

Parrot Time

The Thinking of Speaking

Issue #33 May / June 2018

Learning Italian And The Art Of Letting Go

Guest author Melissa
Muldoon tells her Italian story

Special
Italian
Issue

A New Sicilian Author on the Horizon

Best selling author Mary Ann
Vitale's road to success

Deborah Caruso
Columnist Teddy Nee
interviews Italian Teacher

Giostra del Saracino
Traditional jousting in Italy



A woman in a blue sari is seen from the side, looking out from a stone archway. The view outside shows a hilltop fort with a small tower, a long wall leading up the hill, and a dry lake bed in the foreground. The sky is clear and blue.

Look beyond
what you know

***Parrot Time* is your connection to languages, linguistics
and culture from the Parleremo community.
Expand your understanding.
Never miss an issue.**

Parrot Time

Parrot Time is a magazine covering language, linguistics and culture of the world around us.

It is published by Scriveremo Publishing, a division of Parleremo, the language learning community.

Join Parleremo today. Learn a language, make friends, have fun.



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Cover: A Sardinian woman in traditional costume. Sardinian is one of the languages of Italy and is in danger of becoming extinct since most people will choose to just learn the dominant Italian.

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Parri sicilianu?

*Learn a language,
Make friends,
Have fun!*



Parleremo

Where languages live!

www.parleremo.org

Italian Woman

Italy is a country which is heavily associated with being an artistic muse to painters, sculptors, writers, singers, and many other creative venues for centuries. Many people have visited and, in many cases, moved to Italy in order to begin or further fuel their creative talents.

So it should come as no surprise that in a group of languages lovers, we have Italy or Italy loving authors and teachers who give us all their energy to make us love languages and Italy as well.



To meet a few of these, as well as a get more of a look at Italy in general, we are devoting this issue to Italy.

For that, we have articles from three wonderful ladies involved with Italy and Italian. The first is Melissa Muldoon. You might recognize the name for her "Studentessa Matta" blog.

The second is Sicilian born Mary Ann Vitale. She came to American but her love of her home helped her in writing children's book.

Finally, we have Deborah Caruso, an Italian teacher looking to take her educational experience and apply it in the freelance field.

Of course, we round out the issue with news, events, reviews, and other activities, to make the issue well worth the download!

Erik Zidowecki

ERIK ZIDOWECKI
EDITOR IN CHIEF



EU GDPR Goes into Effect; Is Your Data Ready?

By the time you are reading it, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will have gone into effect.

This bit of European Union (EU) legislation was approved April 2016 and set to go into effect May 25, 2018. It replaces a previous law (the Data Protection Directive) and is aimed at standardizing the rules across the EU on data control and protection.

While it is put in place by the EU, it reaches far beyond that to any website or service that might deal with EU citizen. So if you run anything bigger than a local business page, you will likely need to conform to the rules.

And those rules are very precise with high punishments for even the smallest infraction.

The main focus is around the consent of a user for their data to be collected and used. All the ways any data is collected must be spelled out specifically and consent from the user begotten for it. Also, the user needs to be able to easily remove their consent, have their data deleted, or even transferred to another site.

Notification of cookie use is also vital. Since most modern sites use some kind of cookies to store information about a person or collect email addresses for a mailing list or site registration, you can understand just how many websites this will affect. Many may simply shut down out of fear of not conforming properly and being forced to pay a fine.

And such fines are rather extravagant.

An organization or company in violation of GDPR laws will be fined up to %4 of their annual global turnover, or 20 million euros (\$24.6 million), whichever is bigger.

For the biggest technology companies which are making billions in profits every year, this could be a major loss hit if they were to break any rules.

Parleremo Website Taken Down for GDPR, Revisions

The Parleremo community website, which is what this magazine, Parrot Time, was built around, will be taken offline by the end of May 2018.

The reason for this removal is partially due to the GDPR going into effect. Parleremo is a community, and as such handles a lot of data not only about its users but also that which they create, such as writings, recordings, and language logs. It will take some time to fully adjust all system to be GDPR compliant.

Mostly, the site is at least four years overdue for an upgrade. Technologies have changed and need to be replaced. Sections that were in place that are no longer useful or were never used will be removed.

We will endeavour to save all the existing data of the current residents, and hope to reopen by the end of the year.

The social accounts surround the website (the Facebook page, Facebook group, and Twitter account) will remain open and active, and we will be posting any major updates still on the "View From the Town" blog.

We apologize for any inconvenience this causes anyone. We hope it will yield a much cleaner, modern, and useful website when it returns online.



Mark Your Calendar

Montreal Language Festival

**August 21 – 26, 2018
Concordia University,
Montreal, Quebec**

The Montreal Language Festival, or "LangFest" for short, is North America's premier celebration and conference for language learners and enthusiasts of all levels. LangFest 2017 will take place at Concordia University's downtown campus in beautiful, eclectic, multilingual Montreal, Quebec.

LangFest attendees learn from and gain access to world-class language gurus, entrepreneurs, educators and industry professionals. You will be introduced to cutting edge tools, techniques and technologies to inform and inspire how you learn and use languages or teach them to others.

For more information and tickets visit montreal.langfest.org

Polyglot Conference 2018

**October 27 - 28, 2018
Ljubljana, Slovenia**

The Polyglot Conference is open to anyone and everyone who loves languages. The events are designed for anyone who loves language and people who simply want to know more about languages.

You will meet other language enthusiasts, discuss new learning resources and techniques, learn about new linguistic research, speak in different languages to the many attendees from different parts of the world, and generally spend a weekend focusing on language in a way that most of us are unable to do in our normal lives.

For more information and tickets visit polyglotconference.com

Language Show London

**9-11 November 2018
Olympia London, Hammersmith Road, London UK**

Language Show is the must-attend event for anyone with a passion for languages.

Attend three inspirational days packed with educational seminars, language classes, live forums and cultural performances in an incredible celebration of languages.

At the show you'll be able to meet thousands of fellow language teachers, learners, linguists, translators, interpreters and job seekers who love languages as much as you.

The event is free to attend!

For more information and registering visit languageshowlive.co.uk



Lasciare

Andare -

Learning Italian
And The Art Of
Letting Go

by **Melissa Muldoon**





Una bella
Scarpa
può
cambiarti
la vita...

Laurentina

Ciao! I'm Melissa – la studentessa matta! In Italian, “matta” means “crazy” or “impassioned.” I promote the study of Italian language and culture through the dual-language blog, *Studentessa Matta* (studentessamatta.com). I began the matta blog to improve my command of the language and to connect with other language learners. Over the past couple of years, the “matta” concept has grown to include the Matta Youtube channel and podcast “*tutti matti per l'italiano*.” I also coordinate *Matta Italian language immersion tours*, which I co-lead with Italian partners in Italy.

I chose the name “matta” because it gives me the flexibility to let go and talk about whatever comes to mind when I sit down to write in Italian. Quindi...come una scatola di cioccolatini – like a box of chocolates – you never know what you will get. It could be a language learning tip, a post about a pop singer, a quirky cultural anecdote...or perhaps the story of how I met Sophia Loren!

How did this all begin, you might ask? It might be especially perplexing if you knew that I grew up in the Midwest and don't have a drop of Italian blood – I know, I did the DNA test! Highly unlikely you might also think for a girl who went to Florence on a whim in college to study art and painting and often skipped language classes to sip wine and wander on her own around the city. Even more so when discovering upon returning home that same girl threw away her Italian dictionary, thinking she had no talent for learning a language and assumed she'd never need it again.

But life has a funny way of sneaking up and surprising you sometimes. After launching a successful design career and starting a family, I realized something was missing in my life. That “thing” was the connection I had made with Italy and the friends who lived there during my student year abroad. Living in Florence was indeed a life-changing event.

At the time I had this epiphany, dumping everything to fly back to Italy to set-up housekeeping and live there, wasn't an



option. So trying to find a way to reconnect with Italy, I decided to start learning the language – from scratch. Too intimidated to even take a class, I began from ground zero with a grammar book I purchased at a local bookstore and audio tapes I plugged into my ears to escape into a sea of new vocabulary, as well as “ire,” “ere” and “are” verb tenses.

Communicating in Italian was the key, and I was not afraid to use it. As a result, my traveling experiences in Italy became richer. I started having more fun, went on lots of new adventures, and met people I never thought I'd meet.

In Italian, they say “lasciare andare” – let things go. And that is precisely what I did! I took the plunge and dove right in and let the current take me away. And as I gave in to the language – letting go of my inhibitions and fears of opening my mouth and sounding like a total idiot – I became completely bewitched, bothered and bewildered. The more I learned, the less I knew. But this feeling didn't make me want to stop – it only pushed me forward.

Soon I began seeking out every means possible to advance my knowledge. I found evening classes, online chat groups, audio magazines, games, tutors, music – to name



Studentessa Matta.com

Celebrating Italian Language & Culture

just a few things – looking for the next great idea that would move me closer to fluency. And then...it came to me. What better way of learning the language than starting a blog inviting the world to correct me and interact with other language students. And that is how the studentessa matta blog was conceived – it gave me a reason to use the language every single day and continue my language learning journey.

Now, during this process of claiming the language as my adopted tongue, I discovered a lot of interesting things about myself. I learned it is necessary to have a sense of humor as well as a bit of courage when you learn a language – especially true when writing in a public internet forum in a foreign language.

But more importantly, I learned that making mistakes wasn't such a bad thing. In Italian they "sbagliando si'impara" – by making mistakes one learns. I discovered on more than one occasion one never actually dies from mangling the pronunciation of

words like "arzigogolato" and "carabinieri" or mixing up the conditional tense with the subjunctive. I found that if I made friends with my mistakes, I'd actually retain more information in the long run. And really...how are you going to learn anything at all without putting yourself out there and taking a few risks?

Which leads me to my next point. As I continued embracing this new "matta" personality and started to let go of inhibitions, a curious thing started to happen. As I began to speak more fluently – using idioms, local expressions, and gesturing with my hands – I actually became more outgoing and less risk averse.

Communicating in Italian was the key, and I was not afraid to use it. As a result, my traveling experiences in Italy became richer. I started having more fun, went on lots of new adventures, and met people I never thought I'd meet. And when I returned home again I was more charmed than ever by Italy, the Italian people and I also had a suitcase full of

unique stories and insights to share with my readers.

So, now after years of publishing non-fictional anecdotes on my blog – seven if you are keeping score – I decided to turn these stories into a series of novels. Since I started writing books based on my relationship with Italy, I'm once again addicted. I love weaving plots, creating worlds and inventing people to populate them based on things I know best – Italian culture, language, art, and history.

But most importantly I want readers to “lasciare andare” let go and come with me on a journey to learn Italian in Italy. And if they can't come away with me to study on one of my immersion programs, I want them to get a glimpse of all the innumerable things that make Italy unique to me – the sights, sounds, tastes, as well as the legends and anecdotes – which I can express more intimately and poetically through the pages of my novels.

I would never have imagined all those years ago when I first stepped foot on Italian soil how it would change me so thoroughly, opening me up personally and leading to a writing career in which I now promote Italy and all she has to offer. But, by embracing this fantastic Italian concept of “lasciare andare”, I relaxed and didn't fight it. I gave in to something for the joy of it, and now it continues to sweep me away and take me places I never thought I'd go! **PT**



For those unaware of her work, Sophia Loren (right) is an Italian film actress and singer. She started out with several small roles, but became an international film star following her five-picture contract with Paramount Pictures in 1958.

Loren's dozens of performances through the years have earned her many awards, including the Cannes Film Festival's best performance prize, and an Academy Award for Best Actress, the first major Academy Award for a non-English-language performance or to an Italian actress.

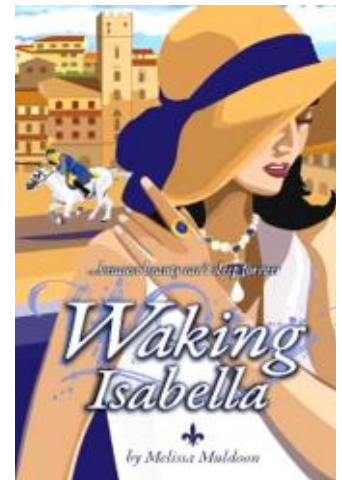
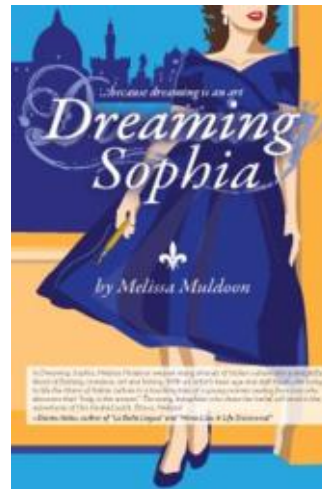


More Information

Melissa, when she isn't abroad in Italy, lives in the San Francisco bay area. She continues to dedicate her time to promoting Italian language studies, her language programs in Italy, as well as writing. Melissa has a B.A. In fine arts, art history, and European history and a master's in art history. She is an artist, designer and studied painting, language and art history in Florence.

She invites you to join her in Italy on one of her learn Italian in Italy programs. Twice a year she co-leads small group immersion programs with Italian schools. Open to 10 people of any level of Italian, students are placed in appropriate level classes at the school in the morning, and in the afternoons Melissa organizes excursions and activities to continue practicing the language together with the group. This year takes Melissa to Montepulciano in June and Arezzo in September. The June program is sold out but there are still spots for Arezzo!

Melissa is also the author of “Dreaming Sophia,” “Waking Isabella,” and is currently working on her third “Eternally Artemisia.” All three books are set in Italy and celebrate art and creativity. They tell the stories of three distinct women and their journeys of self-discovery to find love, uncover hidden truths, and follow their destinies to shape a better future.



For more information about **Melissa's learn Italian in Italy**, programs visit www.studentessamatta.com. Spots are still available for the Fall program in Arezzo August 31 – September 11 (Sept 15 for the extended program)

Visit: [the Matta Facebook page](#).

Visit: [the Matta Youtube channel](#)

Visit: [Twitter Melissa la Matta](#)

To learn more about Melissa's novels set in Italy:

Visit: [Amazon available in print and epub](#).

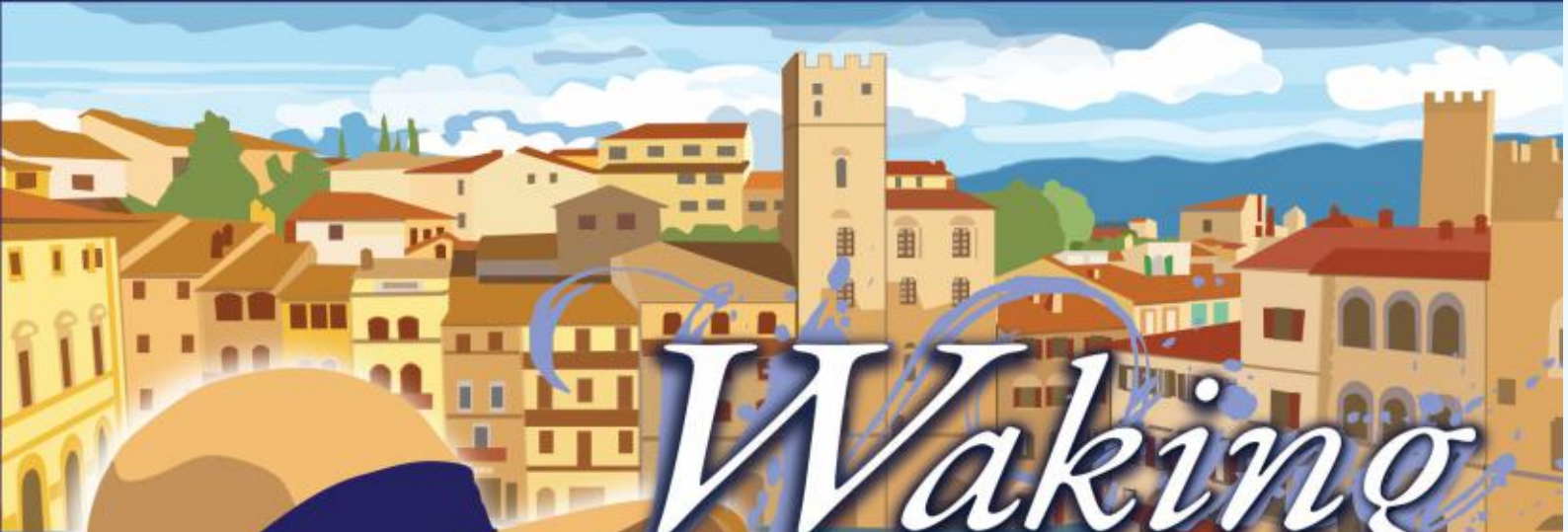
Visit: [Melissa's author website](#) with links to all her blogs and projects.

Visit: [Dreaming Sophia website](#) where Melissa blogs in English about art history topics.

Visit: [Art of loving Italy Pinterest page](#) companion page with images for all her books.



With languages, you are at home
ANYWHERE



Waking Isabella

...because beauty can't sleep forever

by Melissa Muldoon



Waking Isabella is a story about uncovering hidden beauty that, over time, has been lost, erased, or suppressed. It also weaves together several love stories as well as a few mysteries. Nora, an assistant researcher, is a catalyst for resolving the puzzle of a painting that has been missing for decades. Set in Arezzo, a small Tuscan town, the plot unfolds against the backdrop of the city's antique trade and the fanfare and pageantry of its medieval jousting festival. While filming a documentary about Isabella de' Medici—the Renaissance princess who was murdered by her husband—Nora begins to connect with the lives of two remarkable women from the past. Unraveling the stories of Isabella, the daughter of a fifteenth-century Tuscan duke, and Margherita, a young girl trying to survive the war in Nazi-occupied Italy, Nora begins to question the choices that have shaped her own life up to this point. As she does, hidden beauty is awakened deep inside of her, and she discovers the keys to her creativity and happiness. It is a story of love and deceit, forgeries and masterpieces—all held together by the allure and intrigue of a beautiful Tuscan ghost.

"Waking Isabella" by Melissa Muldoon is a must-read for all fans of Italy, history, romance and intrigue. Eccellente! Muldoon magically weaves together the lives of Nora, Isabella and Margherita, spanning the course of many centuries, into a story that will mesmerize and haunt readers long after the last page is read. - Sheri Hoyte for Reader Views

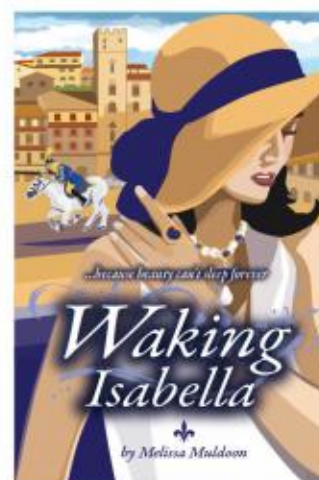
A latter-day Renaissance woman, Melissa Muldoon blends fact and fantasy, history and art, English and Italian in this richly woven tapestry. Waking Isabella, carries us from 16th-century Italy to modern-day Arezzo, from palace plots to wartime intrigues. A perfect read for Italophiles, art lovers and armchair romantics. Brava! - Dianne Hales, "La Bella Lingua"

Renaissance princess Isabella de' Medici steals the limelight as her influence transforms lives even across centuries. A beautiful story filled with intrigue, mystery, art, and redemption, Melissa Muldoon succeeds in transporting the reader to Tuscany with all its cultural festivities, history and people. A treat for lovers of historical fiction, the beauty of art, and the challenge of starting a new life and rediscovering love. - Italy Book Tours



Available in print and e-book on Amazon and other book vendors

Visit: www.MelissaMuldoon.com for more information





A New Sicilian Author on the Horizon



by Mary Ann Vitale

My name is Mary Ann Vitale. I was born in Cinisi, Sicily. My parents had seven children and cared for their land. They suffered the misfortune of having most of their beautiful land expropriated for the purpose of building the Punta Raisi Airport. A door was closed, but right after God intervened, opening a bigger door.

At the age of fifteen, I moved to the United States with my family to St. Louis, Missouri. At the beginning, my life was very challenging. I had to rely on the help of family and friends to ease the transition of living in a strange country. I didn't know English and had to attend night school to learn the basic skills of the language. As a child, one of my dreams was to become a hair stylist. One of my friends suggested to enroll in beauty school. As soon as I turned sixteen, I attended Cosmetology School and became a licensed hair stylist. Once again, my friend encouraged me to take driving lessons. At sixteen, I followed her advice. I received my driving license, but I didn't own a car and had to use a bus to move around. My parents had a hard time adjusting to life in America; they missed their home and decided to return to Sicily.

While I was in Sicily, at the age of nineteen, I planned to get married. My husband and I decided to make our future in America and made our roots in Michigan. Through the years, we faced many challenges in our new environment. We had three children to raise, while my husband was often out of work. I worked many years in a beauty salon and helped to support my family. In the meantime, I became a naturalized American citizen and attended college to further deepen my knowledge. After my daughter got married, I had my first granddaughter. For ten years, she was the only grandchild, which allowed me to spend lots of time caring for her. I enjoyed reading her children's books, watching the *Wiggles* on TV, walking to the park and doing many other fun activities.

In some ways, the little child in me resurfaced. At the age of forty nine, I was inspired to write my first story for my grandbaby, "*Simon, the Red Fish*," while we were watching a



TV show. That was only the beginning of my writing career. I never knew I could write stories. God has a funny way to give talents when not expected and to people who do not deserve them. As a child, I loved reading books, but they were not available. My love for books motivated me to become a writer, but suddenly my dream ended, when I came to America. I didn't know the English language, and it was impossible to pursue my dream.

Many years have gone by, since I wrote my first story. In 2011, I published my first book, *The Water Lily Fairy*. Now, at the age of sixty four, I have a few more grandchildren, and they are the constant source of inspiration for my stories. I have written over one hundred and twenty stories for children, some are already published; the rest I plan to publish in the future. These are my published award-winning children's books: *The Water Lily Fairy*; *The Street Where the Dollar Tree Grew*; *Fingerprints on the Mirror*. These are the rest of my published children's books: *The Water Lily Fairy at the Ice Cream Palace*; *Ants In my*

Pants; Mommy, Where Does Tiger Live?; Julie and Her Seven Calves; Mouse Goes to the Doctor; La Fata delle Ninfee; La Fata delle Ninfee al Castello del Gelato; Formiche Sui Miei Jeans. At the end of May, I will release my first collection book: *Hidden Treasures in a Book, A Collection of Seven Children's Tales, Vol. 1*, which includes these stories: *Reach for a Star; A Sparkle from Heaven; Catch the Rainbows; Simon, the Red Fish; Tinkle, Tinkle, Little Bell; The Pumpkin Patch; Angels.* Soon to come: *Footprints on Mommy's Heart.*

Through the years, whenever I went back to Sicily, I noticed the young people no longer spoke or understood the Sicilian language. This made me realize the importance of preserving our beautiful Sicilian language. A few years ago, I started to gather old Sicilian words and sentences and composed a few books. Remembering the daily proverbs transmitted by my mother and grandparents, which I currently use in my daily life, inspired me to write a book of Sicilian proverbs. Having witnessed the forceful expropriation of our Molinazzo land, motivated me to write the Molinazzo story in Sicilian poems. All my books in Sicilian language are translated in Italian and English and will be published in the very near future.

A recent brain injury has slowed down my writing career, but I am confident that most of

my books will be published in a very short time. I will continue to write stories as long as God gives me new inspirations, new titles or a word. All my children's books will be published in my three fluent languages, English, Italian and Sicilian. The age group for the children's books is one to twelve. My purpose of writing children's books is to help children find joy and learn good values. The reason I write my books in Sicilian is to make sure the Sicilian language is preserved, and to make them available as a learning tool for children. All my books are available for purchase on Amazon, Author House, B&N, Walmart and worldwide. I thank you for taking the time to read my story and also Erik Zidowescki for offering me the opportunity to present it.

My Facebook page

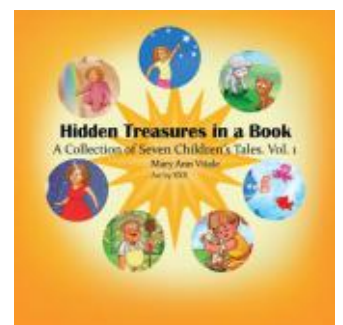
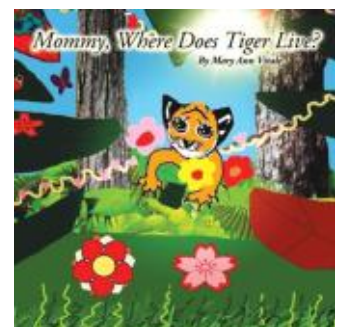
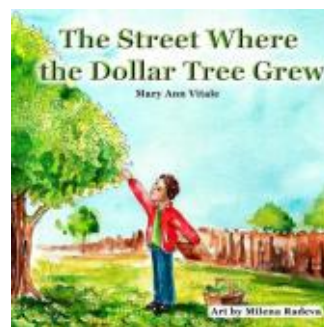
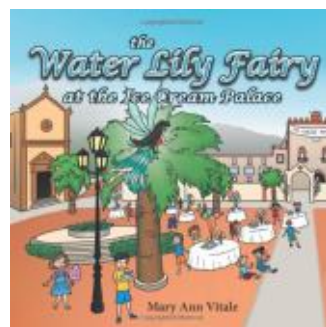
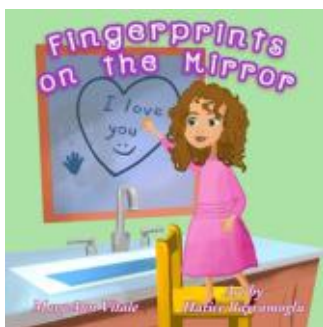
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My blog

<http://maryannvitaleauthor.blogspot.com/>

My Amazon author's page

<https://www.amazon.com/Mary-Ann-Vitale/e/B005EN6RWI/>



Il mio nome è Mary Ann Vitale. Sono nata a Cinisi, in Sicilia. I miei genitori avevano sette figli e badavano alla loro terra. Soffrirono la sfortuna di avere le loro terre espropriate per lo scopo di costruire l'Aeroporto di Punta Raisi. Una porta si chiuse, ma il Signore nella Sua provvidenza ne aprì un'altra più grande.

A quindici anni, sono partita assieme alla mia famiglia in America, a St. Louis, Missouri. Sin dall'inizio, la mia vita ha incontrato molte avversità. Ho dovuto contare sull'aiuto della famiglia ed amici per facilitare le difficoltà di vivere in una terra straniera. Non sapevo la lingua Inglese e ho dovuto attendere la scuola serale per imparare le norme essenziali della lingua Inglese. Da piccola, uno dei miei sogni era di fare la parrucchiera. Una delle mie amiche mi suggerì di iscrivermi alla scuola di cosmetologia. A sedici anni ho iniziato la scuola di cosmetologia ed ho ricevuto la licenza di parrucchiera. Di nuovo, la mia amica mi suggerì di prendere lezioni di scuola guida. Subito dopo, ho seguito il suo consiglio e con coraggio osai prendere lezioni di scuola guida. Ho ricevuto la patente, ma purtroppo non avevo l'auto e dovevo usare l'autobus per andare in giro. I miei genitori trovarono difficoltà ad adattarsi al nuovo ambiente e decisero di ritornare in Sicilia.

Mentre mi trovavo in Sicilia, mi sono sposata all'età di diciannove anni. Sia io che mio marito, avevamo deciso di creare il nostro futuro in America e siamo venuti ad abitare nel Michigan. Attraverso gli anni, abbiamo sofferto delle difficoltà nel nuovo ambiente, con tre figli da badare e spesso mio marito senza lavoro. Lavorai per molti anni in una parrucchiera e aiutai a sopportare la mia famiglia. Nel frattempo, mi sono presa la cittadinanza Americana ed ho frequentato l'università per approfondire la mia cultura. Dopo che mia figlia si è sposata, ho avuto la mia prima nipotina. Per dieci anni era l'unica nipote, e ciò mi permise di spendere molto tempo a badare alla piccola. Amavo leggerle dei libri per bambini, guardare i *Wiggles* in TV, recarci al parco e fare tante altre attività divertenti.

In questo modo, si ritorna di nuovo ad essere bambini. All'età di quarantanove anni,



fui ispirata a scriverle la mia prima favola: "*Simon, the Red Fish*", mentre guardavamo la TV. Questa fu solo l'inizio. Non sapevo che potevo scrivere storie per bambini. Il Signore si diverte a dare doni a quelli che meno se li aspettano e alle persone che non se li meritano. Da bambina, amavo leggere libri, ma in quei tempi non ebbi l'opportunità di averni in grande quantità. Immaginavo un giorno di diventare una scrittrice, ma il mio sogno sfumò quando lasciai la mia patria. Non sapendo l'Inglese, era impossibile fare avverare questo sogno.

Molti anni sono passati da quella prima favola. Nel 2011, ho pubblicato il mio primo libro: *The Water Lily Fairy*. Ora, all'età di sessantaquattro anni, ho degli altri nipoti, i quali sono la costante ispirazione per scrivere tante altre favole. Ho scritto più di centoventi favole per bambini, alcune già sono state pubblicate, altre lo saranno nel futuro. Questi sono i miei libri premiati per bambini: *The Water Lily Fairy*; *The Street Where the Dollar Tree Grew*; *Fingerprints on the Mirror*. Questi sono il resto dei miei libri pubblicati: *The Water Lily Fairy at the Ice Cream Palace*; *Ants In my*

Pants; Mommy, Where Does Tiger Live?; Julie and Her Seven Calves; Mouse Goes to the Doctor; La Fata delle Ninfee; La Fata delle Ninfee al Castello del Gelato; Formiche Sui Miei Jeans. Alla fine di Maggio, sarà pubblicata la mia prima collezione di favole: *Hidden Treasures in a Book, A Collection of Seven Children's Tales, Vol. 1*, che includerà queste favole: *Reach for a Star; A Sparkle from Heaven; Catch the Rainbows; Simon, the Red Fish; Tinkle, Tinkle, Little Bell; The Pumpkin Patch; Angels.* Fra non molto, sarà pubblicato il prossimo libro: *Footprints on Mommy's Heart.*

Spesso, ritornando in Sicilia, ho notato che molti giovani non parlano o capiscono la lingua Siciliana. Questo mi ha fatto realizzare l'importanza di preservarla. Un po' di anni fa, cominciai a collettare diverse parole o frasi antiche in Siciliano ed ho composto diversi libri. Ricordando i vecchi proverbi trasmessi dai miei genitori e dai miei nonni, che tuttora uso nella mia vita giornaliera, mi ha ispirato a scrivere un libro di proverbi Siciliani. Avendo sofferto la brutta esperienza dell'espulsione della contrada Molinazzo, mi ha spinto a scrivere un libro sulla storia del Molinazzo in poesie Siciliane. Tutti i miei libri in Siciliano li ho tradotti in Italiano e in Inglese e saranno pubblicati fra breve.

Una recente commozione cerebrale ha rallentato il progresso delle pubblicazioni dei

miei libri, ma spero a poco a poco di pubblicarli tutti. Se il Signore continua a darmi delle ispirazioni, scriverò ancora nuovi libri. Tutti i miei libri per bambini, saranno pubblicati in Siciliano, Italiano e Inglese. I miei libri per bambini sono per l'età da uno a dodici anni. Il mio scopo per scrivere libri per bambini è per farli sorridere e imparare buone lezioni. Il motivo che scrivo i miei libri in Siciliano è semplicemente per preservare la lingua Siciliana e per offrire ai piccoli una guida che li aiuta a imparare. Tutti i miei libri si possono acquistare su Amazon, Author House, B&N, Walmart e su tutto il mondo. Vi ringrazio per il tempo che avete impiegato per leggere la mia biografia e ringrazio anche Erik Zidowescki per avermi offerto l'opportunità di presentarla. **PT**

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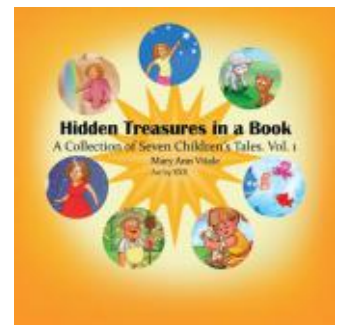
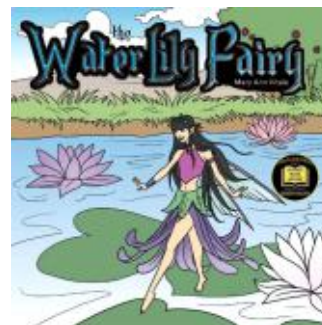
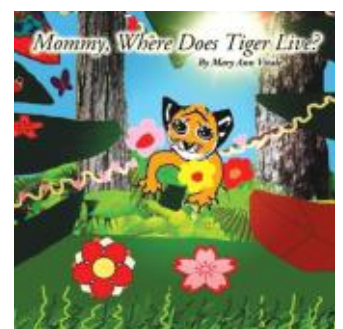
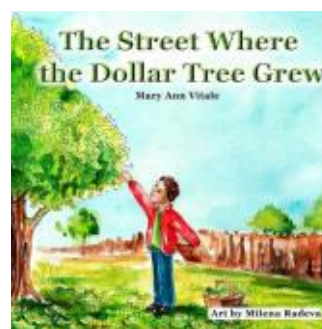
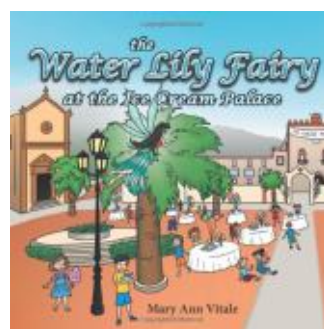
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immersion language learning

Language Boat is a blog about language learning in natural environments. Here you will find personal narratives about language learning experiences, in addition to tips, ideas, technical stuff like grammar, pronunciation, etc., cultural observations, and language resources.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue and white striped sleeveless dress and red high-heeled sandals, stands in a market setting. She is holding a pink bag and has a red suitcase and a purple suitcase on the ground. To her right is a white shopping bag with 'HEATTECH JAPAN TECHNOLOGY' printed on it. In the background, there are several motorcycles and a yellow sign with Chinese characters. The sign includes '營業項目' (Business Items), '計租程送車' (Rent, Delivery, Car), '出分期租' (Outstanding Rental), and '免相費關' (No Commission/Related Fees).

languageboat.com

In Others' Words

Deborah Caruso

For this special Italian issue, Teddy Nee interviewed Italian translator and tutor, Deborah Caruso.

Hi, first of all, I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Could you tell us about yourself (such as hobbies, place of origin/ living, languages, etc)?

My name is Deborah Caruso and I am 25 years old. I am an Italian, a Southern Italian, and around 2 weeks ago, I resigned from my job because I did not like it anymore and because it was a volunteer position.

Suddenly, I did 2 things: firstly, I booked a holiday in Barcelona and I started thinking about what to do. I decided to teach Italian again as a freelancer, we will talk about that later.

During my spare time, I swim and travel, I am also passionate about photography.

Which language are you learning and why?

I used to learn Mandarin and English during my first degree, I decided later to switch Mandarin with French during my Postgraduate in England. I started studying languages because in Italy, language studies are compulsory since elementary school and then, I started to study International Relations. During that time, language studies were still compulsory languages exams.

My final aim is working as a diplomat or in a foreign policy-related job. That's why I always

try to improve my intercultural communications skills. I would like to start studying Spanish language because I think it can be a valuable asset for my future career.

Which methods do you use in your language learning?

I use traditional methods like using books and listening exercise. I also try to watch movies in their original languages and I try to speak with native speakers. Duolingo app is a revelation and quite useful.

Could you tell us which language is the most challenging for you to learn and why?

That's hard to say. I think, maybe, it will be a language that I cannot like, such as German. Mandarin was difficult at the beginning just because it has many ideograms to memorise. Maybe Arabic or Hindi can be difficult as well, I would say languages that have a lot of grammar and different alphabet can be complicated to learn.

Which language is the least challenging for you to learn and why?

Latin, French, Spanish, and all related Romance languages, I suppose.

I studied Latin during my high school and that's not an easy language but if you are an Italian, it is like studying the ancestor of your actual language so it's easier for us than for a foreigner. The grammar is quite complicated but very logical, that's why we say "Latin

opens your mind". Spanish and French are even quite easy because they are very similar to my mother tongue.

What is the next language for you to learn and why?

Spanish, as I said before, and maybe Catalan. As I said before, Spanish can be useful in International Affairs because it is one of the most spoken languages in the world. I have also a minor reason, to be honest, I have many Spanish friends and I understand everything what they say but, because I have never studied Spanish, I can't reply and that's frustrating.

Intonation is also a bit hard. I don't know why, but foreigners believe that each of our sentences ends with a higher intonation sound. We don't sing while we speak, even if you can listen a musical sound.

Which methods do you use to teach languages?

I used to teach Italian in a Chinese school in Italy. That was the traditional kind of lesson: a classroom, a blackboard, a teacher and some students. The tools that I used were a bit limited because I had to strictly follow an academic programme.

Now, I am teaching private lessons on Skype, it can be very flexible. I use a very useful book that is utilised in the university and in international schools for foreigners here in Italy. It has several phonetics for example in different foreign languages that include also non European languages, such as Mandarin or Arabic. My lesson usually focuses on speaking, dialogues, and many exercises. I also add movies and songs to make it more interactive.

I care about grammar and I think that Italian grammar is complicated and important. Many students don't want to study grammar or they think that it is boring and useless. I try not to



talk for hours about the grammar but I am strict with the essentials that everybody needs to memorise to speak a decent Italian.

Why do you think languages are important for you?

Well, I started to work, thanks to the foreign languages that I can speak. I am a Mandarin-English translator for an Italian translation agency and I teach Italian and English as a part-time job.

I also decided to attend university in England and it was not possible without speaking English. Moreover, political science is an American science so all the relevant academic journals and publications are mostly written in English.

How do you make good use of your language skills and can you tell us more about it (such as translation)?

I think that the first purpose of understanding a new language is communication. I like to talk with people, to discover new cultures, to travel more without the language barrier.

Then, I can say that I made good use of my language skills because I am a translator, focusing mostly on legal and business agree-

ments. In this case, I can say that I can use both my language and academic knowledge. It's important to understand the context, use the correct register, understand who is going to read the document that you are translating. It's important to be very flexible and understand when not to translate literally to give a more sense to your final piece of writing.

What do you think is the challenge for learning Italian?

I think it depends on the learners. I can say the grammar for sure because is complicated and full of rules as well as exceptions to the rules. Moreover, I met many students that think that the grammar is useless.

Reading is easier because you basically read as you write but some sounds can be difficult to pronounce for a foreigner such as -gn, -ch, -gl.

Intonation is also a bit hard. I don't know why, but foreigners believe that each of our sentences ends with a higher intonation sound. We don't sing while we speak, even if you can listen a musical sound.

The last challenge is about the Italian dialects. As you know, Italian is a conventional language, it's artificial. It was created on Florence's dialect basis with some words from dialects spoken in Rome. It implies that even now, each Italian village has got its own dialect. If people speak a dialect to you, you will not understand. For example, I even don't understand the dialect of Venice. Some Northerners will tell you that they don't speak dialects because they are civilised and we Southerners are not. That's not true. Mostly old people speak dialects from the North to the South in Italy. But all of us speak Italian because we are Italians, even if some regions believe that they are a kind of a new better state that want to leave Italy. That's ignorance.

What would you like to say to Italian language learners?

Study hard. Italian can sound fun but it's difficult. So be prepared to spend much time on books and have many hours of classes and lessons. Find a native Italian or go to Italy for a period to study. Italian schools and university are hard so Italians are used to study hard to pass their exams. You should start to study as an Italian to speak good Italian. Consider that well educated Italians had a classical education and they also studied Latin and/or Ancient Greek.

But don't forget to have fun, socialize, watch movies, listen to songs, and if an Italian invites you for a coffee, always accept! That's a pure social moment, it's not because of the coffee itself.

Why do you think we need to learn Italian?

I am always surprised when somebody tells me "I study Italian" or "I want to study Italian". This is also my first question on my first Italian lesson with a new student. Their replies are various but the most is that they are fascinated by Italy from our culture and art to our gastronomy. Some of them are in love with Italians, others are musicians or architects or actors and we all know that most of the words in figurative arts are written in Italian.

I can't tell you why you need to learn Italian. I can say that when I speak English, I have the feeling that some words are missing. Not because of my English level as I studied in England at an academic level, just because Italian, in my humble opinion, can express feelings in a better way, with different degrees and shades of intensity.

Is there anything would you like to add?

I would like to thank again for the possibility to be interviewed and I would like to add that if you need Italian private lessons, I would be glad to be your teacher.

Please send me an email to deborahcaruso777@gmail.com or add me on Skype at [deborah.caruso12](https://www.skype.com/people/deborah.caruso12) **PT**



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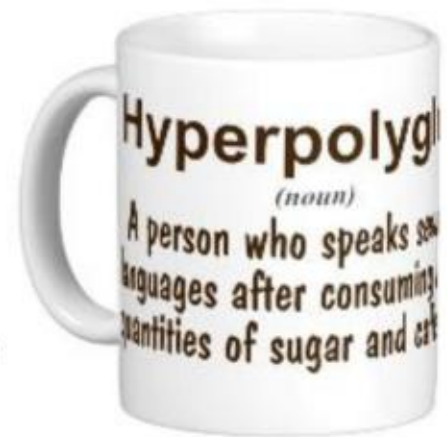
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“ Author **Melissa Muldoon** presents spellbinding artistic expression in her delightful story, **Dreaming Sophia**. Not your typical Italian romantic adventure, **Dreaming Sophia** is a wonderful multifaceted story that pushes through several genres, with layers and layers of exquisite entertainment. The development of her characters is flawless. ” - *Sheri Hoyte: Reader Views*



Melissa Muldoon is the “*Studentessa Matta*”. In Italian, “*matta*” means “crazy” or “impassioned”. She promotes the study of Italian language and culture through the dual-language blog StudentessaMatta.com. She has a B.A. in fine arts, art history and European history from Knox College and a master’s in art history from the University of Illinois. She has studied painting, language and art history in Florence.

Dreaming Sophia is a fanciful look at art history, but it is also a culmination of personal stories and insights resulting from Melissa’s experiences traveling and living in Italy, as well as her involvement and familiarity with the Italian language, painting and art history. Find more about *Dreaming Sophia* on the website, Pinterest and Facebook page:s



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Celebrations

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SARACINO

by Melissa Muldoon

Let's time travel! *Facciamo un salto nel passato – Ritorniamo al Medioevo* - Travel with me to Arezzo and Back to the Medieval Ages.

Sometimes a trip to Italy is like stepping into the past. For me, that is part of the charm of the country. During my stays in Arezzo, a small Tuscan town situated along the train line between Florence and Rome, I have the impression of passing through a portal and slipping back to medieval times quite often when I take part in and witness the festival of the "Giostra del Saracino."

Over the last couple of years, I seem to be particularly drawn to Arezzo and have a particular fascination for the joust. Who knows why? Perhaps I lived here in a previous life. A romantic notion to be sure, but that's just me. I can't help but thrill to the sound of the drums and the sight of women in dressed in medieval costume and cavaliers charging across the piazza with lances at the ready, taking aim at the Saracen target, representing the King of the Indies.

Twice a year, in June and in September, the citizens of Arezzo dress up in medieval doublets, pantaloons and corsets to parade around the streets in preparation for a competition that dates back to the 1300s. In fact, Dante wrote of the joust in his Divine Comedy.

It is widely believed la Giostra Saraceno originated from the Crusades. The historical

documentation tells us that the raids of the Saracens reached all the way up the boot, as far as Arezzo. Formerly the joust would have been a military training ground to prepare the Aretini for battle against the infidels.

Since its inception, over the course of time, the rules of Arezzo's competition have not changed much. The city is divided into four neighborhoods that represent Arezzo's ancient noble families.

Porta Crucifera - rosso e verde	The red and green gate
Porta del Foro - giallo e rosso	The yellow and crimson gate
Porta S. Andrea - bianca e verde	The white and green gate
Porta S. Spirito - giallo e blu	The yellow and blue gate

Each neighborhood selects two jousts who train for the event throughout the year. Also, each district chooses from its ranks a vast assortment of footmen, musicians, valets, flag jugglers, knights and ladies to march in the parades in the days before the event to support the gallant knights.

The evening before the joust, each of Arezzo's four neighborhoods celebrates by holding a good luck dinner presided over by the neighborhood presidents and by the jousts themselves. It is a festive event with

good food—a pizza or a barbeque, and there is dancing and singing in the streets. Everywhere you go you see a sea of colorful banners. Everyone, no matter to which neighborhood you belong, becomes a fan of this magical competition.

People from all over Italy come to Arezzo to watch the event and stands are erected around the Piazza Grande to accommodate the crowds. A week before the sizeable sloping square is filled

Spectators and performers gathering in the Piazza Grande





Images (from top, going clockwise) Local spectators dressed in traditional medieval costumes; Blue and yellow joustier watching the events; Green and white team gathered; Spectators cheering in the plaza; Guest and local spectators watching the jousting lane





Images (from top, going clockwise) Jousters from the four neighbourhoods lined up; Melissa and friends cheering for the blue and yellow; A joustier hitting the score card; Melissa having drinks with a friend; Blue and yellow team revelers



with packed dirt and sand to form a stable path called a *Lizza* for the horses to traverse. The event is well documented by photographers and television crews from Arezzo TV and Teletruria TV, as much as any sporting event featured on ESPN in the States. It is a big deal, to be sure.

The day begins with the sounds of cannons firing to herald in the day and signal throughout the day the events leading up to the game itself. Citizens of Arezzo march through the town beating drums and each neighborhood and their horsemen process from one end to the other as flag throwers demonstrate their skills in the streets and musicians blare their horns.

Then each elegantly dressed joustier enters the Piazza Grande and takes his turn charging up the piazza to attack swiveling “Buratto” the Saracen dummy that represents the King of the Indies.

The object is to strike the score card held by the Saracen dummy squarely in the middle with the joustier’s wooden lance. Depending on the skill and accuracy of each strike, the team earns a certain number of points. The task is made even more complicated by the rotating dummy that carries with it the flail. If a rider is too slow, he is in danger of being hit in the back by the whip.

In the end, the winner is declared, and the neighborhood to whom the joustier belongs claims the Golden Lance as its prize. Members of the winning team then parade through the streets of Arezzo, their destination being

Yellow and black joustier in full mask



Joustier striking the dummy's score card in the centre

the Duomo where they give thanks to Our Lady of Consolation, the patron saint of the city for their victory.

Arezzo then settles back into its routine, each neighborhood vowing to return to win the next challenge. I too will be returning to Arezzo to partake in this year’s Giostra event in September. I invite you to join me in Italy along with my partner Paola Testi – the director of *Cultura Italiana* to learn Italian in Italy. Aug 31 - Sept 11 (or extended stay option until Sept.15). For two weeks we live like locals and learn not only the language but discover more about the city, the art, cooking, the wine and Arezzo’s history in a small group experience. For more information and to make a reservation on the www.StudentessaMatta.com website. **PT**

Melissa Muldoon is the author of “Dreaming Sophia” & “Waking Isabella.” She is also an artist, designer, and creator of the Studentessa Matta Dual-language Blog (www.studentessamatta.com) and Youtube Channel (https://www.youtube.com/c/StudentessaMatta_MelissaMuldoon). Through her many projects as well as her programs to study in Italy Melissa promotes Italian language and culture. She has a B.A. in fine arts, art history, and European history and a master’s in art history. She studied painting, language and art history in Florence.

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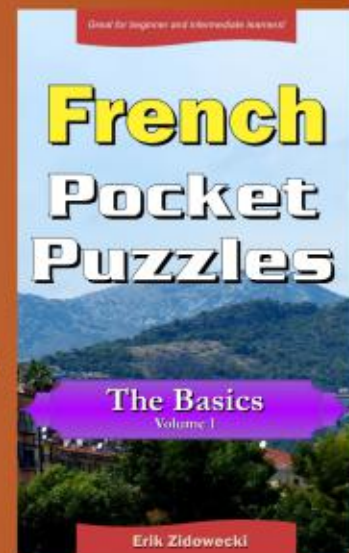
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These photos are from Melissa Muldoon and show parts of Arezzo, Italy



Arezzo is a city and comune in Italy, located in Tuscany.



The Piazza Grande is the most noteworthy medieval square in the city.



It hosts many events, including this antique market.



It is currently the site of the Giostra del Saracino ("Joust of the Saracen").



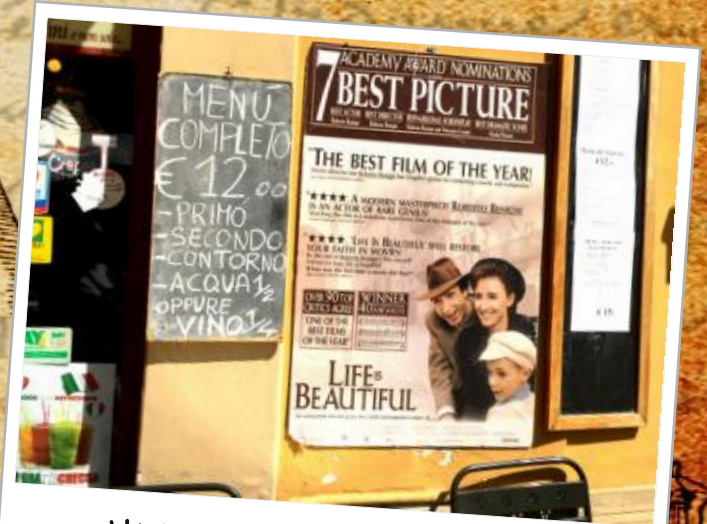
Arezzo, Italy



"Knights" on horseback representing different areas of the town charge at a wooden target.



Virtually all the town's people dress up in medieval costume.



Wall with advertising and film promotion



"The Queen of Sheba Worshipping the Wood of the True Cross" in the Cappella Maggiore of San Francesco.



Artwork in Arezzo Cathedral, a Roman Catholic cathedral

Book Look

Acquisition of Word Formation
Devices in First & Second
Languages” (2017)

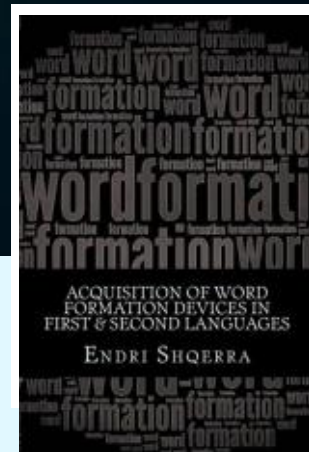
by Endri Shqerra

Language: English

Paperback or kindle

Reviewed by

Olivier Elzingre and Endri Squerra



What comes to mind when you start to think about how we learn languages? Most of us think of learning environment, challenging curriculum, efforts, etc. Another way is to look at the structure of words to explore the ways words are formed, knowledge which assists us in inferring the meaning of the new derivatives and compound words we encounter for the first time. The idea is quite simple really. Languages have root words (e. g., *hard*, *work*), prefixes (e. g., *un-*) and suffixes (e. g., *-ly*) and new words (e. g. *hardworking*, *unimportant*, *hardly*) can be formed by playing with their morphology.

“Acquisition of Word Formation Devices in First & Second Languages” is a technical and academic book delving into the difficult question of how we learn languages, both our native language and subsequent ones, and, more particularly, how we develop a large vocabulary by developing the ability to create new derived words from the words we know. The book is addressed for those who have a previous understanding of language acquisition and are familiar with academic words used in language acquisition. Shqerra presents us with an extensive review of previous research and weaves into the work tables of

his own testings with his students. In essence he is doing what all teachers do, which is to read up on their field in order to adopt a teaching philosophy of their subject and have a look at their own circumstances as a point of comparison. Only, Shqerra does it in a much more systematic, informed and in-depth manner.

The work is reminiscent of the famous ‘wug’ test, in which children were shown a non-existing creature and were told it was a ‘wug’. When shown a picture with 2 of those, children immediately pluralised this non existing word, into wugs. To the authors of this test, it showed that children were able to use words ‘productively’, that is to form derivatives from the initial entry, based on their acquisition of the principles of word formation. Shqerra goes further by looking at first and second language acquisition.

The book is divided into 6 chapters or sections:

- a. Introduction
- b. Ch.1, a literature review on how beginners and early learners develop strategies to form words in their first and second

language

c. Ch.2, a literature review on how advanced speakers and learners of their first language develop strategies for new word formations

d. Ch. 3 a literature review on how advanced speakers and learners of their second language develop the same strategies.

e. Ch. 4, advice to teachers how to teach word formation to second language learners

f. Conclusions

g. Bibliography

The very first paragraph of the introduction sets the tone for this book and immediately we know that the reader needs some background knowledge: Extended Level Ordering Hypothesis, inflectional morphemes, phonological effects, semantic regularity and productivity are concepts mentioned in just the first sentence. In the first paragraph, he explains the general understanding of word formation before clarifying that this work aims at comparing how people learn and use new words in the first and second languages. Shqerra outlines the purpose of this book in the main body of the introduction. He also makes interesting comments about morphological cross-linguistic influence, which is about how your first language influences your second language acquisition.

Chapters 1 to 3 present results of a large number of tests done by Shqerra and other scholars to explore how word formation knowledge is acquired by both native speakers and second language learners. This investigation forms the basis of Shqerra's suggestions given to teachers to improve their students' word formation knowledge.

Following these chapters, Shqerra then focuses on what is arguably the most important chapter of his book – considering



Book Look is made possible in part by
The Polyglotist

"One of my favorite parts of learning a language is the ability to poke your head into a culture that is not your own."



all this knowledge, how do we facilitate the process of language learning in language classes?

Shqerra gives some excellent advice in his chapter 4. Meant for language teachers, this chapter could just as well address those many self-driven adult language learners who wish to add effective strategies to their didactic efforts.

Shqerra makes interesting suggestions, one of which being that textbooks should be 'rich in root words'. This makes sense, because in order to make our target language productive, we have to be exposed to the root vocabulary before learning their derivatives. Following on this, derivatives can be learned through an understanding of affixes.

The author pointed out at the start of chapter 4 that explicit teaching of word formation rules (*e. g., -ly combines with adjectives to form adverbs*) may not be very effective but that such knowledge (*i. e., suffix -ly combines with adjectives to form adverbs*) may be transferred by the learners' first language.

For example, the Dutch suffix *-baar* is the counterpart of the English suffix *-able*. The meaning of both these suffixes (*-able* and *-baar*) is "that can be V-ed", and, they both combine with verbs to form adjectives (the same word formation rules apply to these suffixes). If we present to the Dutch speaking English learners the counterpart *-baar* that the English suffix *-ly* has in pupils' first language, would assist Dutch speaking English learners in transfer such knowledge from their first language.

Conclusion:

As a foreign language teacher, I find the topic really interesting and thought-provoking. I have made plans to develop cer-

tain activities with my own students based on his suggestions. My personal feeling about Shqerra's suggestions, however, is that they are based on a fairly mechanical aspect of the language, reminding me of a scene in the Dead Poets' Society where students read from their textbook what good writing is based on sentence structure and vocabulary range. In the movie, Robin Williams, the teacher, instructs the students to tear off those pages of their textbook, teaching them that writing is much more artful. I feel that language learning contains an unquantifiable dimension which needs to be fostered. For example, we know that some people are able to play competitive scrabble in languages they can't speak.

Still, Shqerra did not claim that he was offering a magical solution to foreign language acquisition. Instead, he convincingly proposed a strategy to enhance learners' ability to expand their vocabulary.

The book is available for purchase at <https://www.amazon.com/Acquisition-Formation-Devices-Second-Languages/dp/1545569533> **PT**

Endri Shqerra M.A. studied at University of New York, Tirana. His publications include "Contrastive Analyses of Word-Formation in English and Albanian Languages" and "The Role of Derivation and Compounding in the Process of English Language Acquisition".

Olivier Elzingre is a PhD candidate researching motivation and identity development in study abroad contexts. He teaches high school French in Australia. Correspondence to olivierrelzingre@gmail.com

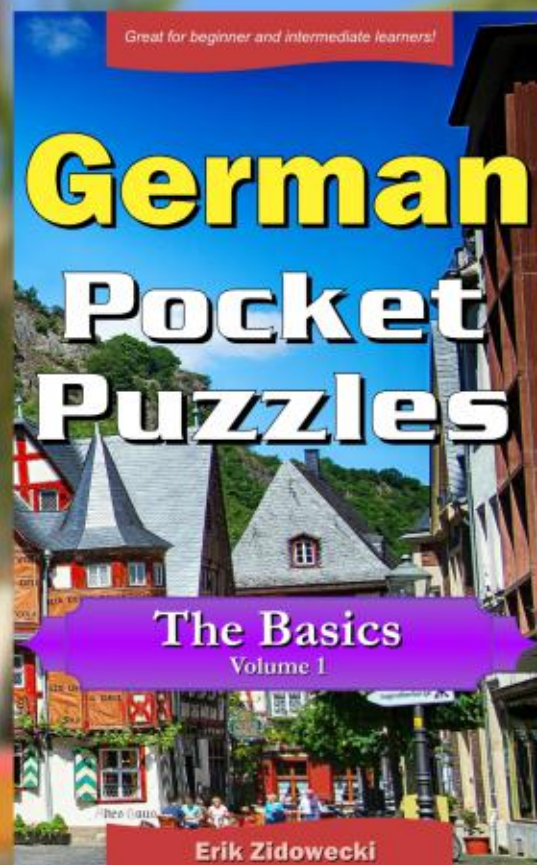
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Language review for the travelling you!

Book Look

Waking Isabella: Because beauty can't sleep forever

by Melissa Muldoon

Language: English / Italian / French

Item Rating: ★★★★★

Reviewed by Erik Zidowecki



This review is for Melissa Muldoon's second Italian novel, *Waking Isabella*. It is a mix of history, mystery, and romance, taking our main character, Nora, back to Italy, which she had first visited several years before.

It starts innocently enough when Nora, feeling like her life is in a rut after a failed marriage, gets a text message one day from a long-time friend. This brings back some forgotten memories of travelling and a desire to see Italy again. So she joins a documentary making contest which gives her money and reason to travel to Arezzo, Italy. There, she plans to trace what happened to the Tuscany princess Isabella de' Medici.

As she travels and researches, she meets many characters, both dead and alive, and falls in love again. It might sound cliché, but Melissa does a fantastic job of storytelling while mixing plenty of history and language to enrich the plot.

Actually, plots. I had read the previous book, *Dreaming Sophia*, (and reviewed it here) so I had an idea of what to expect in terms of style of writing. *Dreaming Sophia* made me fall in love with Italy again myself. I had travelled there a few times while I was in my late teens and early

twenties, and the descriptions of looks, sounds, and smells took me back easily.

In that book, there was really only one plot: following Sophia on her journey to Italy and her life over a few years there. Everything was seen from her point of view and only her thoughts known to us.

In *Waking Isabella*, there are multiple plots and we hear the thoughts of several characters. This gave us varied views of the situations as well as other stories to follow. I don't think either storytelling method is better, just different.

Another note is that while Sophia had never been to Italy and only knew what her parents told her, Nora had spent some time there with her friend, enough to have picked up much of the lifestyle and language. This puts us into Italy very quickly, while *Sophia* took several chapters.

Waking Isabella is set in Arezzo, Tuscany. If you haven't been to Italy, Tuscany is the region that holds the popular cities of Florence, Pisa, and Siena. While I have visited all three before, as well as Urbino (a small town in the mountains of

Tuscany), I have never been to Arezzo. The descriptions almost perfectly matched my memories of the larger region, however.

You don't have to have been to Italy to appreciate the books, however. Far from it. Melissa brings the country to life with her vivid descriptions and subtle weaving of narrative with the language. I was very pleased to find that I could understand most of the Italian, meaning I had not completely forgotten all of it. This is of special note to language learners: Italian and French are "spoken" in the books between characters and as part of the narration. I feel it was done smoothly and there is almost always an immediate translation, it might upset some who are not language enthusiasts.

I have avoided revealing too much of the plot because I don't want the reader's own experience to be spoiled. I can, however, give something of a hint.

Isabella de' Medici died "unexpectedly" at the age of 34, although many believe she was murdered by her husband. Nora wonders what Isabella might tell if she could speak now and so part of her fancy is that the documentary might awaken some facts. So what does Nora find out at the end of her search?

"Waking Isabella", the title, also works as a double meaning. A "wake" is something you perform for someone who has died to say goodbye to them in a formal way, normally as an event with other people.

I can definitely recommend *Waking Isabella* as a great read because it mixes aspect of history, mystery, romance, travel, and language. And be sure to read *Dreaming Sophia* as well, although it doesn't matter which you read first. The two books are completely unrelated. **PT**



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At the Cinema



Life Is Beautiful
1h 56min
PG-13
Comedy / Drama / War
12 February 1999 (USA)

Country: Italy
Language: Italian / German / English

I find it difficult to rate such a film because it is almost two different stories. I loved the first part and thought it was a highly entertaining romantic comedy. But there is the second, much deeper part...

For this special Italian issue, I am reviewing “Life is Beautiful”. When selecting a film, I have constantly avoided this one without remembering why. For some reason, I decided to watch it when I looked for an Italian film this time.

The film starts out with our main character, Guido, and his friend, Ferruccio, travelling the Italian countryside on their way to Rome, where Guido’s uncle, Eliseo, lives. He has promised them jobs.

Guido is a very cheerful man, always making jokes and acting like a buffoon, but there is a sharp mind and wit behind his foolishness. When they stop the car at a farm to do some repairs, he manages to make an impression on a young woman and her older sister, Dora, who he addresses with “Buongiorno, Principessa!” (Good day, Princess!).

Once they reach Rome, they meet up with Eliseo and the next day, Guido starts work as a waiter and Ferruccio starts working for an upholsterer. Guido ultimately wants to open a bookstore, but manages to accidentally completely enrage the city official in charge of handing out such permits, Mr Rodolfo, who declares he will never get one.

Guido has the odd capability of easily getting into trouble then somehow getting back out it almost without effort. However, that does not mean his actions do not affect others.

Over the next few days, we watch him learn about the people and patterns of his neighbourhood. He also meets Dora a few more times, sometimes by chance, sometimes by very deliberate means, because she works as a school teacher.

We learn that Dora is unhappily engaged to Rodolfo, who treats her poorly. Falling in love with her, Guido performs one of his manipulations and manages to steal her away from Rodolfo after a night at the opera during a rainstorm. Then using his charm, imagination, and what he has learned of his neighbourhood, he gives Dora a magical walk home.

After that, Dora has fallen in love with Guido as well and is even more unhappy at the idea of marrying Rodolfo.



Dora falling on Guido when they meet



Guido rescuing Dora on his green horse

But in typical romance film cliché, Guido manages to rescue her from her own engagement party on the back of a green horse, and they marry happily, have a son, Giosuè, and manage to open a bookstore.

This is all in the first part of the film. At this point, I was reminded why I avoided the film.

We jump forward several years to where Giosuè is a young boy and WWII has begun. Hitler is having Jews collected and taken to camps, and we learn that Guido is a Jew. You can guess where this is going. He and Giosuè are dragged from their homes one day and boarded onto trains along with Guido's uncle and other Jews from the area. When Dora finds out what has happened, she goes to the Nazi station and insists there has been a mistake. When they deny it, she finally announces then that she will be coming too, and they put her on a separate train with women.

Guido understands the danger he and Giosuè are in, and that they are likely to be killed. However, Giosuè has no idea, so Guido starts explaining things in playful and humorous ways. He manages to convince Giosuè that they are playing a big game with everyone else, and he must do as he is told in order to get the prize, a real tank.



Guido explaining "the game" to Giosuè



Guido leading Giosuè to a place to hide

It is only through Guido's imagination and wit that Giosuè never realizes what is truly happening, so when the concentration camp is finally liberated and American's in tanks role in, Guido's innocence is preserved, and he believes that he has one the first tank that he sees.

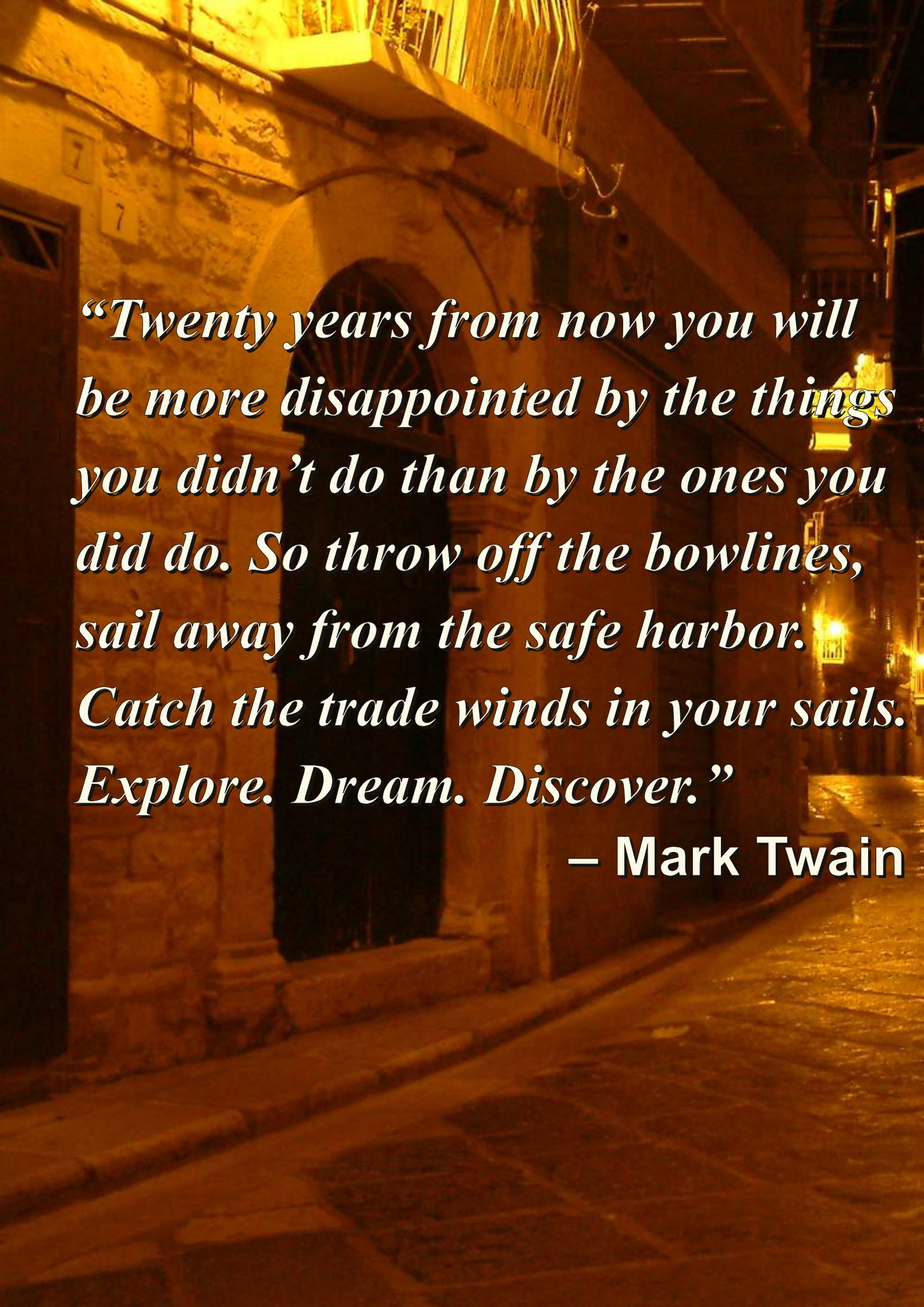
The film is all in Italian, with only a little German. I find it difficult to rate such a film because it is almost two different stories. I loved the first part and thought it was a highly entertaining romantic comedy. But there is the second, much darker part which, to be honest, made me very uncomfortable at times to watch. That is how well it was done.

I would have to say I encourage everyone who likes some fanciful comedy to see the first part, then shut it off. If you are ready to embrace the darker story, then definitely walk the second. But be warned that there is a definite duality to the film.

As an extra tie-in, the film was shot in Arezzo, where the pictures for the "In Focus" section this issue were taken and the *Giostra del Saracino* occurs (page 30). **PT**



Guido making Giosuè laugh one last time



“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines, sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”

– Mark Twain



Italia

Proverbs from the World: Italian

The world is full of languages, which in turn are full of proverbs and proverbial phrases. Some of them are very culture related, some instead very universal. The language of choice this time is Italian. In Italian, the language is called *italiano*.

Italian is the main language spoken in Italy, and an official language there, in Switzerland, San Marino, Vatican City, Istria County in Croatia, and Slovene Istria in Slovenia. It is also a recognized minority language in many countries also outside Europe, for example in Somalia and Libya due to the Italian colonial period. Italian is the native language of the majority of Italians. There are also four co-official minority languages in the northern parts of Italy, namely German, French, Slovene and Ladin. This is just the official part: there are over thirty living spoken languages and dialects in Italy, mostly Romance languages. There hasn't been uniformity along the history whether they are languages or dialects, and the concept of dialect in Italy means big differences compared to standard Italian. The number of native speakers of Italian is about 90 million.

Italian belongs to the Romance branch of the Indo-European language family, alongside Spanish, French and Portuguese, and more specifically, to the Italo-Dalmatian language sub-group. The alphabet is Latin. Italian has two grammatical genders, feminine and masculine, and nouns have singular and plural forms. Indefinite and definite articles are used, and verbs are conjugated in six persons.

Being an Indo-European language with Christian history, many of the proverbs (*proverbio*), are of international heritage. This does not apply to all of them, of course. Here are some selected ones from a famous novel by *Giovanni Verga, I Malavoglia*, first published in 1881. The novel tells about a Sicilian family of fishermen that faces many misfortunes, and it's exceptionally rich in proverbs. The book has been translated by Mary A. Craig into English under the name *The House by the Medlar-Tree* in 1890, and the following translations into English are Craig's. The proverbs selected this time suit life as a fisherman.

1. Fa il mestiere che sai, che se non arricchisci camperai.

Translation:

Stick to the trade you know, somehow you'll manage to go.



2. Per menare il remo bisogna che le cinque dita s'aiutino l'un l'altro.

Translation:

To pull a good oar all the five fingers must help each other.

Cooperation is important.



3. Scirocco chiaro e tramontana scura, mettiti in mare senza paura.

Translation:

Clear south wind and dark north, go fearlessly forth.



4. Mare crespo, vento fresco.

Translation:

Curly is the sea, a fresh wind there'll be.



5. Le acciughe sentono il grecale ventiquattro ore prima di arrivare.

Translation:

Anchovies feel the north-east wind twenty-four hours before it comes.



6. Triste quella casa dove c'è la visita pel marito.

Translation:

Sad is the house where there is the "visit" for the husband.

Sea is, unfortunately, the tomb of many fishermen.



7. Il mare è amaro, ed il marinaio muore in mare.

Translation:

The sea is salt, and the sailor dies in the sea.



8. Col mare fresco non se ne piglia pesci.

Translation:

In this fresh breeze there's no chance of fish.



9. I pesci grossi stanno sott'acqua durante la maretta.

Translation:

The big fish stayed under water while the waves ran high.



10. A nave rotta ogni vento è contrario.

Translation:

To the sinking ship all winds blow contrary.



11. Il buon pilota si conosce alle burrasche.

Translation:

In the storm one knows the good pilot.



12. Mare bianco, scirocco in campo.

Translation:

White sea, sirocco there'll be.



13. Quando la luna è rossa fa vento, quando è chiara vuol dire sereno, quando è pallida, pioverà.

Translation:

When the moon is red it means wind ; when it is clear, fine weather ; when it is pale it means rain.



14. Acqua di cielo, e sardelle alle reti.

Translation:

Water from the sky, sardines in the net.



15. Chi ha roba in mare non ha nulla.

Not translated in the English edition of the novel, but the literal meaning is clear:

Who has goods at sea has nothing. Those goods do not materialize until returning home.



16. Per un pescatore si perde la barca.

Translation:

For one fisherman the boat was lost. One who does not do things right may ruin everything.



As the eldest of the family, padron 'Ntoni says, *il motto degli antichi mai menti* – the saying of the old never lied. The proverbs above are rooted in the reality of the fishermen's daily life, weather and the aspect of the sea, and they are very much popular wisdom instead of witty phrases that rhyme nicely. One must use the strength of the young and the experience of the old - *forza di giovane e consiglio di vecchio*. **PT**

Language Puzzles

Every issue we post a puzzle here for you to solve. It varies in language and type, so if this puzzle doesn't interest you, you can wait until the next issue, or try the puzzle anyways. You might learn something new!



This month's puzzle is a beginner's Italian word search. Find all the English and Italian words in the matrix of letters. Words can be in any direction.

Puzzle #29

g	h	i	a	c	c	i	o	g	v	ù	y	q	a	w	d	y	p	z	à	j	ù	l	o	ù
s	à	d	v	f	ù	n	ù	w	v	e	d	o	g	e	w	r	k	m	t	x	j	y	y	d
k	y	s	o	i	l	g	i	c	c	a	r	p	o	s	k	m	i	e	z	w	z	x	n	t
c	u	r	j	e	ù	m	k	y	j	e	d	d	n	x	s	p	t	b	a	g	q	r	k	f
o	x	h	t	j	k	z	w	c	ù	e	l	r	b	g	y	u	o	p	t	q	o	y	u	f
s	a	ù	o	l	l	e	c	c	u	j	t	l	e	i	o	k	m	r	à	o	c	w	w	r
à	z	a	s	f	j	s	q	u	i	b	u	e	l	o	s	n	a	k	e	m	r	w	c	e
c	l	n	x	y	o	t	n	ù	d	x	p	y	e	a	h	j	t	p	a	à	a	t	q	c
h	q	a	e	b	b	à	u	j	p	j	x	e	f	v	j	f	o	f	q	z	à	m	a	i
u	l	ù	n	j	f	i	a	k	s	w	v	b	s	e	r	p	e	n	t	e	ù	g	d	e
n	q	u	s	x	o	t	n	e	m	v	z	r	o	ù	c	z	p	a	h	b	a	g	t	z
d	h	y	p	o	m	o	d	o	r	o	n	o	x	a	u	h	u	w	u	e	n	a	c	à
g	z	b	e	l	b	o	r	s	a	j	m	w	k	v	h	à	v	z	d	ù	l	c	b	o
k	o	i	n	i	z	l	a	c	l	j	k	e	n	q	p	c	u	l	u	v	w	t	d	t
n	r	x	w	z	y	o	l	x	x	f	k	g	r	o	r	o	z	n	i	h	c	n	v	s

Find all Italian and English words in the puzzle.



Beginner's Italian Word Searches - V1

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Italian

- sopracciglio [m]
- uccello [m]
- torta [f]
- mento [m]
- pomodoro [m]
- serpente [m]
- cane [m]
- borsa [f]
- calzini [mp]
- ghiaccio [m]

English

- eyebrow
- bird
- cake
- chin
- tomato
- snake
- dog
- bag
- socks
- ice



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Despite the number of native speakers, it is sometimes considered endangered because of the small area it is spoken in and the lack of younger people learning it.

Hello	Salutamu / Ciau
Good morning	Bonasira
How are you?	Comu s`i?
Fine, thank you	Bonu, grazzi
And you?	E tu?
It is a beautiful day	Bimminutu / Bummegna
Have a nice day	E' na beḡḡa jurnata
Goodbye	Ni videmu
See you later	Ni videmu/A doppu
See you tomorrow	Ni videmu dumani / A dumani
Do you speak English?	Parri ngrisi?
Yes, a little	Se, n'anticchia

Yes	Se / Sì
No	No
Nice to meet you	Piaciri 'i canuscìriti
Nice to see you	Sugnu cuntent 'i vidìriti
day	jornu
Monday	luni
Tuesday	marti
Wednesday	mèrcuri
Thursday	jovi
Friday	vènniri
Saturday	sàbbatu
Sunday	dumìnica



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<https://www.udemy.com/speak-italian-like-an-italiano/?siteID=XDosYcwyRTU-GXa7LojCNp2DiSzsufVIHg&LSNPUBID=XDosYcwyRTU>

Italian



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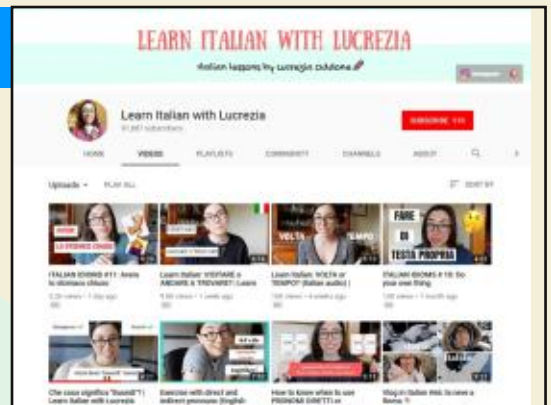
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<https://www.youtube.com/user/lucreziaoddone/videos>

Italian



La Studentessa Matta

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https://www.youtube.com/c/studentessamatta_melissamuldoon


Italian



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I don't get anything
the teacher says.

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like a drag sometimes, doesn't it?

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News Brief

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Lasciare Andare – Learning Italian And The Art Of Letting Go

Writer: Melissa Muldoon

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A New Sicilian Author on the Horizon

Writer: Mary Ann Vitale

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In Others's Words - Deborah Caruso

Writer: Teddy Nee

Celebrate - Giostra del Saracino

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In Focus

Writer: Erik Zidowecki, Melissa Muldoon

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Book Look - Acquisition of Word Formation Devices in First & Second Languages” (2017)

Writer: Olivier Elzingre and Endri Squerra

Book Look - Waking Isabella: Because beauty can't sleep forever

Writer: Erik Zidowecki

At The Cinema - Life is Beautiful

Writer: Erik Zidowecki

Sources:

• "Life Is Beautiful (1997)" Internet Movie Data Base <<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0118799/>>
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Proverbs from the World - Italian

Writer: Tarja Jolma

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Sources:

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Language Puzzles**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki**Basic Guide to Sicilian****Writer:** Erik Zidowecki, Cademia Sicilian**Images:**

Petey: Flag; View of city

At A Glance**Writer:** Erik Zidowecki

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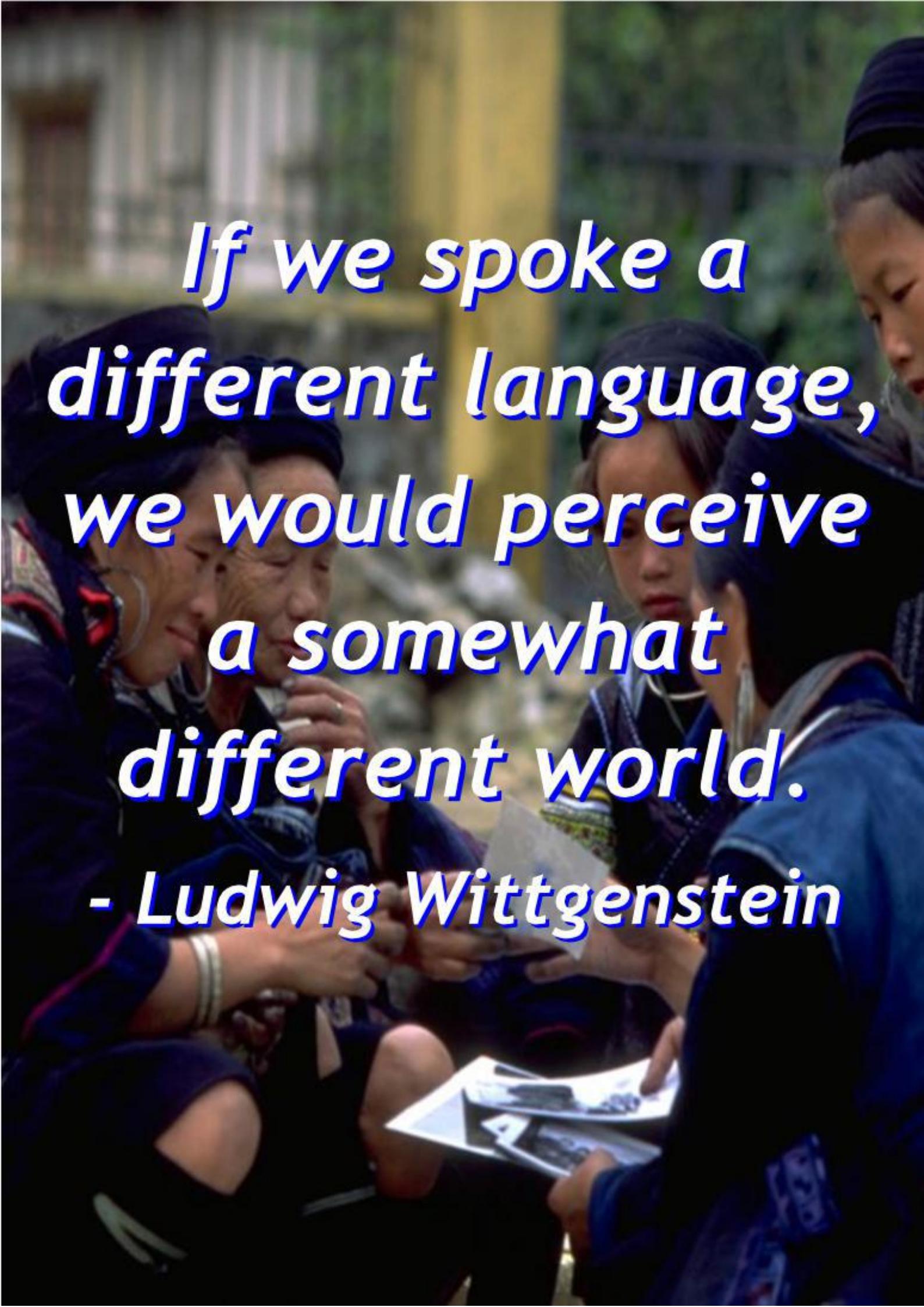
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A group of women, likely from a traditional community, are gathered around a document. They are wearing dark blue traditional clothing and headwraps. One woman in the foreground is holding a large sheet of paper, and others are looking at it with interest. The background is slightly blurred, showing an outdoor setting with trees and a building.

*If we spoke a
different language,
we would perceive
a somewhat
different world.*

- Ludwig Wittgenstein