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# NEW TRENDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING, LEARNING AND EDUCATION

## INTERNATIONAL ELT CONFERENCE



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



UNIVERSITÀ DI NAPOLI  
L'ORIENTALE



Associazione Italiana  
di Anglistica





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International ELT Conference: New Trends in English Language Teaching, Learning and Education  
 University of Naples L'Orientale  
 26-27 September 2022, Chiesa Santa Margherita Nuova, Salita Castello Procida (Italy)

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## **How (Thoroughly) Does the Medium Shape Teaching? Some Considerations on Doctoral Courses at the Vanvitelli University**

*Lucia Abbamonte*

It is by now an accepted notion that in our age, pandemics, like wars, lead to an acceleration of scientific and technological advances. In recent times, the field of education has been one of the main points of interest for technology, and the existing digital divide in school populations has been brought to the fore, due to both the lack of resources in many (educational) contexts and the digital skills gap among users. Furthermore, in ELT, the employability of apps, platforms and social media has been amplified and improved, to make synchronous online teaching possible and more effective (ZOOM and Google Meet, Microsoft teams, etc).

Incidentally, ELT teachers at all levels of education had to develop skills for distance teaching all of a sudden, and to some extent/duration some of them were no longer the 'all-knowing voice' in their virtual classrooms, which entailed some (transient) identity issues – not necessarily negative. Indeed, a greater danger could be seen in the increasing focus on the functioning of the tools, rather than in the 'content' of the teaching activities.

Yet, on the whole, given the traditional abundance of (free) online resources for teaching English and the habitus of teachers of using them, when the available online language learning platforms and tools were well-functioning and updated/adapted, many educational experiences were considered positive (Moorhouse and Kohnke 2021).

Furthermore, attention should be paid to the difference between the communicative value of a lesson prepared to be recorded and a synchronous online distance lesson which the students ask to be recorded. When teaching in real-time classes (with students participating via computer or I-phone), there is a lot of 'wasted' time in overcoming connection/tools problems, in establishing contact, in eliciting students' interventions and discourse etc., which spoil the effectiveness of that lesson when accessed later.

This study will briefly refer to the burgeoning literature on teaching during the Covid 19 pandemic (Moorhouse, Kohnke 2021, 2020; Fitria 2020; Yunus, Ang, Hashim 2021; Mahib ur Rahman 2020), and provide some insights into the 2021-2022 English for Research Purposes doctoral courses of the Doctoral School of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Vanvitelli University.

In a way, in the flattened spatial dimension of Microsoft Teams, students from India, Pakistan and other extra-European countries were no longer perceived as 'distant' – the affordances offered by the media were empowering for these students. The Rosetta Stone platform was also utilised. The issue of online assessment and certifications will also be taken into account in this context.

The lessons at the Vanvitelli University were initially held online and, as soon as it was possible, in a blended dimension, for a total of 90 students (the lecturers and part of the student were in a well-equipped multimedia language laboratory, most of the students were connected via Microsoft Teams).

The undeniable value of eye contact, proxemics, body language – i.e., of sharing the same physical space – was thus partly recovered.

Some reflections on the communicative situation in which videos retrieved from a variety of sources (ELT platforms, news media, YouTube) were transmitted both in the physical space of the language laboratory and through the medium/channel of Microsoft Teams, in our multi-layered metaverse, will also be proposed.

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## **Developing Digital Competence in Online ESP Teacher Training**

*Patrizia Anesa*

This paper draws on the international projects TRAILS (LSP Teacher Training Summer School) and LSP-TEOC.Pro (LSP Teacher Education Online Course for Professional Development), both funded within the EU Erasmus+ KA2 action programme.

The focus is on professional development in the field of LSP teaching, with particular attention devoted to the enhancement of communicative skills and digital competences on the part of ESP teachers operating in European universities. The point of departure was the investigation of teachers' and teacher trainers' needs, based on data obtained through qualitative investigations (questionnaires and semi-structured interviews). Data show that high-quality teaching is considered crucial in the area of ESP, but the specific needs of teachers working in this field are not always addressed. From the qualitative investigation, digital skills emerge as a key necessity as they can foster innovative and participatory practices in the design and implementation of training activities in ESP; it is also believed that the production of high-quality educational material can be favoured by competence in ICT.

Based on these findings, this paper presents insights into the development of specific online training programmes for LSP teachers, which include the appropriate support needed to foster involvement and autonomy in the active use of ICTs. The focus is on the evaluation and on the creation of materials which can be used for instructor-guided training as well as self-administered training and, in particular, processes of augmentation and substitution are investigated. It is suggested that attention should be paid to key aspects such as the selection of appropriate content and its management in online environments, the design and delivery of training activities via digital platforms such as Moodle, and their post-use evaluation.

## **Combining SLA Theory and Teaching Practice: “Big Bowl of Serial”, or, how to use TV series to become proficient English learners**

*Anna Anselmo*

This paper presents “Big Bowl of Serial”, an online self-study video-course, designed and written by Elena Refraschini (travel writer, journalist, and a trained EFL professional specialized in NAmE). The course is aimed at professionals and/or TV series enthusiasts, who wish to pursue the study of English independently. Starting from the students’ notorious interest in TV series and their self-confessed inability to fruitfully use them for language learning purposes, and further acknowledging the lack of an online course on TV series that is rooted in pedagogy, Refraschini has built an unprecedented resource that is proving effective, fun, and productive of independent students of English as a Foreign Language (Refraschini 2021).

This paper is divided in three sections: firstly, Refraschini’s background and mission are briefly presented and an overview of her competition in the world of Social Media-based English Teaching and Learning is provided; secondly, a literature review concerning self-study in English language learning is offered (Doughty and Long 2003; Ushioda 2011; Richards 2014; Nunan and Richards 2015), and the theoretical background and pedagogical agenda to the course are summarized (Krashen 1981; 1982); thirdly, “Big Bowl of Serial” is described, including course structure, rationale, practical activities, expected learning outcomes, as well as the possibility to combine the independent learning process with online teacher-student interaction.

The paper not only aims to present “Big Bowl of Serial” as a successful case study, but it also aims to stress its theoretical and practical soundness, combining language acquisition theory (Krashen 1981, 1982) and a commitment to creating independent language learners, who can maximize leisure for learning purposes and continue learning English at their own pace and in their own time.

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## Alternative Ways of Teaching/Assessing in Higher Education: The UniSOB Pandemic Emergency Experience

*Adrian Bedford, Emilia Di Martino, Jane Ritter*

During the recent Covid-19 emergency, Università Suor Orsola Benincasa, like many other Universities worldwide, had to face the problems linked to the congestion of examination rooms at exam time, when large numbers of test participants were expected. Given the need to find a practical solution to this technical issue, a suggestion emerged from several teachers involved in the preparation and testing of undergraduate and graduate students enrolled on language degrees to make extensive use of evaluation grids previously developed within a pilot project set up on the recommendation of the degree courses Steering Committee, not only as a diagnostic tool but also as a data archive providing a reliable profile of the skills of attending students through continuous assessment. Now that we have overcome the most uncertain phase of the pandemic emergency, the teachers involved are considering the possibility of extending the future use of continuous assessment, also in the light of the fact that some university institutions in other countries have recently proposed continuous assessment as a method that could even become the norm. There is already a vast literature supporting it, particularly the *UNESCO Continuous Assessment for Improved Teaching and Learning* document, issued precisely for the purpose of disseminating on a global scale adequate knowledge of this evaluation method among all the stakeholders in the educational process, spreading awareness of its possibly key role in achieving high-quality education.

Some of the teachers involved in applying this alternative way of teaching/assessment at Suor Orsola University will report on the experience, listing the benefits brought by continuous assessment from their perspective.

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**#BellaLi: Integrating Instagrammers and TikTokers into Instructor-led ELT Classes***Marco Canani*

Since its introduction in the late 2000s, social media has reportedly prompted a number of changes in the social and cognitive interactions amongst the so-called digital natives. One of the implications of such changing attitudes concerns learning, where social media has fostered cooperative practices relying on forms of “collective intelligence” (Allam and Elyas 2016) whose impact on ELT require further scrutiny. More to the point, this paper argues that more recent platforms such as Instagram and TikTok provide effective teaching and learning tools that may be profitably integrated into instructor-led ELT classes. To this end, the profiles of two Italian Instagrammers and TikTokers, @davidepatron and @normasteaching, will be presented as part of a case study in order to investigate the possible use of these platforms for vocabulary development and pronunciation practice.

Accordingly, the first part of the paper will assess the educational potential of Instagram and TikTok in ELT by arguing that their combination of visual, verbal, and sound inputs responds in novel ways to key tenets of Second Language Acquisition and may be employed to provide EFL / ESL learners with meaningful input. The integration of Instagram and TikTok, it will be argued, is instrumental in enhancing the students’ learning motivation as well as in lowering their affective filter, elements that are crucial to successful language learning practices (Krashen and Terrell 1983; Krashen 2009; Ciampa 2014; Barcroft 2015). Secondly, this theoretical overview will be followed by the presentation of task-based activities moulded on the *Presentation-Practice-Production* approach to discuss the extent to which EFL / ESL instructors may resort to @davidepatron and @normasteaching Instagram and TikTok profiles to devise lesson plans directed at (lower-) intermediate learners and aimed at introducing new vocabulary and correcting common pronunciation mistakes. Finally, the paper will argue that the integration of these social media profiles into ELT instructor-led classes activate different cognitive skills simultaneously, and thus provide useful springboards for ice-breakers as well as for controlled-practice and production activities.

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## **Assessing Padlet and Virtual Walls in EFL Teaching at the Language Centre of the University of Naples Federico II (CLA)**

*Fabio **Cangero**, Flavia **Cavaliere***

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, language education has undergone dramatic changes, leaving EFL tutors with no alternative other than to go online, which pointed the way to the emergence of a new category defined as digital immigrants (Dudney and Hockly, 2007). A cause of concern about Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) voiced by most language instructors is the risk of students becoming increasingly alienated from a real-life learning environment and consequently losing touch with reality (Frolova et al., 2021). While on the surface this may seem a valid objection to Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), on closer inspection, such assertions might prove untenable under certain circumstances. In light of this, the main aim of this pilot study is to demonstrate how helpful the integration of technology into regular feedback and writing practice sessions could be in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and how beneficial its effects may prove in the long run. This initial, yet empirical, analysis sets out to gainsay the former proposition, going as far as to argue that open online resources such as Padlet<sup>1</sup> can significantly contribute to the removal of the affective filter (Krashen, 1985) and the establishment of genuine rapport between learners and educators. Padlet, an online platform developed to foster collaboration among users on colourful and tailor-made virtual walls, can be adopted as a form of Learning Management System (LMS) exploitable for a variety of purposes, not least the elicitation of authentic and anonymous feedback and opportunities to practise writing with more complex structures (i.e., inversion, conditionals, among others). Based on experience with Upper Intermediate (number of students: 30) and Advanced (number of students: 18) learners having attended English courses at the Language Centre of the University of Naples Federico II (CLA), this ongoing project points to the conclusion that one of the main advantages of using Padlet in language classes is the provision of further spaces devoted to writing, which is said to be the least practised of the four skills in Communicative Language Learning Methodology (CLLM) (Scrivener, 2011).

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<sup>1</sup> Users can visit Padlet online at <https://padlet.com/> (last accessed: July 30, 2022).

## Technology, Techne and Lexis. Teaching English in a Transformed World

Richard **Chapman**

This paper attempts to grapple with a traumatic transformation in the educational environment which is the result, not only of the devastating Covid 19 pandemic, but also of the re-emergence of warfare in Europe and severe economic hardship. A crisis in neoliberalism that has questioned globalist assumptions and challenged democratic structures in America and elsewhere suggests that skilful adaptation of teaching techniques during lockdown, and even the most adept adjustments to the complexity of hybrid teaching contexts are not in themselves enough to alleviate the coming crisis in ELT.

After mastering new technological tools (often hurriedly, of necessity), teachers find themselves in a postadoption phase where disillusionment can set in, and this more complex than the familiar Gartner Hype Cycle. We need to be aware of the cognitive change required by hybrid learning contexts and understand altered classroom behaviour. We also need to observe changes in language practice (different media and pragmatics, not simply different vocabulary). Drawing on both classroom experience and theory, the paper suggests that becoming more tech-savvy is merely the beginning of our journey as language teachers.

As we prepare learners for different language practices in different environments, we have to develop our *techne* – defined as ‘the art of living well’ (in this case, within a technologically advanced classroom) – and transmit this to our students. This is particularly significant in tertiary education, where critical thinking skills are in demand, and especially relevant to the present European context, where learners are increasingly viewed as social agents.

Technology helps us do things, but we must know how to do them wisely. Language can offer an understanding of what this means, as well as a reflective critique of our actions. This implies highly developed language use (*lexis*, as defined by Aristotle), since skilled practitioners of language can apply their abilities in any environment, and describe problems they encounter with precision. ELT must thus face the significant issues raised by Phillipson (the concept of Linguistic Imperialism), and finally come to grips with the legitimate questions presented by the ELF movement, and moves towards multilingualism to redefine language education.

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## **From Theory to Practice: The Construction of a MOOC Course on British Culture for Undergraduate Students**

*Salvatore M. Ciancitto*

After the COVID-19 Pandemic, teaching and learning has been the object of deep changes due to the use of remote technologies and methodologies. At the same time, MOOC as a new teaching model had already had a tremendous impact on modern higher education, due to the characteristics and incomparable advantages of MOOCs. Different platforms (Futurelearn or Coursera, to name a few) offer a wide range of courses but it can be noticed that there is a lack of diversification and systematization in the contents of online resources and the discipline system is incomplete. Most of online platforms feature courses of science and engineering, while a few with contents of humanities do not do well in specialization (Sun 2020). If on one hand, MOOC courses in foreign languages are quite numerous and widespread, on the other hand, there is a shortage of MOOC courses focused on foreign language and culture. Teaching culture to foreign or second language students may not be a novel topic, as it has repeatedly been discussed by a whole host of authors such as Atkinson (1999), Blatchford (1986), Brown (1986), Brown (2007a), Brown and Eisterhold (2004), and language has a dual character: both as a means of communication and a carrier of culture. Language without culture is unthinkable, so is human culture without language. A particular language is a mirror of a particular culture (Wei 2005:56). The widespread of English has brought to the misconception that American culture and British culture are quite the same, especially when low culture is concerned. The focus of this paper is on the construction of a MOOC (from planning the content and the related interactive tasks to his physical construction) on FedericaWebLearning about British contemporary culture within the framework of the concept of content and language integrated learning, with the application of a CLIL-based teaching methodological model. The course will be available to students at the end of 2022 as part of the syllabus for the undergraduate course in Languages and Communication.

## **Translanguaging: A Pedagogical Practice Challenging the Monolingual Standard in Third (or Additional) Language Acquisition**

*Francesca D'Angelo*

Translanguaging is a natural phenomenon occurring in multilingual societies. According to the Ethnologue (Berthele, 2020: 10), "more than 7000 languages are spoken in 194 countries of the world, or approximately 38 languages per country. Such a linguistic situation implies that the majority of people in the world live with plurilingualism". Nonetheless, in Applied Linguistics, particularly in Bilingual Education Research, monolingualism has always been the default for human communication and additional language learning. That is, due to the monolingual bias, during the whole process of multilingual acquisition, language competence is always compared in relation to an idealised monolingual native speaker instead of other multilinguals.

Translanguaging has proven to be an effective pedagogical practice in a variety of educational contexts where the school language or the language of instruction is different from the learners' L1. Over the last years, it has been advocated as a language theory and a pedagogical practice that empowers both learners and teachers, transforms power relations, and focuses the process of teaching and learning on making meaning, enhancing experience, and developing identities. More specifically, it deliberately breaks the artificial and ideological divides between indigenous versus immigrant, majority versus minority, and target versus mother tongue languages (Garcia 2009; Creese and Blackledge 2015).

The work aims to apply the Translanguaging approach to research on multilingualism to go beyond the comparison between Second and Third (or additional) Language Acquisition (TLA), purely conceived in terms of level of attainment. Instead, it is advisable to switch the focus from the target language(s) to the multilingual learner as "someone who is aware of the existence of the political entities of named languages, has acquired some of their structural features, and has a Translanguaging instinct that enables a resolution of the differences, discrepancies, inconsistencies, and ambiguities and manipulates them for strategic gains" (Wei, 2018: 19).

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## Storytelling as a Teaching Tool: Some Reflections from Experiences with Undergraduates and Doctoral Students

*Stefania D'Avanzo, Antonella Garofano, Barbara Masiello*

In recent years, storytelling has been increasingly used to support teaching and learning in both higher and university education. Indeed, even if educators have always used stories occurred spontaneously, only recently storytelling has been considered as an integral component of learning has been shown to be able to support students in their sense-making processes. (<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/storytelling-benefits-tips>). This study is aimed at exploring how some potential tasks and activities including storytelling can be used with undergraduates and doctoral students, uncovering the methods and tools applied by university teachers of English and Marketing, who teach in a Business Department. Their experiences highlight the power of stories, not only able to stimulate individual thought processes, which give meaning to things, but also to create collective practices aimed at a consensual construction of reality. In this sense, teaching through stories gives students the opportunity to cooperate and share feelings, thus developing stronger relationships with their peers. Specifically, by integrating the perspectives of scholars from different fields, the present contribution highlights the need to adapt the storytelling methods to specific goals and learning needs. Therefore, different ways to work with stories are discussed, along with structured approaches to adopt when students are new to storytelling. Attention is also devoted to digital storytelling, which has the potential to engage learners in integrated approaches to learning with digital media. In particular, it enhances learners' motivation, and helps teachers in building constructivist learning environments (Smeda, N./ Dakisch, E. / Sharda, N. 2014). Thus, from a teaching practice perspective, two main approaches to storytelling are explored, each used for a specific audience. With undergraduates, mainly "prepared" stories about companies, consumers or brands are used (as found for example in mass media advertising, articles, business reports and videos), in order to develop their skills of identifying and interpreting key story aspects. With postdoctoral students, instead, the adopted storytelling approach generally includes the processing of their own stories, since they are invited, for instance, to write a chronological account of their studies and then to turn their report into a story with a plot, in order to see their experiences from different perspectives. In short, this work will shed light on learning processes through storytelling from both marketing and linguistic perspectives while also exploring possibilities to learn through non-verbal storytelling tools.

**Keywords:** storytelling; teaching tool; undergraduates; doctoral students.

**PATHS4ENGLISH as an Alternative Way of Teaching EFL in Higher Education (USR Piemonte)***Maria Di Carluccio*

This study deals with an experimental project : A Philosophical Approach to Thinking Skills (PATHS) used to improve English as a foreign language, considering also the challenges in education field in the last years caused by Covid 2019. Paths was born from the collaboration among INDIRE, the General Directorate for School Regulations and the National Education System of the Education Ministry. The first attempt was made in 2019, in a vocational school in Turin and used as a pilot project to be spread nationwide, as it was initially conceived just for "licei". Paths' aim is to promote students' linguistic awareness, starting from the assumption that each word is more complex than it appears, revealing an unexpected semantic density. From the choice of a single word given by the teachers, students are led to share ideas, connect opinions and find new lexical features through a critical and transversal path. Furthermore, the project strengthened digital citizenship, encouraging cooperative learning and team working, even remotely. The results were surprisingly far beyond expectations, since students improved their language knowledge, cultural awareness and communication skills. When applied in teaching EFL, they have been able to communicate naturally without worrying about the performance, as they focused on debating. Starting from the brainstorming, implemented by teachers and researchers' documents on the word given, the students are brought to apply reading skills such as skimming and scanning in the perspective of the final output. This autonomous and critical approach has proved a positive impact in terms of self-esteem too. A further challenge would be to implement Paths throughout Europe to compare the results, seeing the different geographical and cultural backgrounds. In conclusion, one of the best alternative practices of teaching EFL in higher education is on the way with PATHS.

## **Rethinking Education through the Challenges of Distant Learning**

*Manuela Esposito*

The Covid-19 Pandemic has deeply transformed the teaching/learning process in terms of space, time, strategies, and methodologies, through the introduction of distant learning in all school levels that has definitely affected ELF teaching practice as well.

The integration of technology involves a series of digital tools during online lessons. For this reason activities should be reorganised according to the SAMR model and Bloom's taxonomy. At middle school remote teaching was often very difficult for many reasons, but it was also a challenge that provided many suggestions to rethink language education at school. Inspired by Luciano Floridi's metaphor of "mangroves" and his conception of "Infosphere", my talk will explore how technology has reshaped the way we learn and teach not only in distant learning but also in traditional or blended teaching.

I would like to suggest some language activities I proposed to my students that were successful in the learning process. Such activities include an example of gamification on the online platform Flippity, a project of digital storytelling aimed at developing writing and speaking skills in English, and finally a brief introduction to Augmented Reality. Why are ICT effective for English learning language? Because they highlight flexibility, sharing, collaboration, autonomous learning. Moreover since English is the language of the digital, students are exposed to the foreign language using technology in a real context.



## **Reimagining English Language Assessment in the Pandemic Era: The Use of the Moodle Platform in the Dematerialization of English Language Tests**

*Antonio Fruttaldo, Francesco Nacchia, Marina Niceforo*

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a rapid and unprecedented change in the assessment practices that schools and universities up until this particular moment in history were forced to face, leading to rapid innovations among language assessment instructors – who had to adapt their testing processes in order to address the various restrictions from governments and institutions (Alghammas 2020; Ockey 2021). The need for social distancing and the impossibility to test students in face-to-face situations triggered a tremendous shift in English assessment practices since teaching and learning had to move online (at least in the academic years 2020 and 2021), creating a variety of challenges but also opportunities for educators worldwide (Tian *et al.* 2021). Indeed, the implementation of various online learning management systems (LMSs) afforded a chance to develop, handle and supply digital resources for online teaching, learning and testing (Gamage *et al.* 2022), as LMSs intersect traditional teaching techniques and digital learning resources (Balirano/Castaldi 2004; Balirano 2008), while simultaneously offering, on the one hand, students with personalised e-learning opportunities and, on the other, educators with testing techniques in line with institutional and governmental measures enacted in the wake of the health emergency. As face-to-face teaching and testing methods for many educational institutions have been limited by the COVID-19 pandemic, the present research sets out to provide an overview of the dematerialization process actualised by the University of Naples L’Orientale (Italy) in the assessment of the proficiency of university learners of English as a second language. In particular, the study focuses on the implementation of the Moodle platform as a virtual testing resource to assess students’ competences in their L2 by describing in detail the type of exercises and quizzes developed for undergraduate courses. The statistics (i.e., test scores, pass/fail rate, etc.) related to the adoption of such a platform will be commented on to underline the benefits and opportunities for the implementation of Moodle-driven testing in online second language environments.

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## **Corpora in Language Teaching: Developing English Speaking Skills with the British National Corpus 2014**

*Dana Gablasova*

Language corpora play an increasingly important role in language classrooms, providing valuable resources for language teachers. This talk will first give a brief overview of the different ways in which corpora can be used to increase effectiveness of language teaching and student motivation. Next, the presentation will focus on the practical ways of integrating corpora into language classrooms. In particular, we will look at how to use the newly released British National Corpus 2014 (Brezina, et al, 2021; Love et al, 2017) to develop speaking skills of learners of English, employing data and examples from current British English.

This presentation introduces BNClab ([corpora.lancs.ac.uk/bnclab](http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/bnclab)), an online platform for corpus analysis developed at Lancaster University to provide an easy access to a large collection of spoken British English. The platform contains samples from two major corpora: i) the British National Corpus, representing British English in the 1990s and ii) the British National Corpus 2014, representing current British English from mid-2010s. BNClab uses five-million-word samples from informal spoken conversations from each of these corpora, balanced for social variables such as age, gender and social class of the speakers. BNClab can be searched for a range of linguistic features, with the findings automatically visualised. The structure of BNClab allows students to explore i) trends in current spoken BrE, ii) the changes in BrE that took place between 1990s and 2010s, and iii) the effect of social variables (e.g. gender and region) on language use.

BNClab was developed with the aim of bringing corpora and corpus methods into classrooms to teach students about how spoken English is used in real-life situations. The platform enables students to engage in data-driven learning (DDL), a teaching and learning approach which draws on corpus evidence and corpus methods to identify target language patterns (e.g. grammatical or lexical regularities) and to draw learners' attention to these patterns (Flowerdew, 2015). DDL has been shown to be an effective teaching approach, leading to both increased linguistic gains as well as greater engagement with learning among students (Boulton & Cobb, 2017; Lee et al, 2019). Knowledge and skills gained as part of such learning tend to be more robust and retained for longer as learners have to actively engage with the learning process, rather than being presented with the information (Ozdem-Yilmaz & Bilican, 2020).

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## The CEFR CV and CLIL: Best Practice and Trends in Plurilingual Digital Classrooms

*Gisella Lange'*

The new “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – Companion Volume” published in 2020 by the Council of Europe represents a great potential for teaching and learning: it offers new scales and examples of domains, it broadens concepts (i.e. mediation), it refines the pedagogical vision through the action oriented approach. Focusing on the learner as a “social agent”, new perspectives on plurilingual/pluricultural competences and new descriptors on online interaction invite teachers to design interesting and motivating tasks and materials. Pilot projects have been carried out in different European countries and my talk will analyse two examples of best practice:

- a. a book on “online interaction and collaborating in a group” organized in nine regions by the Italian Ministry of Education and INDIRE, the national research institute;
- b. a project that explored benefits and drawbacks of online language education during COVID -19 times and supported teachers of English, French, German and Spanish in Lombardy, Italy, in adopting online pedagogical resources developed by the University of Toronto, Canada, in their teaching contexts.

In the second part of my talk I will focus on CLIL/EMILE, the methodology that has increased exponentially all over the world both in schools and in higher education. In Italy the introduction of CLIL into mainstream education is not only for English but for other languages as well. This innovative educational model is proving to be a real change agent both for schools and universities. It requires a cultural shift: no more teacher-led lessons centred on content, but student-centred activities.

Thanks to CLIL, Italian subject teachers are focusing on scaffolding instruction, improving plurilingual classroom management and at the same time boosting their own foreign language level. In June 2022 a ministerial decree defined continuous professional development targeting CLIL subject teachers for students aged 3 – 19. Teachers wishing to attend 20 credit methodology courses organized by universities must have already gained internationally recognised certification at B2 level for pre-school/primary and C1 level for lower/upper secondary. Here I will analyse some examples of best practice in plurilingual classroom applications for effective digital CLIL teaching/learning and some relevant international cooperation projects.

To conclude, I will emphasize the importance of assisting, guiding, and supporting headteachers and teachers organizing continuous professional development schemes and developing international networking, partnerships and ventures.

## Recognising Conversation Strategies: The Development of a New Test for Learners of English

Annarita **Magliacane**, Hernandez Ariadna **Sanchez**

Conversational skills are assumed to develop with practice and have not received enough prominence in instructed contexts despite being a pivotal aspect of learners' pragmatic competence (McCarthy & McCarten 2018). Recent research (Jones 2021) posits that teaching conversation strategies can enhance their acquisition and stresses the crucial role that noticing has in the learning process. Noticing, and therefore recognition, are indeed key elements of pragmatic development as they are preliminary steps for the development of any productive ability (Sánchez & Alcón-Soler 2019). However, despite such a pivotal role in pragmatic development, research on pragmatic recognition is rather limited (Barron 2019).

This study fills this research gap by focusing on the recognition of pragmatic markers (PMs) in spontaneous conversation. PMs are linguistic constructions which help the smoothness of interaction (Beeching 2016) by performing a series of functions (i.e., managing the conversation, constructing turns, showing listenership). More specifically, this study presents the design of a research instrument (a test) to assess PM recognition and explores the relationship between PM recognition and production in English as a second language (L2). The test includes different tasks: (i) PM recognition in aural excerpts showcasing different varieties of English; (ii) identification of PM use and functions; (iii) awareness-raising questions about informants' PM use, and (iv) prompted oral production. The test was piloted with 53 learners of English with a pre-intermediate (n = 13), an upper intermediate (n = 19) and an advanced (n = 21) proficiency level.

Firstly, the test internal consistency was analysed, revealing high reliability scores. Moreover, an analysis of frequency and variety of PMs in the fourth task pointed out to the validity of the task for the intended purpose. Altogether, these results showed the potential of this instrument to assess PM recognition and production in English as an L2. Secondly, PM knowledge across proficiency levels was explored, with findings revealing an effect of proficiency on both the ability to recognise and produce PMs. These findings will be discussed in terms of their implications for English language teaching and English language varieties, illustrating the application of this research instrument for future research as well as for the design of teaching material.

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## The First Ever Orientale MOOC

*Livio Malocco , Catherine Emma Shaw*

The adoption and spread of technology in learning and in particular language learning is offering enormous potential for ELT educationalists to experiment, assess and revise methodology at a truly global level.

We created a Tourism 101 MOOC for participants with a B2 - C1 level of English with the purpose of integrating concepts of multisensory learning and language teaching to learners with an already competent linguistic level. The remit was to focus more on language acquisition through digital content as opposed to traditional grammar and vocabulary language input, thus promoting learner autonomy.

We provided stimulating real-life content material and promoted social-constructivist approaches to second-language acquisition (SLA) through emphasizing a more student-centred experience and encouraging a more active learning environment. This was achieved by creating formative and summative evaluation with particular attention placed on questions, module quizzes and tasks – self-reflection and research tasks - as well as a discussion forum to promote peer-to-peer learning.

Course participants are expected to produce portfolio tasks which are based on Bloom’s taxonomy of digital verbs e.g., blogging, collaborating and reflecting in order to develop Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS).

This approach is interactive, mediated and, most importantly, student led. When learners interact together their learning is scaffolded by someone more “expert” than them that does not necessarily mean that it is the teacher. This can be done by other course participants or resources - technology. In fact, the latest research says that weaker learners are scaffolded by virtual learning environments because they allow them extra thinking time to formulate and check their answers compared with a face-to-face classroom (Bruzzano 2022). When learners are challenged cognitively, they are more engaged in interacting with “expert” others. The learners are in the ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development) type of learning: it is challenging but yet potentially within reach of individual learners as long as support, scaffolding and guidance are provided (Vygotsky, 1978).

According to Vygotsky, what learners can do today with support, they can do alone tomorrow (quoted in Gibbons, 2008). We believe we achieved this by providing a digital scaffolding framework to promote active learning through micro-learning content, reward systems, repetition, and relevant & meaningful content.

**Keywords: digital learning, language learning, engagement, higher order thinking skills, multisensory learning, recall, Tourism**

### Creating Scenarios in Plurilingual Classrooms

*Mario Menini, Irma Rossi*

In school year 2021/22 the Italian Ministry of Education financed three projects in the regions of Campania, Lazio and Lombardy thanks to an agreement signed with the University of Toronto, Canada, that offered expertise and online pedagogical resources. Italian Team leaders were trained by professor Enrica Piccardo\* and her research team and about 180 Italian teachers were guided to create plurilingual scenarios in their classrooms. The school network “Comprendiamoci” activated in Campania by the headteacher Evelina Megale of Istituto Comprensivo Statale “Nicola Romeo”, Casavatore (Naples) developed valuable experiences: two teachers will explain the process and some outcomes of this partnership.

**Marco Menini** will present a scenario, “Poster Mascot”, organized in a fifth grade of a primary school. The main target language was English, but other languages were involved: Spanish, Pakistani and Neapolitan dialect. Several language activities were carried out aimed at developing communicative, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and sociocultural competences in a plurilingual/pluricultural dimension. For example, recognising internationalisms and words common to different languages using a very limited repertoire in different languages to conduct a very basic, concrete, everyday transaction with a collaborative interlocutor. The scenario completion required about three hours’ work. Students used resources such as flashcards, recordings, a world map, coloured markers and crayons. The culminating task was carried out during a final party, where students presented different mascots on posters to their parents.

**Irma Rossi** will describe “Our Museum, Our History” stemming from a visit to the Paleontology Museum in Naples. Students worked to create a prehistoric museum with some of the most famous dinosaurs.

Our aims were to improve vocabulary and to increase their knowledge about animals in different contexts through a holistic and action-oriented approach. Due to the pandemic, the museum exhibition had to be virtual so we decided to create a “talking e-book” on dinosaurs in two languages: English and Italian.

Later we added Neapolitan, the language they are discouraged to use at school. We made this choice because we discovered that some of the affective and emotional skills could be activated only by using the local dialect, Neapolitan. Students have improved their life and cultural skills and their ability to lead experiments, work in groups, experience cross-curricular activities in different subjects, such as Math, Science, Italian or History and ... really enjoying themselves!

\*Dr Piccardo has actively contributed to the work of the Council of Europe as a member of the CEFR Expert Group that developed the new CEFR Companion Volume, which includes descriptors for mediation, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism and new descriptors for phonological competence.

[https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ctl/Faculty\\_Profiles/189272/Enrica\\_Piccardo.html](https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ctl/Faculty_Profiles/189272/Enrica_Piccardo.html)

## **Do Online Classes Encourage Collaborative or Isolated Learning, Students' Motivation or Disengagement? A Retrospective Look at Old and New Educational Challenges in COVID Times**

*Cristina Pennarola*

Much has been written about the distress of social and physical distancing, the collective trauma and sense of loss and vulnerability making the whole world kin, while the extraordinary stories of resilience and resourcefulness have shown the other side of disasters, i.e. the capacity-building of individuals, communities and institutions. The more we have read about Covid the more we have noticed manifest or subtle differences in attitudes and ways of coping as well as the distinctive perspectives associated with the socioprofessional roles played out by politicians, decision-makers, doctors, teachers, retailers etc. In the educational field the debate on the outcomes of the massive shift of traditional schooling to e-learning has been heated and inconclusive, with some voicing deep concern at the hysteresis (or progressive loss of skills) of schoolchildren and higher education students (OECD, 2020) and others illustrating the advantages of online teaching/learning in terms of flexibility, personalization and hypermedia enhancement (Bailenson, 2018).

This paper examines the aspects of interaction and motivation in the light of the ambivalent assessment of online education based on academic research (Dumford & Miller 2018; Ponton, 2022 among others) and on the survey of several cohorts of students at University of Napoli Federico II. In particular, we will be looking at a) the types of instructional exchange involving learner–content, learner–instructor, and learner–learner; b) the computer-mediated messages and their affordances c) the social and psychological dimension of interaction (Roblyer & Wiencke 2003; Wanstreet, 2006). By looking back on the last two years' sudden and steady transition from face-to-face teaching to platform-based classes, I will try to consider to what extent the educational exchange has been enhanced, damaged or problematized by the new trends in ELT and has possibly opened the way to innovative decision-making and knowledge-building scripts in the classroom.

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## **New Trends in ELT: The Use of TikTok**

*Michaela Quadraro*

During the last two years teachers at all levels had to find new ways to engage students and to adapt the teaching/learning strategies to the unprecedented difficulties in terms of health and social relations. This also led to a spread of new tools and to an increased use of online platforms in the EFL domain. For instance, the use of TikTok can be particularly effective for promoting students' interest in the English language and boosting speaking and listening skills. This platform, indeed, has become very popular with teenagers across the world. The immediacy of the users' involvement, the shortness of videos, as well as the diversity of the offered content that covers every category (such as fitness, fashion, make up, travelling, and so on) make this platform particularly engaging for middle school students. The learning activities that will be presented in this talk were thought and undertook in order to strengthen some language competences previously achieved and to boost students' motivation towards the foreign language. Taking the students' interests and context into consideration and starting from their needs, the aim is to make students feel as the active protagonists of the learning process, in which the teacher becomes a facilitator. John Dewey's "learning by doing" (1938), through learner-centered activities, and Jerome Bruner's "discovery learning" (1960) provide the theoretical framework in a learning process that uses TikTok as a potential tool for ELT.

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**From CALL to MALL: Designing, Developing, and Testing Storytelling Games for ELT***Annalisa Raffone*

In the context of CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning), Digital Game-Based Language Learning (DGBLL) started to arise as an innovative instructional tool at the beginning of the 21st Century following the advancements in new media technologies.

Since then, several investigations have been carried out to test the effectiveness of games in the classroom and, in particular, in the ELT (English Language Teaching) setting, showing the powerfulness of this tool in enhancing teaching and learning (Wichadee & Pattanapichet, 2018).

Moreover, the COVID-19 situation – which has forced teachers and educators to adapt to remote teaching and learning approaches – has further shown that traditional face-to-face classroom needs to be improved to respond to today's students' needs (Moser et al., 2020). Accordingly, the recent educational trend involving the employment of smartphones for instructional purposes that goes under the label of MALL (Mobile-Assisted Language Learning) has already been proving to be a valuable method to engage learners in their studies (Miangah & Nezarat, 2012). Against this backdrop, this paper aims to present the design, development, and testing of a classinteractive storytelling game for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected and submitted to several statistical and computer-assisted content analyses to triangulate findings. The investigation reported positive results regarding the effects of DGBLL on students' language development and enhancement of different skills (e.g., critical, cooperative, and digital ones), thus shedding new light on the use of DGBLL and MALL in the L2 classroom.

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## Re-Constructing the Mentality of (Language) Learning: Post-Pandemic Challenges

Margaret **Rasulo**

The current COVID-19 pandemic is not only a serious public health emergency, but an unexpected educational emergency which has triggered a massive switch to remote forms of teaching and learning as a consequence of worldwide closures of schools and universities (UNESCO 2020, 2022). Indeed, online instruction seems to have become a top priority in this moment of pandemic educational politics (Williamson et al. 2020) in which digitally-driven technologies have been positioned as a frontline emergency service. However, according to UNESCO (2020), the pandemic rush towards online instruction has also adversely impacted educational authorities, teachers, and students as they were left in a completely new situation (Bozkurt and Sharma 2020), and it is precisely for this reason that this exceptional event should be exploited as a point of reference to examine the effectiveness of digitally mediated education (Zimmerman 2020). This paper therefore presents a series of critical cautions regarding the effects, consequences, and caveats of the massive and imposed use of technology and media that are progressively embedded in education systems and practices across the globe. By acknowledging that this process did not start with the pandemic, the paper argues that there are pedagogical implications that are more acutely relevant in current times, but are often overlooked mainly due to the urgency of finding quick solutions. Consequently, educators are invited to collectively reflect on the pedagogical aspects of online education (Anderson 2008; Rasulo 2017, 2018), with specific reference to the ‘missing principles’ (Gagné 1965; Bandura 1991; Williamson et al. 2020) that are the heart and soul of all types of learning, and the necessary vehicle for *re*-fostering, *re*-generating and *re*-motivating the learning mentality (Piaget 1964; Gillett-Swan 2017) in an online environment.

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## Instagram and TikTok in Classroom: Enhancing Critical Visual Literacy Skills among Undergraduate Students

Sole Alba **Zollo**

Social media have become part of our daily routines, bringing a lot of changes in our lives and suggesting new and stimulating views of the world. Most students have mobile phones with different functions, and using them for educational purposes can be attractive, given that it is becoming more and more difficult to engage new generations with traditional teaching techniques and methodologies. In the last few years, using mobile devices in class as a new approach has been widely recognized by language learning scholars (Ducate and Lomicka 2013; Wang and Smith 2013; Chen et al. 2020).

Based on social semiotic studies of social media (Adami 2014; Zappavigna 2013, 2016; Poulsen et al. 2018; Zhao and Zappavigna 2018), the present research aims at exploring how university students can improve their critical visual thinking on specialized knowledge via social media, in particular Instagram and TikTok.

Following a recent empirical work on the use of Instagram in class (Zollo 2019), this study tries to implement the investigation by designing a TikTok-based class experiment and answering the following research questions: How does the use of Instagram and Tiktok affect students' learning process and improve their critiques of specialized discourses? What are students' attitudes towards Instagram and TikTok as a pedagogical tool? Can Instagram and Tiktok be used as academic tools to apply the theoretical concepts discussed in class?

Since semiotic technologies are not neutral technical devices, but social and cultural products that significantly contribute to changing and creating new social practices, the pedagogical implications of including Instagram and TikTok in undergraduate English language curricula are explored, particularly their potential as didactic instruments to enhance critical visual literacy skills among university students.

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**'Light and Nimble'.****Teaching English as a Foreign Language in the Age of Social Media: New Trends and Evolving Perspectives***Tania Zulli*

Recent research studies on Social Media recognize its influence on every aspect of life nowadays, underlying how the exponential growth of social network sites and mobile apps has fostered significant changes in terms of socialization and communication. For example, we try new recipes on Dinner Spinner or Big Oven when inviting friends for dinner; we look for home remedies to remove stains from our clothes on MyStain; we search for the brand of a wine bottle we are served at the restaurant on Vivino. SM has also become the most popular tool people use to stay in touch, and to connect with each other by sharing common interests, political views, work and daily activities (Clarkson 2013).

As far as language teaching and learning are concerned, as early as 2009 Warschauer suggested that technology should not be regarded as 'a magic bullet to solve educational problems, but rather as a powerful tool that can have both a positive and negative impact, and that [it] must be carefully exploited' (20). On the exploitation of 'new technologies' for educational purposes much has been said, too. Furthermore, literature has widely demonstrated that SM can be integrated into ESL/EFL classroom practice by focusing on its educational implications on language learning and teaching. Not surprisingly, the speed at which SM itself is growing and evolving has corresponded to an exponential development in research studies on this topic and to a certain difficulty in categorizing SM. For this reason, monitoring the evolution of SM and the potential of its integration in class is imperative.

This paper analyzes the didactic effects of SM in EFL learning and teaching, with specific reference to the most popular and recent SM apps. Apart from those young students are already familiar with (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.), new ones will be considered in order to define their possible integration in language teaching practices. Their use will be studied in light of their main educational potentialities and challenges, such as motivation and distraction, abundance of online material and facilities lack, controlled learning and privacy.

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