



Paola Nastri and Francesca Cadel. *Pinocchio. Storia di un burattino*. New York: Edizioni Farinelli, 2013.

Pinocchio. Storia di un burattino by Paola Nastri and Francesca Cadel is neither a traditional language textbook nor an annotated edition of Pinocchio's adventures. The book is, rather, a pedagogical instrument targeting intermediate/advanced learners of Italian, which can accompany them in the transition from lower-division language courses to upper-division content courses. Thanks to Nastri and Cadel's skillful design, the book guides the readers throughout the language of the original text (Paggi's edition, 1883) while familiarizing them with the cultural and historical context that frames the story. The unabridged text is carefully yet not pedantically annotated and extensively

integrated with activities and exercises aiming at building grammar, vocabulary, and cultural knowledge while developing proficiency in the interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational modes of communication.

The entire tale of Pinocchio is divided into 14 chapters, each organized into three main sections with pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities.

The pre-reading activities at the beginning of each chapter anticipate the themes of the reading and are designed to stir motivation and build vocabulary. Working in pairs or in small groups, learners can discuss the themes, exchange prior knowledge, make predictions, and negotiate meaning while expanding vocabulary. They are thus prepared to move with a certain ease to the next phase – reading - and not only understand the main idea of the text and significant details but also enjoy the story within its social and cultural implications. The post-reading activities focus on comprehension and interpretation. In this phase learners verify their initial predictions, think about meaning, make inferences, and reinforce and expand their language skills by manipulating the text through additional grammar and vocabulary exercises.

The post-reading section expands into *Esercitazioni*. Besides serving as wrap-up for the unit, these pages propose written and oral production and encourage further investigation, analysis, reflection, and self-reflection on language and content. Learners can construct their own meaning while making connections with other disciplines and comparisons among cultures. At the end of every group of 4-5 chapters there are two additional sections, *Riflessione* and *Cultura*. The section *Riflessione* proposes a series of exercises aimed at reinforcing grammar structures and vocabulary encountered in the chapters, while the section *Cultura* presents additional background about Italian society during Collodi's era. These cultural pages further explore themes present in the story and help contextualize them within the historical period immediately preceding and following the unification of Italy (1861).

The great merit of Natri and Cadel's *Pinocchio. Storia di un burattino* is to place the text at the center of the learning/teaching process all the time. The book is an unlimited source of ideas, stimuli, activities, and exercises skillfully conceived to lead users to learn, expand, and reinforce grammar and syntax structures, vocabulary, and cultural knowledge, starting from and returning to the authentic text. The activities in the book effectively utilize the same lexicon and reproduce the structure of the text sentences. By moving from the original (con)text, the authors show how to (re)produce new yet similar contexts and provide learners with strategies and techniques to create their own meaning. This highly contextualized approach makes the study of the language occur within the dynamics of its use. As a result, the discovery of the forms of the language comes after the discovery of its functions. It is probably for this reason that *Pinocchio. Storia di un burattino* does not offer grammar explanations but only exercises. The grammar exercises illustrate grammar topics according to a gradual level of complexity. By encouraging reflection on the language, the exercises invite learners to study grammar inductively. Instructors serve as facilitators and select the activities that best suit the interests and the needs of their students, but in the end the interaction mainly occurs between learner and content. For this reason, Natri and Cadel's work responds also to the needs of self-learners.

In the end, even though this book can indeed meet the needs of self-learners, I believe that the class is the best environment to leverage all the characteristics of this outstanding work. In class, instructors can definitively clarify a grammar concept and help students develop equal proficiency in the three modes of communication. Outside the classroom setting, on the other hand, learners would have fewer opportunities to practice the interpersonal mode of communication.

Paola Morgavi
Northwestern University