, which is the source for all words used in the competition. The Merriam-Webster's Advanced Learner's Dictionary is designed to be a resource for both teachers and students of English as a secondary language, as it contains over 100,000 words and phrases, drawings, illustrations, and usage examples to help students learn English.

The local event hosted by TESOL-Italy featured students from the following schools:

1. Liceo Scientifico Statale 'Ettore Majorana', Orvieto Scalo, Terni
2. Liceo Artistico Statale di Latina, Latina
3. Liceo Scientifico Statale 'A. Bafile', L'Aquila
4. Istituto d'Istruzione Superiore Statale 'Vittoria Colonna', Roma
5. Istituto Tecnico Commerciale 'Vittorio Veneto', Latina
6. Istituto Istruzione Superiore Statale 'D. Cotugno', L'Aquila
7. Istituto Istruzione Superiore 'Via Salvini, 24', Roma

Here follows a list of the staff.

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For more details on the **Global Spell Event** Championship, please visit: [www.spellevent.org](http://www.spellevent.org)



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## Web Watch

*Teachers this is for you:  
Teachers' discount!*

by Letizia Corbucci

Dear Tesolers, this time I don't want you to think about lesson plans and students' homework anymore! Would you like to go on holiday, to improve your English, to read a good book or to re-organize your own material for next year? Whatever you want to do, there is only one rule: save your money! To make the most out of your wishes you can check the following websites out! You might find a good discount waiting for you!

### ITIC Card

<http://712educators.about.com/cs/webresources/a/discounts.htm>

Here you can find instructions to get the International Teacher Identity Card (ITIC.) It offers special discounts, privileges and benefits to full-time teachers and professors. To apply for the ITIC, you need proof that you are a full-time teacher, professor or instructor at an accredited educational establishment. You must be employed for a minimum of 18 hours per week for a minimum of one academic year

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Enjoy your summer and remember: Who is rich? He that is content. (B. Franklin)

**Visit TESOL Italy Website**

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## WORDS & WORLDS

by Beth Ann Boyle

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corpora. **Prof. Do Coyle** is an expert in learning innovation and motivating learning through CLIL. She is also based in the UK and is sponsored by the British Council.

As you can see from the plenary speakers, our 36<sup>th</sup> National Convention is something that you can't miss! So keep checking our website and the Newsletter for updates - to find out more about the social events and the talks and workshops planned.

## Food for thought

by Franca Ricci Stephenson

*(continued from p.3)*

*in EFL contexts.*" And I add that teaching time is too limited to indulge in less meaningful activities and pointless competitions. Let's carefully choose what we offer our students.

<sup>1</sup> Yujong Park is a researcher at Korea Institution for Curriculum and Evaluation and an adjunct professor at Ewha University

<sup>2</sup> <sup>1</sup> What's your thinking about neuroenhancers? Do you agree to use them?

<sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup> Do you have any experience taking neuroenhancers?

<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> Do you consider the use of neuroenhancers as something that would cause inequality? If you do, to what extent do you think so? If you don't, do you think that they actually bring the opportunity of equality, especially in the field of education?

<sup>2</sup> <sup>4</sup> Do you think the use of these drugs (neuroenhancers) should become legalized?

# Translation in Love

by Marina Morbiducci

## Parallel stories

We dare say that translation is presently experiencing a revival in language teaching (let's consider, in particular, the groundbreaking book by Guy Cook, *Translation in Language Teaching*, OUP, 2010); or better, to be preciser, translation is witnessing a new birth in the classroom not only because the linguistic empowerment that has always traditionally provided is being appreciated anew by teachers, but also in the sense that translation is now being studied in its intersections with ELF research (see the recent Call For Papers issued by University of Messina: *English as a Lingua Franca: Implications for Translator and Interpreter Education*).

In this column, this time, we will deal with a little bit of theory by way of practice; as Popovic put it, theory has never harmed anyone, and we should really keep in mind that it is thanks to theoretical studies that the language of translation preserves itself from becoming "translationese" (see Bruno Osimo, *Manuale del traduttore*, Hoepli, 2003).

Typically, we are warned that translation is never a matter of one-to-one correspondence; the word by word technique does not simply hold good in all cases; however, the text we are in front of, when we are to translate it, is one and is whole and is a whole, an integral text, with its own internal laws and meaning, this must be respected; the author is one and the translator, with a generous action of transfert, becomes that same person, embodying her/his intended meaning, and transporting it into her/his target language; when this happens and the transference is successfully performed, we have a good, "faithful" translation, otherwise we can have "parallel stories", as I will shortly show.

Indubitably, the translator is a second hand writer (Laura Bocci, interestingly, titled her book on translation *Di seconda mano*, Rizzoli, 2004) accustomed to become someone else according to the text s/he is confronted with; interpreting from another language, different from her/his native one, s/he creates a sort of programmatic estrangement from her/himself, and this is not easy to achieve all the time, especially for those who are not properly trained. The translator is a person who has to disappear, to withdraw her/his ego, when s/he is at work (it's not by chance that Lawrence Venuti wrote his famous *The Translator's Invisibility, A History of Translation*, Routledge, 1994, 2008):

what a difficult mental operation for a young mind! (I'm thinking about our students). At the same time, , we also face the double intersemiotic passage that we perform in translation, a process so clearly explained by Bruno Osimo, once again.

Drawing from Peeter Torop's notion of "total translation" (Peeter Torop, Bruno Osimo [a cura di], *La traduzione totale. Tipi di processo traduttivo nella cultura*, Hoepli, [1995] 2010), Osimo effectively describes the four stages: 1- when we read a text to be translated we are in front of a verbal text; 2- the subsequent level of the text, in the translational process, is mental, because the original text (prototext) has not yet become a written text in another language (metatext), and this happens at the stage of reading; 3- at the stage of writing, when the prototext undergoes the passage of becoming a written text in the target language, 4- it then goes from mental to verbal again, in written form. So, summing up: prototext/reading: verbal' --> mental; metatext/writing: mental' --> verbal. That's why translation is so demanding, but also that's why it is so necessary: it requires from us to be able to remain among uncertainties, like acrobats!

Let's consider the excerpt from Lisa Kramer Taruschio's short story Naples to Rome, 1964, that I used in my class:

*The two appeared on the platform nearly five minutes before train time, according to the clock just above their heads. The young woman was dressed in black and carried a small patent leather makeup case; the tall elderly man, who faced the train, had thick white hair and a moustache, and his fine features were gnarled with concern. Wearily, he set the overnight bag he'd been carrying down next to him. Certainly he was over sixty, with a slight paunch, but his manner was distinguished, the look of a man used to better times. In the old days, men like him met colleagues at the Gambrinus and spent the afternoon over coffee and an aperitif discussing politics or art. [...]*

Reflection is an important feature, absolutely compulsory in the case of translation, if we want to reproduce, in the interlingual passage, a text which makes sense. However the projection of our leap of imagination sometimes produces a sort of parallel text, quite diverging from the original one. See what happened in my class with the rendering into Italian of some expressions, appar-

ently quite unambiguous:

"according to the clock just above their heads" =

**1- come avevano concordato prima con i loro superiori;**

**2- rispettando l'orario dell'orologio in testa;**

**3- accordatisi con l'orologio che sovrastava incombendo proprio sulle loro teste.**

The simple description of "thick white hair" becomes: "**con i capelli bianchi concentrati**"; not to mention the chunk "his fine features were gnarled with concern", fancifully translated as =

**1- le sue buone caratteristiche erano contratte con dispiacere**

**2- le sue gradevoli parti del viso erano scavate con cura**

**3- i suoi tratti delicati erano scomposti con consapevolezza**

**4- i suoi lineamenti erano disfatti dall'età**

**5- i suoi lineamenti erano invecchiati con cura**

**6- i suoi tratti somatici esprimevano preoccupazione**

**7- le sue parti migliori erano notevolmente invecchiate.**

The list could continue, but it is obvious that even simple words such as "features" and "concern", can create interpretive problems! There are many parallel stories in mind underlying such translations, no doubt; "Wearily, he set the overnight bag he'd been carrying down next to him" becomes:

**Indossandola, lui posò per una notte la valigia.**

From another passage used in class, I drew the definition "fullfledged American" and that, too, gave way to various versions:

**uno sbandieratore americano, un agile americano, un americano al cento per cento, un americano con tutti i crismi, un americano modello, un americano a tutto tondo, un americano coi fiocchi, un americano pienamente plagiato, un americano pienamente integrato, un pieno cittadino sotto la bandiera americana...** (good for July 4th!): there is obviously some work to do with the creativity of our students, and translation can help in straightening down such parallel stories...

# IWB (Interactive Whiteboard) for dummies

by Maria Teresa Ciaffaroni

Sooner or later language teachers are bound to come across an IWB in their classroom, since both state and private education authorities are investing in this kind of technology and it is estimated that one in seven classes in the world have got an IWB. But what can language teachers do once they have an IWB at their disposal? First they need to know what IWB functions amount to, then they have to figure out what kind of activities can be devised for or performed with each function in a language class.

Let's start from a definition. An IWB is an interactive display connected to a computer and a projector which projects the computer screen onto the board where you can interact with the computer through a pen or a finger, or other device. On the upside, having an IWB in your class means having a computer, plus a big display, plus some effective, collaborative tools all in one. In addition, if you have an Internet connection, you can get access to a huge array of language resources and materials. On the downside, different IWBs use proprietary software which are not compatible so far. Anyway all currently available IWBs share more or less the same tools, so if you learn to use one you can use them all.

The main IWB functions can be grouped into 4 areas: writing; visualizing; managing multimedia resources; saving/recording.

## Writing

Being the IWB a board, writing is one of its key functions. You can write on an IWB using a pen or your finger, the computer's or a virtual keyboard. No matter what tool you choose, whatever you write becomes a digital object which can be saved, moved or modified in colour, size and font. Handwriting can be transformed into typewriting using a text recognition function. You can also erase handwritten text using a real or a virtual eraser, while typewritten text can be erased via the erase function from

the main menu. Unlike traditional blackboards, written text can be stored, retrieved and used again and again. Writing also includes drawing tools with lines, arrows and shapes. Each drawing can be saved, moved, or modified in size and colour. Hand-traced forms such as circles or squares can be made perfectly



regular through a shape recognition function. Drawings can also be grouped together and locked in a special position on the board. Finally writing tools include a wide range of highlighters and special pens which can be used to manipulate text or images.

## Visualizing

An IWB is a big display, thus a visual tool on its own, in addition all IWBs provide some special tools such as a spotlight, a zoom and a curtain. The spotlight can be moved across the board to reveal specific sections while the rest of the board is shadowed. It can be enlarged or reduced according to needs. The zoom allows you to enlarge or reduce objects while the curtain is used to hide or reveal what's on the board, either horizontally or vertically. You can also use shapes to hide images or text which can be revealed by removing the shapes.

## Managing multimedia resources

Multimedia is one of the main advantages of IWBs. Resources of any kind can be displayed on an IWB provided they are in digital format. You can copy or insert images, you can insert audio and video files such as music, film clips, radio clips, TV clips or you can add links to multimedia resources from the Internet. Creating links is quite simple. You just have to select an object on the board, right click on it and click on add link and that's that. Multimedia resources can be stored in folders in the gallery provide by all IWB for retrieval.

## Saving/recording

In an IWB you can create as many pages as you wish, like in a Power Point presentation, using the add new page function. Pages can be saved just by selecting save as from the file menu. IWBs have folders to save your files but you can create your own and position or arrange them as you like. To open a file you just have to double click on it. All IWBs provide a recording function which allows you to record both yours or your students' voice and whatever you do on the board. This function is particularly useful to create tutorials or lessons for revision.

In case you need a more detailed description of IWB functions you can have a look at a series of 9 mini tutorials created by Cambridge for an old version of Mimio IWB. The basic functions they illustrate are still the same.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILxVjw1yvRk&feature=related>





## The Electronic Village Online Provides Free Professional Development Annually

by Aiden Yeh, Sandra Rogers, Heike Philp, Kalyan Chattopadhyay, Carla Arena & Vance Stevens

With the advancement of Internet technology, teachers find it necessary to expand their knowledge and enhance their technological skills to be able to effectively integrate technology into their teaching. One of the traditional ways of doing this is by attending local and/or international conferences e.g. TESOL or IATEFL. However, attending such conferences do not come cheap; airfare and lodging, plus conference fees can be very expensive. For some teachers, the cost is more than their monthly salary, and they may not have access to other sources of funding, thus finding it impossible to travel and participate in traditional forms of professional development.

Recognizing these constraints, the CALL-IS took advantage of the availability of technology and the advancements of online distance learning courses and came up with an idea of bringing a similar-high caliber TESOL colloquia, forums, discussions, and workshops to teachers all over the world thru the Electronic Village Online (Hanson-Smith & Bauer-Ramazani, 2004). EVO is a five-week session (from January- February) offered entirely online to language teachers worldwide annually. Usually there are about 10-12 sessions offered, and some of these sessions are also presented at the TESOL annual convention.

How does EVO differ from online professional development courses? One of the biggest differences is that EVO sessions are free! The EVO moderators, mentors, coordinators, and participants are all volunteers. They're offered by educators who have vast experiences and are considered experts in using Web tools as part of their language instructions and/or knowledgeable enough on topic/s of their EVO session. Secondly, participants are not graded. Although there isn't any money involved, the process of vetting EVO proposals, training of EVO moderators, publication of Call for Participation, and the way the actual sessions are conducted adhere to the same professional quality TESOL colloquia, discussions, and workshops are known for.

Here's a list of EVO sessions that already took place in 2011: <http://tinyurl.com/36nxyaw>. TESOL Italy sponsored an EVO session for the first time in 2011 titled, PLEs & PLNs for Lifelong Competencies. The moderators were Daniela Cuccurullo, Letizia Cinganotto, and Susan Burg. They created **PLE & PNE for Lifelong Learning Competencies**, learning environments for training teachers on TESOL Italy's Moodle and a wiki on PBWorks.com. Here's the link to

their wiki: <http://tinyurl.com/3w6uo9m>. They had 132 participants for their session! Since this was their first time moderating, they received help from several EVO mentors throughout the process. Another well-attended session offered in 2011 was the **Digital Storytelling: From Images to Motion to Great Stories** (<http://digistorytelling.pbworks.com>). In this session, participants were introduced to various online tools for digital storytelling and learned how to effectively incorporate those resources into their teaching practices. They explored how images, music, slide-shows, among others, could be used in educational settings for storytelling. By the end of the workshop, participants were able to develop a digital storytelling plan to promote students' creativity, engagement and learning, incorporating digital production into their lesson plans. There were around 250 educators all over the globe taking this session. Two of the Digital Storytelling co-moderators - Jane Petring and Mary Hillis - presented the results of the projects they carried out with their students at the TESOL Convention 2011 in New Orleans. All the ideas and resources from Mary Hillis and Jane Petring's presentation, **Using 21st Century Tools to Explore 19th Century Literature**, are available at <http://educationconnections.pbworks.com>.

The Virtual Language Learning and Group Experience (**VILLAGE**) session focused on language learning in Second Life (SL). With 167 participants signed up on the VILLAGE's Grouply site <http://village.grouply.com>, and 50 new ones on SL, this proved to be a very lively session indeed. Moderators Dennis Newson [Osnacantab Nesterov], Kalyan Chattopadhyay [Kalyan Horatio], Nahir Aparicio [Nahiram Vaniva,] Mary Pinto [Mary Rousell], Carol Rainbow [Carolrb Roux], and Heike Philp [Gwen Gwasi] conducted 65 live events with dual goals. Namely to introduce language educators on the one hand to the awesome potential of teaching in SL, and on the other hand to build community. Their wiki provided the weekly schedule, numerous links to SL places, videos, and technical information: <http://village2011.pbworks.com>.

This two-fold approach resulted in half of those events focused on visiting language learning sites, touring real-life places, and building workshops. The other half was dominated by bonfire chats and discussions taking place, which gave time and space for adding each other as friends, adding each other to groups,

and discussing with SL expert teachers. A summary and a list of the recordings, as well as testimonials can be found on this page: <http://village.grouply.com/page/summary>. Another session that's been running for several EVO sessions now is **Multiliteracies for Social Networking and Collaborative Learning Environments**. Course content was prepared largely by Vance Stevens with contributions from Jen Verschoor and Nelba Quintana, and moderators over the years have included Nina Liakos and Dennis Oliver. The course is archived each year and renewed continually at <http://goodbyeutenberg.com>. The course departs from most other sessions in that it is conceived as an ongoing community event. Whereas other EVO courses tend to start fresh each session with new portals and few overt connections with participants and artifacts from previous sessions, if any, the multiliteracies course has nurtured its community from the start, and current year participants are often joined in their discussions by voices from past renditions. Another way the course differs is that it adopts certain principles from MOOCs, or massive open online courses (except we replace massive with miniscule in our version of the acronym). In such courses participants are expected to orient themselves within the course, declare their objectives and point of view, and then essentially make their own path through the course, largely through networking with others in the course and breaking into their own discussions of aspects of the course that interest them rather than rely on having the moderators drive the way the participants progress through the material. With that in mind, the course emulates real life where the content might be regarded at first as being daunting, when in fact it's presented as a berry bush, where not all the berries are meant to be picked, only the most accessible and appealing. The course strives to model how information overflows in real life but can be managed through awareness of the appropriate digital literacy skills. Participants are encouraged to develop eportfolios which state their goals in the course and document progress made in meeting them. The Electronic Village Online has been providing educators with opportunities for professional development that go beyond institutional and national boundaries. It has proven to be an efficient way to connect professionals in the educational field and to weave those connections year-long in a more powerful network of like-minded educators who support each other in their daily activities.

(continued on p.10)

## The Electronic Village

(continued from p.9)

Many past participants become active members in the network and end up offering their own sessions in their area of expertise. It's an online "entity" that has gained a life of its own and has become an annual meeting point for those professionals who look for recycling and renewal of their pedagogical practices, fresh perspectives, and the constant interaction with other educators. The EVO has become a learning hub for the ones who seek sustainable, ongoing professional development.

**EVO's mission statement:** The EVO is a creation of TESOL's CALL Interest Section. In this age of electronic communication, it seems a natural way to bring the issues of our profession to the international stage. Our goal is to allow learning anywhere, anytime, with as little expense as possible. Thus EVO moderators and trainers are all volunteers, and participants need only provide their own Internet access to take part in activities. Contribution as a moderator is a significant act of volunteerism, and forms an important service to our profession.

### References:

Hanson-Smith, Elizabeth, and Christine Bauer-Ramazani. (2004). Professional Development: The Electronic Village Online of the TESOL CALL Interest Section. *TESL-EJ*, Volume 8. No. 2. <http://tesl-ej.org/ej30/int.html>.

## WORDS & WORLDS



Tesol Italy's 36th Annual National Convention  
Rome, November 18-19

### THEMES

Content through Language

Identity and Diversity

Primary Language Education

Motivation in Language Learning

## Foreign Language Learning

by Stefano Mochi

(continued from p.1)

way they organise their internal 'architecture': where the place for eating is located, where the one for cooking, the one for sleeping and so on. Also, these places may be allocated smaller or greater spaces in the house. In linguistic terms, we can define the different spaces the house is divided into its 'features' - which may be more or less unique from country to country - while the operations carried out to turn the individual spaces into a whole may be defined as the 'computational process'. Yet, even though the latter may assemble the spaces and the objects in the house differently from country to country, the process *per se* remains universal: all the combinatorial units have to be tied together and none of them can be eliminated.

Turning to language acquisition, we can compare the foundations of the house to 'functional projections' (e.g. the underlying structure that allows words to be glued together: agreement relations, auxiliaries, tenses, cases, and so on), the existence of which we take for granted because we can only see the

facade, the roof and the floors that hide them. The latter element can be compared to 'lexical items' (e.g. words and morphemes), that is to say, the surface realizations of the underlying structure. Houses also have different internal properties because they are built up differently, in the same way as languages from the world are or - to extend the metaphor further - we can suppose that they do not have a separate room for cooking, for sleeping, etc. Despite this, there must necessarily be a place where to sleep, even though it might be a 'null space', that is to say a space not specifically devoted to such a function (for example a bed in the dining-room), in the same way as elements in language may not receive phonological realization even though they are present in the underlying structure (e.g. the difference between 'I think  $\emptyset$  you are right Vs 'I think that you are right'). Of course, in the early phases of the house-building process some foundations (e.g. functional projections) are not present and are built gradually over time (e.g. 'acquired'). The same goes for the floors, the facade and so on hiding them (e.g. "lexical items"). This, in my view, is what happens in First Language Acquisition.

However, when we go abroad, even though we may perceive that houses are different from the ones we have experience of in our native country, we are not led to suppose that they have no foundations, no roofs, no spaces where to sleep and so on. This, I argue, is what happens in Second/Foreign Language Acquisition. We already know what houses are made of have: they have internal elements (e.g. projections) as well as external ones (e.g. lexical items). Of course, we may not know exactly what their internal structure and forms are or what kind of foundations have been laid to build them up (e.g. their 'underlying representation'). Yet, what we do know for sure is that all these elements are, in some way, present, because we have been acquainted with them (e.g. acquired) from observations of houses in our country (e.g. our native language).

Learning a foreign language, then, is like moving to a new house: what is needed to feel comfortable in it is just a little bit of enthusiasm, curiosity and, of course, determination.

### References

Jackendoff, R. (2002) *Foundations of Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

## *NEWS from the GROUPS*

### **Unification of Italy Creative Writing Contest**

A challenging opportunity to promote language and culture

by Maria Antonietta Ortenzi and Maria Grazia Maglione

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This contest was the follow-up to the project Creative Writing organised last year by TESOL Italy's Local Group Rome with the support of Oxford University Press. This creative writing competition was addressed both students in the third-form of "scuola media" and secondary school students of Rome. The theme chosen was both challenging and attractive as this year the 150th anniversary of Unification of Italy is being celebrated.

About fifty teachers of English took part in seminars held in December in three schools: L.S.S. "Primo Levi", L.S.S. "Teresa Gullace Talotta" and I.T.T. "Livia Bottardi". They were given information about the initiative and provided with materials, ideas and ethical and legal rules about the contest. They were also advised to encourage students to write their own stories, poems or comics in English trying to be original and creative. They were asked not to correct their students' productions in order to give importance to their creativity.

The main objective was to increase students' awareness of the problems of the Unification as well as to reflect on the meaning of national identity and the sense of state nowadays. Through this project, students could also improve written production in English, develop their autonomy, cross-curricular skills and use of multimedia resources. The texts could be handed-down family stories, memories, thoughts, and reflections about events, characters or problems that marked the Unification of Italy. The key idea was to see how the young generations face these issues from their own personal experience and point of view.

The winning texts were selected by the members of TESOL Italy's Local Group Rome and the O.U.P educational consultant Donatella Fitzgerald (and the members of TESOL Local Group Rome) considering above all the originality, creativity and effectiveness of the texts rather than accuracy.

Winners were announced at O.U.P.'s National Convention on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2011, and the awarded schools were the following:

Scuole Medie

S.M.S. "Anna Magnani"

Istituto Comprensivo "Via Santi, 65"

Scuole secondarie superiori

I.P.S.I.A. "De Amicis"

I.T.A.S. "G. Garibaldi"

L.S.S. "Teresa Gullace Talotta"

L.S.S. "Primo Levi"

Students were awarded prizes in two ceremonies held respectively at L.S.S. "Teresa Gullace Talotta" and L.S.S. "Primo Levi".

If you are interested in participating in the next creative writing contest with your students, please contact us:

**[maortenzi@fastwebnet.it](mailto:maortenzi@fastwebnet.it) and [mg.maglione@libero.it](mailto:mg.maglione@libero.it)**

***Join us and win***

***Let your students become successful writers creating their own stories!***



## 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-Italy di inviare all'Executive Committee la seguente documentazione:

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

Il Coordinatore del gruppo TESOL-Italy rappresenta a tutti gli effetti l'Associazione nell'ambito della provincia in cui il gruppo svolge la sua attività ed è tenuto a presentare una relazione annuale in sede di National Committee. I membri del Consiglio di Presidenza e la Segreteria di TESOL-Italy sono a disposizione per qualsiasi eventuale richiesta di ulteriori informazioni.

Le colleghe incaricate dall'Executive Committee del coordinamento nazionale dei gruppi sono **Simonetta Romano** (e-mail: [simonetta.romano@infinito.it](mailto:simonetta.romano@infinito.it) – tel. 06/6390532) e **Paola Mirti** (e-mail [paola.mirti@tin.it](mailto:paola.mirti@tin.it))

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The deadline for submitting articles for the 2011  
September - October issue is September 30th