○ J. J. KINDER, *CLIC. CULTURA E LINGUA D'ITALIA IN CD-ROM. CULTURE AND LANGUAGE OF ITALY ON CD-ROM*

(NOVARA: INTERLINEA. 2008. ISBN 978-88-8212-637-7)

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CLIC (Kinder, 2008) is a bilingual Italian-English interactive multimedia resource for the teaching of the history of Italian culture and language. It is ideally suited to tertiary teachers and students of Italian language, linguistics, architecture and history, though high school teachers of Italian would also find it a valuable resource. It is suitable for both in class and out-of-class work, including individual student projects guided by the teacher.

As pointed out by the author in the accompanying booklet, all material included in the CD-ROM has been selected 'in relation to the history of language rather than for its intrinsic interest' (p.5). The focus on language as the guiding and organizing principle of this resource contributes to its coherence, educational soundness and accessibility. The multimedia format permits users to easily access lessons, documents, music and images from various historical periods, from Ancient Rome to United Italy in one clearly structured and easy to navigate package. The Notes (*Appunti*) button includes a feature which allows teachers to bookmark pages they wish to show students during a lesson, without spending unnecessary time navigating the resource. While providing flexibility in how users might read the resource, its 28 chapters are divided into four main time periods, including Ancient Rome, Middle Ages, 13th/14th century, Renaissance,17th century, Revolution and Risorgimento, and United Italy. These time periods are each structured according to four themes: History and Society, Ideas and Religion, Art and Architecture, and Language and Literature. These themes allow users to explore the interrelationship between politics, ideas, religion, art, architecture and developments in language and literature, in the society of the selected era.

The navigation is simple and intuitive, and the various functions are easy to control. Users can choose which chapter they wish to study and progress through the program in any order, combining historical era with theme of their choice. The program does not however allow users to move directly from one chapter to the next, but they can achieve this by returning to the main menu.

The booklet which comes with the CD-ROM package provides a complete overview of the contents and structure of the CD for intending users, before they step into the marvellous scholarly multimedia journey set up by the author. The history of Italian language is contextualised through the use of authentic documents, videoclips and realia from appropriate historical periods. This brings the development of Italian language, including dialects, to life for students, teachers and scholars alike. For example, various regional accents and dialects of modern Italy are illustrated using entertaining film clips from popular Italian films. Authentic historical documents and carefully chosen music of the relevant periods also shed light on and enrich users' understanding of the development of Italian language, including varieties of Italian in contemporary society. The ever present multiple still images of Italian art works of the relevant period also contribute to the user's sense of 'immersion' in the Italian language and society of the time.

The author's expertise as textbook author is evident in his creation of a series of exercises for linguistic analysis which allow users to gain a deeper understanding of the development of Italian language in each historical period. In the Ancient Rome section, one such activity is the series of exercises on the cases of Latin, which are designed to illustrate the changes which took place in Latin as it evolved from Imperial times to the Middle Ages. These and other exercises are enhanced by corrective feedback, which is available on screen by following instructions; in the case of the Latin exercises, it is sufficient to click on the image of Cicero's bust. In future versions however, linguistic analysis exercises could be marked and accessed as a separate feature on the main navigational item (Roman coin) or within the Notes feature, rather than being hidden within the chapters.

Users who are not entirely proficient in Italian are able to switch to English at any time, because the resource may be navigated in either English or Italian. The switch between languages via appropriate buttons in the menu is fast and easy to achieve. This is an important educational function because students of Italian are able to use the English translation as temporary linguistic support while attempting navigation entirely in Italian.

Another important educational aspect of the package is the bibliography which is available in each chapter, and allows users to engage in further in-depth study of the language and society of the relevant era. The hyperlinks in each lesson also enrich this resource substantially by linking to pages which provide supplementary information. As these hyperlinks are written in by the author, users avoid hyperlinking to irrelevant information which may occur when navigating on the web.

Since the CD-ROM was published in 2008, computers and software have changed considerably, so some additional instructions are required for users who are not "digital

natives" (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). The CD-ROM is Windows or Mac compatible, however, I tested the software only on a PC. Once you insert the CD into the computer, Windows will prompt you to make various choices to open the CD. Select Open Folder to view files using Windows Explorer, then right click on the .swf file. Flashplayer 7 is required to be able to use the CD-ROM, but this is easily installed from the CD if required.

In future versions of *CLIC*, I would consider the inclusion of naturalistic audio or videorecordings of accents and linguistic varieties of contemporary Italian speech, in addition to the scripted filmic material which is provided. These would provide users of *CLIC* with authentic examples of how Italians of various regions and social backgrounds talk, and would serve the author's purposes of illustration and inspiring further research by budding Italian dialectologists and sociolinguists.

This resource is sure to delight students, educators and scholars of Italian. It also fills a significant gap in the provision of suitable resources for intermediate to advanced learners of Italian as a foreign language. The study of the development of the Italian language in the target language is likely to engage tertiary Italian students. Given that it is available in both Italian and English, even Italophiles and beginners who do not yet speak Italian fluently would find this resource a wonderful opportunity to explore Italy's contribution to the world's cultural heritage, from a sociolinguistic perspective.

REFERENCES

Palfrey, J. & Gasser, U. (2008). *Born digital: understanding the first generation of digital natives*. New York: Basic Books.