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Teaching Italian as L2 using pictures taken by the  
students.

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## CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This work describes my action research in teaching Italian to foreigners in a L2 environment by means of pictures of words or texts taken by the students themselves. I did this experimentation in the Venetian seat of an Italian for foreigners private school where I was doing my curricular internship from March to June 2013 and where I'm still working. My goal was to find out whether it's possible to use student's pictures of writings in the lessons and what is the best way to do it.

The structure of this paper is the following: in this chapter I present the theoretical framework for the use of students' pictures of writings in L2 lessons and for taking into great consideration students' opinions and feelings about it. The chapter on the Method describes the people who took part to the study, the didactic activities and the didactic units I devised and proposed to them, the data collection instrument I used and the procedures I employed in the data analysis. In the final chapter there's a discussion of the results of the study and their implications.

### 1.2. MOTIVATION IS CRUCIAL

Motivation is related to the affective dimension of the learner and is considered by some scholars as "the essential motor of the cognitive skills that come into play" (Stern, 1983). "The affective component", in fact, "contributes at least as much as, and often more, to language learning than the cognitive skills" (Stern, 1983). The affective aspect of learning, indeed, is more important than the cognitive one, because cognitive functions work well only if emotional conditions are good. Motivation is considered to be the spring that brings forth learning. Corder wrote that "given motivation, anyone can learn a language."; so, if there is no motivation there will be no effective learning. The Teachers' task is therefore to stimulate motivation, using all the available means.

In reference to foreign and second language learning, "It has been commonly accepted that the learners' achievement in learning a second/foreign language is

related to their level of motivation to learn the language. Motivation is a kind of internal drive that encourages a learner to pursue a course of action and is responsible for initiating the learning and later the driving force to sustain the learning process over the long and arduous years it takes to learn a language. It is believed that without sufficient motivation no other factor on its own can ensure student achievement” (Dörnyei, 2001).

There are different types of motivation and they have an important effect on individual's willingness to seek contacts with those who speak the language in question. Having personal relationships means having the chance to use the language: this fact is crucial for the acquisition of the language itself.

Gardner and Lambert are the two scholars who have contributed most to the understanding of motivation as cause of success in second language learning.

They compared students with two different types of motivation for the study of French in Montreal (a bilingual area in Canada):

- There were students who wanted to be like the people who belong to the target language group: they identify themselves with French speakers, they want to be part of their community and establish friendships with them. This type of motivation has been called integrative motivation;
- Other students were attracted by the benefits associated with the knowledge of French in that area, such as social and professional advancement, finding a job, studying, reading useful materials. This utilitarian kind of motivation has been called instrumental motivation.

Gardner and Lambert compared the results achieved in the learning of French as second language with the kind of motivation showed by the students. The research has shown that those students who had an integrative motivation had greater success in learning the L2. According to the scholars, the reason for the success lies in the fact that this type of motivation is rooted in the personality of the individual, while the instrumental motivation is not. Because of this, integrative motivation is less exposed to external influences, such as an uncomfortable learning situation. In this way it is also more capable of exerting its influence for a long time, so it enables the learner to sustain the effort needed to achieve success. Moreover, the effects of learning will last longer.

However, the importance of integrative motivation isn't so constant and that the instrumental motivation may, in certain socio-economic and cultural circumstances, count more. In India, for example, where a proficiency in the L2 (English) is essential for the survival, instrumental motivation is primary.

Gardner and MacIntyre (1992) declined further the concept of motivation and imagined it as a combination of effort, goal and attitudes. So, having an integrative attitude in itself isn't enough; you have to set a goal and most of all, be willing to engage yourself, to make an effort.

The extent of the effort, the desire to set and achieve goals and the kind of attitude a student shows are related to the emotional sphere of the individual, which can be affected by factors such as anxiety and low self-esteem, but also by ethnocentrism and attitudes of closeness towards the target language and the people who speak it. Gardner set on from those considerations and conceived a socio-psychological model of education for language learning motivation that binds it to the social context.

Acculturation theory, also known as social and psychological distance hypothesis, was developed by Schumann in the 70s and refers to situations of a second language. The hypothesis can be summed up with what the author wrote in Schumann (1978, p. 34): "...second language acquisition is just one aspect of acculturation, and the degree to which the learner acculturates to the target language group will control the degree to which he acquires the target language". In his idea, acculturation (and therefore also the acquisition of L2) is determined by the distance that exists between the two groups in contact. The distance is determined at two levels:

- Social distance; that depends from the attitudes toward the other group: if one group is closed or open towards the other one, dominant or subordinate, small or large;
- Psychological distance; that depends from individual affective factors such as cultural shock or stress, integrative or instrumental motivation.

This hypothesis postulates that more social and psychological distance there is, the lower the acculturation will be. The individual's ability to acculturate determines his/her degree of success in the acquisition of LS; simply because social and psychological distance will determine how much contact the learner will have with the L2 as well as his/her "affective" opening to the input.

The fifth hypothesis of Krashen's theory of second language acquisition, called "affective filter" hypothesis, is related to what has just been said about the psychological distance. Krashen, making use of various studies on the affective variable in LS acquisition, refers to three affective categories that play an important role in language acquisition:

- Motivation
- Self-confidence
- Anxiety

He postulates that affective variables can prevent the input to reach that part of the brain that processes information (i.e. the LAD). So, although the main causative variable for the acquisition of the LS is comprehensible input, the affective dimension can play a role, either positive or negative, in the elaboration process.

People who, for example, have a low motivation, a negative self-image and high levels of anxiety, have also a high affective filter, which "block" the acquisition process. The methodological implication is that we have to look for all those solutions that lower the filter. A new type of teacher is needed – the affective teacher - who follows the new approaches to language teaching, called affective-humanistic approaches.

In the '90s, the focus of the research is increasingly oriented towards motivational processes in the classroom. This change was inspired by the cognitive revolution in the mainstream of motivational psychology and has led to a significant enrichment and diversification of the motivation concept. These studies show a micro-orientation, an orientation towards the learning situation.

Dörnyei, for example, has developed a more comprehensive framework of L2 learning motivation. This framework consists of three relatively distinct levels:

- Language level
  1. Integrative motivational subsystem
  2. Instrumental motivational subsystem
  
- Learner level
  1. Need for achievement
  2. Attribution theory
  3. Self-confidence
  4. Personality factors
  
- Learning situation level
  1. Course-specific motivational components
  2. Teacher-specific motivational components
  3. Group-specific motivational components

Some other researchers have found that there is a strong link between teacher's motivation, negative feelings and stress and student's ones (Chambers, 1998; Clément et al, 1994; Gardner et al, 2004; Mihaljević, 1990, 1992, 1994 Nikolov, 1999; Ozek & Williams, 1999; Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Williams & Burden, 1999; Williams, Burden e Al-Baharna, 2001; Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2009; Hardré & Sullivan, 2008). As claimed by Dörnyei (1998, p. 130): "the teacher's level of enthusiasm and commitment is one of the most important factors that affect the learners' motivation".

In addition, other external factors such as the course, the teaching method, teaching materials, the influences of family and friends, learning activities and even single tasks can affect the motivation and effort of the students and develop positive or negative feelings (Chambers, 1998; Dörnyei, 1994, 2002; Dörnyei, 2008; Donitsa-Schmidt, Inbar & Shohamy, 2004; Egbert, 2003; Ellis, 1985; Inbar, Shohamy & Donitsa-Schmidt, 1999, 2001; Julkunen, 1990, 1994, 2001;



Mihaljević, 1990, 1994; Ozek & Williams, 1999; Williams & Burden, 1999; Williams et al, 2001).

In Dörnyei's approach, motivation is conceived as something dynamic, something that has a temporal nature in the sense that its nature can change at different times of the learning process. Motivation then it is not a given, still fact. The situated approach recognizes that what the student needs to stay motivated changes according to the different stages of learning:

- at the beginning: need to generate motivation (find goals)
- during the activity: need to sustain the motivation
- after the activity: need to see the efforts done as positive (learners need to find motivation and satisfaction in what they've just done)

Dörnyei recognizes not only the importance of generating a motivation that gives the initial push to face learning, but also the need to sustain motivation during classes.

This interest in the micro aspects of motivation allow the teachers to identify those in-class factors playing against the establishment of a strong motivation to learn the language.

Action research become so crucial, and the analysis of students' feedback and of the reasons for it vital.

Paolo E. Balboni has developed a model of motivation which is essentially based on three possible factors: duty, need and pleasure.

According to Balboni (1994, 2002), based-on-duty motivation is often other-directed and almost never corresponds to a real desire to learn the subject. It is linked to contingencies and often creates anxiety during learning; when the contingency is overcome, this motivation loses significance for the student because the purpose for which it was activated is no longer important and, consequently, the information is quickly forgotten.

This type of motivation has two obvious limitations: it easily raises the student's affective filter and it produces learning instead of acquisition.

Need can certainly be a more stable kind of motivation, especially in an L2 context. It is a motivation that works, but it has two limitations: the need has to be perceived and it works until the student decides that he has fulfilled his needs.

Finally, pleasure is a key factor in order to create meaningful learning and language acquisition. Thank to pleasure, the subject can activate and continuously regenerate its motivation. Pleasure has to be understood not only as a pleasant sensation or emotion but also as a fulfillment of the need for knowledge and of the desire to participate.

It's definitely the most effective form of motivation and, in a formal learning context, it consists of:

- Pleasure of learning

- pleasure of overcome the challenges
- pleasure of variety (both cultural: for example, the curiosity to discover Italy, and for what concerns attention: a too long task is boring, therefore demotivating)
- pleasure of originality
- pleasure of systematization (a way to provide such pleasure is that of allowing the student to discover the grammar rather than teach it with ready-made patterns)
- pleasure of responding to one's sense of duty
- pleasure of playing (Freddi, 1990).

With my experimentation, I investigated a way of increasing the variety and originality of my lessons: the using of students' pictures in place of didactic materials.

Schumann's model (1999, 2004), which is based on neuro-biological data, explains how the brain captures the stimuli and proceeds to an appraisal, depending on which it decides whether to internalize the new elements that appear in the stimulus or not.

The brain selects what to process on the basis of:

- originality
- attractiveness (pleasantness, beauty of the stimulus)
- functionality (according to the need perceived by the student)
- feasibility
- psychological and social safety (what the learner must learn and the answer he/she must give to the stimulus don't have to put in danger the learner's social image)

I wanted to offer in my lesson an input that had all those features and I tried to do it by asking the students to bring into class the material they wanted or needed to learn about; and to collect it by means of their smartphones and cameras.

In the case of Italian, however, there is also another kind of motivation, which can be defined as cultural motivation (interest in Italian art, cinema, opera, etc.). In their investigation of various L2 learning orientations, Clément and Kruidenier (1983) isolated a factor that designated the 'social-cultural' dimension of L2 motivation, which covered 'an interest in the way of life and the artistic production of the target language group'.

### 1.3. APPROACH

#### 1.3.1. The affective-humanistic approach in the L2 context

Given these premises, we now face the principles of humanistic-affective approach to language teaching. It was developed in the 70s under the influence of Carl Rogers' humanistic psychology and is characterized by the centrality of the affective and relational aspects, and by attention to self-fulfillment.

Like humanistic psychology, this approach and all the methods that have resulted from it take in great consideration the concept of affective filter and all the other emotional aspects. The idea that underpins them is that, given an atmosphere of real trust and freedom, people choose constructive and positive behaviours.

The learner is viewed as a whole. His rational part isn't the only one to be contemplated, also the whole sphere of his feelings and inclinations is considered, because it influences his perception of reality and his relationship with the others.

The importance of the affective element in the learning process is emphasized because in the learning experience in general, but especially in that addressed to adults, passions, expectations and experiences are all-encompassing elements, and, if isn't taken sufficiently into consideration, it may invalidate the success of the educational process.

A group of learners, in fact, is not a static system. In order to be able to organize and successfully conduct a language course you need to know which are the emotional dynamics, motivations and needs that push learners to take that course; as well as the most appropriate strategies to lead the students to learning success and personal fulfillment.

The continuous search for self-promotion and self-realization in the community where the student is, has to be strengthened and promoted, particularly by the teacher. Carl Rogers (1973), as his colleague and follower Thomas Gordon (1991), starts from the principle that the primary goal of the educational system is to bring out one's identity, and that education is basically a self-managed process that leads to understand and be oneself. In Rogers' opinion, empathy is already an educational agent and empathic understanding increases the sense of belonging and openness to society. The basic concepts of his thought can be summarized in the following assumptions:

- humans have a cognitive intrinsic motivation, a natural tendency to know and to learn, which should be stimulated and enhanced;
- learning is "significant" when the learner feels that the content is relevant to fulfill his personal needs and to achieve his goals;
- "significant" learning arises from experience and from doing; so, when the student is an active part in the teaching-learning process, he learns much more;

- learning which involves a change in the self-perception is perceived as a threat and tends to raise student's resistance;
- when outside threats (i.e. from teacher and peers) are reduced to a minimum, learning occurs more easily and effectively;
- self-directed and self-promoted learning, which involves the intellect but also the feeling, is the longest-lasting and the most pervasive;
- the more useful learning in the current socio-cultural context concerns the process of learning itself and the ability of being constantly open to experience.

A teacher who adopts the humanistic approach focuses on all the factors that can limit learning, such as anxiety and competitiveness and tries to remove them. He prepares as much as possible individualized courses in order to enhance and make the best use of the potentialities of each individual. He tends to a full involvement of each participant in the group and promotes the search for inner motivations that might facilitate and support learning.

I decided to make this experimentation because I wanted to find a way to add significance to my students' learning. So I proposed that they bring the pictures they chose to take in the hope that those would have been significant to them not only because they have taken an active part in the preparation of the lesson looking for the subject and photographing it, but also because they would have photographed something they needed to know or were curious about. So, I tried to create lessons that are individualized from the material point of view and that make the students feeling responsible for the success of them. I had, moreover, the goal to increase students' autonomy showing them how they could find all around them "didactic" material and how they could store that material in order to ask for its meaning at school.

Italian as second language means the language learned by a stranger in a social environment where Italian is the means of daily communication, where it's thus the primary tool for interacting in social life. That is, it is a language that can be learned inside and/or outside a formal learning environment.

An affective-humanistic approach is critical in a L2 environment because it manifests the following characteristics:

- centrality of the process of self-realization of the subject within a community, and of the process of fulfill the subject's life plan;
- emphasis on all the ways of learning available to the student.

The outside-school social environment plays a key role as it provides a substantial amount of spontaneous linguistic stimuli that can't be controlled by the teacher. These stimuli are not exclusively in the standard Italian language, but they are in an extremely varied Italian, more or less formal, more or less regionally characterized. Often these are in youth slang or in dialect.

The Veneto region, in particular, since the beginning of the 80s was the protagonist of deep social changes the origin of which is to be found in the economic changes. From a typically agricultural region, a basically poor one, with a high rate of emigration, the Veneto has become a heavily industrialized area, not on the model of the north-western regions (where the big industries prevailed), but with small and medium-sized, often family-run, enterprises. From the social point of view this has resulted in an increase in self-esteem, and in the rebirth of a regional identity, which has led, little by little, to the rediscovery of history, traditions and peculiarities. Among these, of course, could not miss a linguistic appreciation, which was manifested in the desire to revive the dialect of the region, to confer it again the prestige and the social role it had had in the past. As observed by Canepari (1986), in the Veneto region "anche negli uffici postali, come nell'industria, nel commercio e nelle banche, spesso si ricorre all'italiano solo se si ha a che fare con dei *foresti*, provenienti da altre regioni. Pure i professionisti e i medici per lo più usano il dialetto, parlano con i clienti e i pazienti, non solo per farsi capire meglio, ma anche – e non raramente – perché in questo modo tutti si trovano maggiormente a proprio agio. Il rapporto è sentito come più cordiale, più sincero, più vero". In Veneto, Italian and dialect are no longer hierarchically arranged in a continuum or in strictly rigid and separated contexts, but rather tend to be juxtaposed, if not to overlap, often giving rise to mixed statements. For this reason, the condition of partial competence in one code or in the other is somewhat popular.

The importance of the dialect is such that even immigrants, especially those with a permanent migration project, feel the need to acquire a certain competence in it. But such a need is perceived also by foreigners with a good knowledge of Italian, especially if they love Italian culture and traditions.

The didactic action must therefore be an highly individualized one. The courses programmed in order to bring the stranger to master Italian must take into account the input he comes in touch with and the opportunities he has to use the language outside of the school. It is essential to move from the concept of mixed input (which assumes an idea of the juxtaposition of the different inputs to which the student is exposed inside and outside the learning context) to that of integrated input (in which the different types of input can be consistently combined and can bolster each other). The teacher must therefore "hook" his teaching directly to the reality that the students live in and to the language they encounter in the daily life. He must propose a whole range of activities that can be done outside of the classroom and that can be much more motivating, especially if it comes to adult learners.

I thought about pictures as a means to hook my teaching to the reality that the students live, as well as to give more room to the Venetian dialect in my lessons.

### 1.3.2. Autonomy

The promotion of autonomous approaches for language learning is justified on ideological, psychological and economic grounds (Crabbe, 1993). Modernity, global market - that pushes forward creating ever new supply and new demand - and competition, instil in the people anxiety of being left behind. In the field of language learning, in particular, autonomy and creativity are therefore fundamental.

Moreover, learning takes place in different ways and different times, and these do not always coincide, unfortunately, with teaching times. It takes place with rhythms, logical and analogical connections that are partly unexpected (ex. incidental learning); it may be linked to several uncontrollable factors, which are independent of the teacher's will (ex. fatigue, mood, amount of mental energy available, time of the day, etc.). Teaching students to take control of and manage their own learning both inside and especially outside the context of formal education must become a main purpose of the communicative pedagogies.

However, the traditional role of the teacher and the school is, on the contrary, that of building structures, such as curricula and syllabuses content practices, which are meant to lead and control the process of teaching and learning. Teachers and schools are in this sense "expert systems" (Giddens, 1990) that serve to reduce the risks the students can meet through maintenance and promotion of repetitive, regulated, stable and predictable practice.

Compared with an L2 spontaneous acquisition process, instead, one of the added values that an conscious, structured teaching, in a formal context can give, is that of giving to the students tools and methods to reflect on the language and to learn how to find out how to learn languages. Metacognitive and learning-to-learn skills become a heritage that can infinitively multiply the ability of the student to take advantage of all the opportunities to learn a second language that he meets.

Autonomy manifests itself in different ways and different quantities. In this thesis for autonomy I do not mean just the possession of learning-to-learn skills and metacognitive strategies, but also and most of all the psychological traditional concept of ability and willingness to take responsibility for one's own learning. The success in the acquisition of those skills, in fact, does not mean that students will then be willing to take control of the learning process.

As they learn to communicate in another language, students should aspire to become more independent and more creative, because these qualities will help them with their interactions with people in an uncertain future. By means of this experiment, I tried to make students aware of the infinite possibilities of learning that occur just by living for a while in a foreign city. The city has plenty of linguistic input and it is important that the learners learn to see and catch them.

Becoming more autonomous and embracing instead of resisting change is risky for the learners, because in this endeavour they must invest not only their time and effort, but also their sense of self. Students, in fact, have beliefs about teachers

and their role, on feedback, on their capabilities and their role as students, on language learning and learning in general. These beliefs influence their receptivity to the ideas and activities presented in class, especially if these are different from those they are used to.

Cotterall (1995) argues that, before any intervention occurs, it is necessary to evaluate the students' readiness for the behaviour and beliefs changes that autonomy entails. But, as Brown et al (2007) have argued, resistance to autonomy shouldn't become an excuse for going back to more traditional methods. Teachers should investigate the reasons for this resistance and try to find ways to overcome it.

In this context, investigating students' feelings and opinions with respect to methodology and the activities proposed in class, is a must and the questionnaire I devised and I present in Chapter II has precisely this purpose.

### 1.3.3. The text as the minimum unit of communication

Textual linguistics indicates that the minimum communication unit isn't the structure or the word, but the text. A writing, to be called a text, must have at least two of the following characteristics: communicative purpose, coherence and cohesion. Such theory makes it possible to accept as a text not only a set of multiple statements (the common conception of a text), but also individual sentences and even non-sentences: "intercity 590 soppresso" or "vietato fumare" are not yet complete sentences are texts to the extent that they have a communicative purpose and are consistent with the communicative situation. A sign with the words "no parking" in the midst of the desert would be difficult to accept as a text – we will think it would be garbage. The following dialogue: A. "The dog needs to go out!" B. "I'm cooking! " is an example of a text in which the coherence is provided by the acknowledgment of the communicative value of the two statements (the first is an exhortation to do something and the second is a rejection) and by the knowledge that a call is always followed by an acceptance or a rejection.

The implications for language teaching are important both from a linguistic and from a cultural point of view: as the minimum communication unit is the text, it is clear that the input should be provided to students under the form of a text, instead of under the form of a single structure, a single word or a grammatical rule. From the educational-methodological point of view, the teacher should arrange also activities by which the students can acquire a textual competence.

The city provides language inputs which are mainly under the form of texts: graffiti, restaurant and bar lists, billboards, events posters, shop signs, public announcements, road signs and much more. Each writing that you can see walking on the street has a communicative purpose. The city is therefore a good teacher, because it gives language input under the form texts to those who decide to be its

student.

#### 1.3.4. The functional approach

The functional approach to language teaching stems from the developments in pragmatics, a science of language which aims to study the language as social interaction and which is born between the '50s and the '70s in Anglo-Saxon area.

The person who speaks does it for a purpose, and each speech act will be more or less effective depending on whether it realizes or not the purpose for which it was produced. So, pragmatics focuses on the purposes, or "functions", of the speech act: using a language means to make communicative acts that allow you to act socially because they allow you to interact with another person for the purpose of pursuing your own goals. The notional-functional approach is based on the communicative act. This approach put the student and his communication needs at the core of the didactic action; and the curriculum is built around his needs.

A functional approach cannot exclude, however, a sociolinguistic competence: since the language changes while the situational context changes, it is necessary to know the register to be used (formal or informal), the regional varieties, the varieties depending on the medium that conveys them (television, newspaper, radio...) and those depending on the social class of the speakers.

Moreover, you cannot overlook even the cultural competence, that is the knowledge of the cultural patterns that govern the everyday life of the community. It is therefore vital to provide students with authentic materials presented in context and this is precisely what I tried to do with my experimentation.

#### 1.3.5. Technology in L2 learning and teaching

If, as we have seen, the functional approach in language teaching is based on the use of language and on the knowledge of the plurality of elements that determine communication (pragma-linguistic, sociolinguistic and cultural elements), then technological tools acquire significant importance because they, using the auditory dimension, the visual dimension, or even both, allow teachers to bring authentic communicative situations in class.

The use of technology in the language class has many benefits:

- it makes possible the enrichment of educational tools by the use of many authentic materials
- it shifts the core of the class from the teacher to the learner
- it allows the students to widen and increase the opportunities to use the language in meaningful situations



- it promotes collaborative group dynamics
- It can promote the growth of the learner's self-esteem if used by students who own the necessary technical skills
- it encourages creativity and self-consciousness
- it can make the student's participation in the educational dialogue more active
- it provides opportunities to expand the work in the classroom thanks to the many resources
- it offers new opportunities for natural learning to people with learning mechanisms based mainly on the right brain hemisphere and with mainly visual and kinesthetic representation systems

For my experiment I wanted to take advantage of a technological tools used daily by the students: cameras and smartphones. I tried to show them how these tools can be very useful in learning a language when they are in a L2 situation. Taking pictures of texts is quick and easy for students. All of them are in fact familiar, if not with smartphone, at least with digital cameras.

Moreover, many students feel these tools (especially smartphones) as affectively significant objects or even as a status symbols. A language teacher that knows how to integrate new and creative tasks with technological resources known and loved by the students can potentially promote the development of both the attractiveness and the originality of the course; that Schumann points out to be between the parameters upon which the brain operate the stimuli appraisal.

The image remains in the memory card of the camera and it can be retrieved when there is the opportunity to ask the teacher or a native speaker for clarification. In this way, the learners can take charge of their progress.

Through their cameras, the students also had the opportunity to participate in the "building" of the didactic unit and to create opportunities for learning not only for themselves but also for their course mates. This gave them the opportunity to select the texts which, in their opinion, are more useful, meaningful or interesting. Regarding the latter point ("it offers new opportunities for natural learning to people with learning mechanisms based mainly on the right brain hemisphere and with mainly visual and kinesthetic representation systems"), neurolinguistic studies on cerebral lateralization reveal that the traditional language teaching methods have referred almost exclusively to the left mode, that governs the denotations, the phonological and the morphosyntactic levels; while too little attention has been paid to the right mode that governs the understanding of the context, the textual genre, the metaphors and of every kind of images, caught in their entirety (Danesi 1988). In our case, for example, memorization is helped by the fact that the student connects the text to the place where he saw it, to the emotional situation in which the learner was at that time and to a gesture that the learner made (the one of taking the picture).

Thus, technology is not a simple addition to the resources available for the L2 teaching, but rather represents an opportunity to offer new relational scenarios in which the teacher himself can collaborate with his students in a different way.

However, the use of technology also has some disadvantages:

- the students and the teacher must adapt to new roles that are sometimes in direct conflict with their training
- the students and the teacher need some technical knowledge
- the students need a sufficient level of autonomy
- the oversupply of available materials can generate cognitive overload
- the motivation given by the originality becomes soon obsolete

In Chapter III I analyse how those disadvantages affected the success of my experimentation.

#### 1.4. DIFFERENT AGES MEANS DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEARNERS

##### 1.4.1. The adult learner

The school where I did my action research deals primary with adult students, I'm so going to discuss some aspects peculiar to adults language teaching.

Psychologists and educators are increasingly analyzing and studying the concept of learning throughout the whole life and the expression Lifelong Learning (Kearnes, 1999) is popularly used in order to indicate the permanent education of the adults.

Lifelong Learning envisages ongoing training for adults in regular intervals throughout the entire span of life, according to a diachronic development that allows the learner to take care of his training for a time span of a considerable number of years. The concept of Lifelong Learning assumes the centrality of the individual and his problems, cognitive needs and motivations, and works to ensure that each student is encouraged to acquire all the skills and knowledge that can help him throughout his working and private life.

One of the greatest scholars of adult learning is Knowles, who has formulated a model in which the adults, as learners who already have knowledge and competences, like to be independent in order both to play different roles in different stages of life, and to learn how to learn. Knowles identifies six principles in his andragogical model:

- *Need to know:* adults want to know why they should learn something and in which way they can take advantage of the new knowledge; to increase their knowledge, they must have clear the need to learn;
- *The self-concept:* unlike children, whose dimension depends on others, adults live essentially in an autonomous dimension, and they need to be autonomous also in learning;
- *The role of past experience:* experience plays a major role in the adult mind, because new knowledge has to relate with prior learning and to with it. For this reason, it can be helpful to use the techniques that give emphasis to the experience of learners;
- *Willingness to learn:* the adult is aware of what he wants to learn and hence his willingness to learn is limited to it;
- *Orientation towards learning:* adults tend to learn what they think can be immediately applied in their everyday life, what helps them to solve their problems;
- *Motivation:* adults' strongest motivations are the personal ones; they are internal pressures, such as the desire for greater satisfaction, for a better quality of life, etc.

While a child is always willing to learn, the adult chooses among different training opportunities; his interest is directed towards what allows him to fulfill his social role. Therefore, the adult student is not willing to be guided by the teacher without posing problems: first of all he wants to be involved in the decisions that concern him, he wants to be sure of the itinerary he is going through, he wants to have the opportunity to continuously measure the distance traveled, he wants also to be autonomous in learning. Thus, among the constituent elements of the LS/L2 adult learner, a prominent place is taken by the need to actively participate in the training program by being involved in the decision-making process and by negotiation of the course content with the teacher. My afternoon and day-by-day activities are devised in order to allow the students to participate in the choice of teaching material. Moreover, one of the functions of the questionnaire I devised is that of giving them the opportunity to express their feelings and opinions about the course and to make some suggestions on how to improve it.

Generally, in fact, the adult feels the need to seek self-learning situations. Self-learning is a process inherent to all men, who, from the earliest years, learn life 'rules' from their own experience. For this characteristic, self-study cannot be created, but only facilitated by the teacher, who is called to assume the stronger role of leader and adviser and to lead the student to independence. The teacher, in fact, is no longer considered as an educator, but as a technician with language and language teaching skills (Balboni 2002) and I proposed myself as a facilitator in the students' process of learning from the city.

The adult often resists new learning opportunities for psychological reasons, on the one hand to avoid denying his past experience, on the other for not

questioning himself as an already fulfilled individual. An adult has probably studied other foreign languages, and therefore expects that the teaching of the language he's learning to be in a certain way, he expects a particular type of path; if their expectations are not being met, you can create a barrier between student and teacher. The adult has experienced in the past a model of learning and it is understandable that he will focus on this, according to some studies on cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1973), adults commonly acquire new knowledge through cognitive processes that they have used for a long time and which they're used to. Often, however, the mature person rationally rejects the systems he used at school when he was a child, but unconsciously he looks for them because they give him a sense of safety. This results in a sort of inner conflict of which the subject is not always aware.

A group of adults will therefore present a wider range of individual differences compared to a group of children or teenagers. An adult learner has already a lot of experience behind him and a very personal kind of past education that differs from those of other adults; and the experience he will receive in the classroom will be definitely less than the experience he has already had. Consequently it is clear that the most effective methodology with adult addressees will be the one based on the analysis of experiential contents. That's why I proposed to my students to bring into class a piece of "their" Venice by the pictures of writings they found while they were living the city.

The adult learner can be driven by any of the three kinds of motivation: an employee can approach a refresher microlanguage course organized by his company driven by duty, a migrant looking for work, however, will surely be pushed to attend an Italian course by need. This kind of learners, in order to learn life rules in the community where the LS/L2 is spoken, need to know the different codes of the target culture: the linguistic one, the behavioural one, the social one, the socio-cultural one, etc. Therefore, the teacher must programme a learning itinerary that will help students to better understand life in Italy. Adults need to understand and be understood in the workplace, offices, shops, etc. They need to know both colloquialisms and formal registers of the language, they must learn to read communications and notices, they need to be able to fill in forms, and to read the entries of pay slips and bank statements. By my didactic proposal I wanted to allow the students to take their linguistic needs into class in order to meet them.

However, there are also adults who approach language study motivated by pleasure. Lots of people, for example, come to Italy and learn Italian because they love the opera or Italian art, or because they want to read Italian literary texts in the original version. This type of motivation is shared by fewer adult learners, but it's without doubt the most powerful drive, the one that leads to better results and, ultimately, the only really positive kind of motivation. In this case, the interest in the target language and culture is not limited to an immediate need for communication, it is rather based on personal and spontaneous pleasure to learn. It is therefore important to offer the educational paths that originate from a powerful personal motivation of the learners (for example, fascination with Italian culture,

art, food and wine, etc.), precisely in order to support motivation. By asking the learners to collect pictures of writings they found around the city I was able to offer them lots of input related to cultural aspects in Venice, as well as to the culture peculiar to the city.

#### 1.4.2. The teenager

I carried out my research also with some teenagers and here I'm going to recall some aspects of their behaviour and the consequences for language teaching. When the child becomes a teenager, the privileged relationship that he had with his teacher (a social version of the parents) loses meaning. He joins a "gang" and replaces this vertical relationship with the horizontal one with other classmates. The number of the members of the group and the self-referential values compensates for the weakness of the individual teenager and help him in his struggle for emancipation from adults.

The first consequence is that the affective filter changes his nature; now it is calibrated on the approval of peers, which makes it more difficult to manage pair and group activities, as well as errors and mistakes correction, because, in the perception of the student, it may undermine his image and his role in the group. The teenager no longer accepts as normal the fact of making mistakes and being corrected by an adult. An unsaid social pact develops between the classmates that leads them to prefer *aurea mediocritas*: the goal is no longer excellence (which can remain a secret purpose) but the bare minimum. In proposing activities that encourage students' active participation and exposition, the teacher must therefore pay attention in avoiding to create relational exclusion.

Lots of teenagers who come from very structured school systems, where little space is left to the sharing of the training process between student and teacher, tend to rely on the teacher for all the training and teaching decisions and follow the course often in a passive way. Moreover, the teenager see himself as an adult, learning activities that he perceives as childish are therefore less usable. The teacher must therefore discuss with him the psychological and cognitive nature of the activities, describe him their utility, and present them as challenges, making him aware of his acquisition process.

At this stage the student leaves, or wants to leave, the parents' home and goes into the world with more and more autonomy. Languages are a key to expand his exploration of the world, so his motivation grows, at least until the teenager does not feel that his competence fulfills his need (even if it is much below than what is actually needed). For languages other than English, motivation must therefore spring out of the falling in love with the Country; the student, in fact, must want to find out that part of the world. In a L2 context, it is important that a deeper, integrative motivation sustains the instrumental one; because it is the former type of motivation that allows the progress and the deepening of the learning process.

So, authentic materials and friendship relationships with native speakers are crucial. One of my experimentation goals was indeed to arouse students' curiosity about and their knowledge of the city and its inhabitants.

## CHAPTER II – THE STUDY

In this chapter I describe the three questions that I took as my point of departure for my research, the subjects who took part in the project, the instrument I used for collecting the data and when and how my action research was conducted.

### 2.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

My research will answer the following three questions:

- 1) Is it possible to set teenage and adult students of a school to collect materials during their daily life in Venice by mean of the technology tools they have in their pockets (i.e. smartphones and cameras) so as to make the Italian language courses they are following more motivating, personalized and so as to help learners to become more autonomous?
- 2) How can the teacher make a good use of the pictures the students bring into the class from outside by mean of their smartphones and cameras, taking into account the syllabus and the organization of the school?
- 3) Do the students like teacher's didactic proposals, what do they like and what don't they like?

In order to find answers to these questions I devised a questionnaire that investigated students' participation, feelings and suggestions. The students completed it after the lesson in which their pictures had been used.

My aim was to make some action research, so, for six times, I implemented student's suggestions and I handed out the questionnaire again.

### 2.2. SUBJECTS

The sample for the study is shown in tables from 1 to 9. Table 1 shows the students who took part in my Afternoon activity. In Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4,

I collected the data of the students of the three classes with which I performed my Day-by-day activity (the Austrian class of teenagers, a level 2 class and a level 4 class). Table 5, Table 6, Table 7, Table 8 and Table 9, show the data of the students of the 5 classes to which I proposed the 5 didactic units I created. I entered the students' features in the charts following the order in which they appeared in the class books.

They were 81 people from 21 different countries and between the ages of less than 20 and more than 60. There were 51 women and 30 men. Most of them were having cultural holidays in Venice and were following the Italian course for 3 or 4 weeks for pleasure, in order to enjoy cultural offer in Italian or in order to make it easier to travel in Italy. There were also several university students who were taking part in exchange programs lasting from 4 to 12 months and who spent at the school from 1 up to 5 months. There was also a high school class of 15 Austrian students, who were 16 and 17 and who were in Italy for just one week. Finally, some of the subjects were studying Italian for their job or because they had recently moved to Italy and live here permanently; and a couple of them in order to learn their parents or grandparents mother tongue.

Excluding the high school class, just 3 students were younger than 20 (between 16 and 19), 14 people were from 20 to 29, 16 between 30 and 39, 13 between 40 and 49, 13 more were between 50 and 59 and 6 people were more than 60 years old. Half of them are graduates. Only a few of them had never studied Italian before and almost half of them had already attended a course in that school.

Nobody had already attended a lesson where pictures taken by the students themselves had been used.

Table 1. Afternoon activity participants

COUNTRY	LEVEL	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
France	2	50-59	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	TRAVEL
Finland	2	50-59	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	PLEASURE
Russia	4	60 or more	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
Norway	2	40-49	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	JOB
Japan	2	20-29	F	DEGREE	YES	YES	STUDY
Japan	4	20-29	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	STUDY
France	4	50-59	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
France	4	50-59	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
Canada	1	30-39	F	MASTER	NO	NO	JOB
Japan	1	20-29	M	DEGREE	NO	NO	STUDY



Table 2. Day-by-day activity participants (Austrian class)

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Austria	less than 20	M	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	M	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	M	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Austria	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY

Table 3. Day-by-day activity participants (level 2)

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Portugal	50-59	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
Japan	20-29	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
USA	40-49	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	TRAVEL
USA	40-49	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	TRAVEL
Argentina	50-59	M	DEGREE	YES	NO	PLEASURE
Holland	20-29	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Portugal	20-29	F	MASTER	YES	YES	JOB
France	60 or more	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE

Table 4. Day-by-day activity participants (level 4)

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Israel	20-29	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	STUDY
Austria	20-29	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Poland	40-49	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	TRAVEL
USA	40-49	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	JOB
Poland	30-39	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	LIVE

Table 5. Didactic unit “Nizioletti che parlano” participants

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Germany	30-39	F	DEGREE	YES	YES	LIVE
Poland	50-59	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
Switzerland	50-59	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Germany	30-39	F	MASTER	YES	YES	JOB

Table 6. Didactic unit “Trovare casa a Venezia” participants

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Japan	20-29	F	MASTER	YES	YES	JOB
Germany	30-39	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	PLEASURE
Cina	30-39	M	MASTER	YES	NO	JOB
USA	30-39	F	DEGREE	YES	YES	TRAVEL
USA	60 or more	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
Holland	60 or more	F	DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Germany	50-59	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
Germany	50-59	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	CULTURE
Japan	20-29	M	DEGREE	YES	YES	STUDY
USA	50-59	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Japan	20-29	M	DEGREE	YES	YES	STUDY
Russia	40-49	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	JOB

Table 7. Didactic unit “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” participants

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Russia	30-39	M	MASTER	NO	NO	JOB
Germany	40-49	M	NO DEGREE	NO	NO	TRAVEL
USA	less than 20	F	DEGREE	NO	NO	STUDY
Holland	50-59	F	DEGREE	NO	NO	PLEASURE
Holland	30-39	M	UNIV. DEGREE	NO	NO	PLEASURE
Japan	30-39	F	MASTER	NO	NO	JOB
USA	30-39	F	UNIV. DEGREE	NO	NO	LIVE
Holland	30-39	M	MASTER	NO	NO	OTHER
Canada	40-49	M	DEGREE	NO	NO	PLEASURE
Cina	20-29	F	DEGREE	NO	NO	STUDY

Table 8. Didactic unit “Arte di strada” participants

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Brasil	20-29	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	STUDY
Spain	20-29	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
France	30-39	F	MASTER	YES	YES	LIVE
Italy	less than 20	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	STUDY
Germany	40-49	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Spain	20-29	F	MASTER	YES	YES	STUDY
Switzerland	40-49	F	DEGREE	YES	YES	TRAVEL

Table 9. Didactic unit “Che si fa sabato?” participants

COUNTRY	AGE	GENDER	EDUCATION	STUDIED ITALIAN	BEEN IN THE SCHOOL	REASON
Germany	less than 20	F	NO DEGREE	YES	NO	OTHER
France	40-49	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Germany	60 or more	F	DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Canada	40-49	M	DEGREE	YES	NO	TRAVEL
Brasil	60 or more	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	CULTURE
Croatia	30-39	F	DEGREE	YES	NO	LIVE
Russia	30-39	M	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	CULTURE
Russia	30-39	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	PLEASURE
France	40-49	M	DEGREE	YES	YES	PLEASURE
Japan	50-59	F	UNIV. DEGREE	YES	NO	JOB

### 2.3. TIMELINE

My internship in the school started at the end of March 2013 and I began to implement my project almost one month later, proposing the Afternoon activity in the third and in the fourth weeks of April.

Then, in the first week of May I taught an Austrian class, to which I propose the Day-by-day activity; one week later I proposed it to 2 more classes.

The didactic unit “Nizioletti che parlano” was performed the first week of June. The week after, I experimented “Trovare casa a Venezia”.

In June my internship came to an end, and I was hired in this school as a teacher.

In the second week of July, I proposed “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” and, exactly one month later, I created “Arte di strada”. The last didactic unit to be performed was “Che si fa sabato?”, in the fourth week of November.

## 2.4. INSTRUMENT

For the data collection, I decided to devise a questionnaire. Among the advantages of the questionnaire over interviews there is that the former, because of its anonymity, encourages greater honesty and it tends to be more reliable; though, of course, dishonesty might not be able to be discovered. Among its disadvantages respondents, if only open item were used, may be unwilling to write their answers for one reason or another. Moreover, the interviewer is able to answer questions concerning any misunderstanding experienced by the interviewee, for it sometimes happen that the same questions have different meaning for different people. Since I was both the teacher and the researcher, I was afraid that my students wouldn't have been completely open if I had interviewed them. Because of this and because I was going to collecting personal and rich data from a small size sample, I decided to use a semi-structured questionnaire.

### 2.4.1. Structure of the questionnaire

In the first part of the questionnaire, the students were asked for the following personal informations: course level, gender, nationality, age, education, the reason why they were studying italian, whether they had studied Italian before, whether they had studied in the school and whether they had already taken part in a lesson where pictures taken by the students had been used:

Level:	1	2	3	4	5
Sex:	MALE	FEMALE			
Country:	_____				
Age:	less than 20				
	20-29				
	30-39				
	40-49				
	50-59				
	60 or more				
Education:	no degree	degree	university degree	master	
Why do you study Italian?	For my studies				
	For my job				
	For pleasure				
	I live permanently in Italy				
	In order to make easier to travel in Italy				
	In order to enjoy cultural offer in Italian				
	Other: _____				

Have you studied Italian before?  
 YES NO

Have you attended an Italian course in this school before?  
 YES NO

Have you already taken part in a lesson where pictures taken by the students were used?  
 YES NO

The second part, instead, investigates students' participation, feelings and suggestions about the project.

Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 answer to the third research question, "Do the students like teacher's didactic proposals, what do they like and what they don't?".

Item 1

1. How did you like the lesson/activity with students' pictures from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much)?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

allowed me to investigate the students' general appreciation of what I proposed them.

The second item investigated in a deeper way the learners' opinions about the activity in which I made use of the pictures they took:

2. How do you consider the activities with students' pictures

Boring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Interesting
Unenjoyable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Enjoyable
Meaningless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Meaningful
Useless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Useful
Dull	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Exciting
Unsatisfying	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfying
Unappealing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Appealing
Monotonous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Absorbing

Item 3 explored whether the learners were willing to repeat the experience:

3. Would you like to have more opportunities to take part in classes where students' pictures are used?

Yes

I don't know

No

Item 4 enabled me to find out about what the students had liked of the innovation:

4. The aspects that I liked of the teacher using students' picture in the lesson had been \_\_\_\_\_

On the contrary, item 5 allowed me to know which aspects of my didactic proposal hadn't been appreciated:

5. The aspects that I didn't like of the teacher using students' picture in the lesson had been \_\_\_\_\_

The first research question, "Is it possible to set teenage and adult students of a school to collect materials during their daily life in Venice by mean of the technology tools they have in their pockets (i.e. smartphones and cameras) so as to make the Italian language courses they are following more motivating, personalized and so as to help learners to become more autonomous?", is answered by item 6:

6. Did you take pictures for the lesson? If you didn't, write down the reason.

Yes

No, because

I didn't get what I was supposed to do

I didn't find any writing I didn't understand

I forgot to

I didn't have time

I thought the activity was useless

I don't feel comfortable using this kind of technology

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

With item 7 and item 8, the questionnaire goes back to the third research question. The purpose of those points was that of getting some insights in the learners' feelings about the facts that they had to collect photographic material and that the material they collected were used in the lesson:

7. The fact that I had to take pictures for the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

8. The fact that my pictures were used in the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, I tried to collect the students' opinions about the second research question, "How can the teacher make good use of the pictures the students bring into the class from outside by mean of their smartphones and cameras, taking into account the syllabus and the organization of the school?", by the following items of the questionnaire:

9. The lesson with the students' pictures would be more useful if \_\_\_\_\_

10. The lesson with the students' pictures would be more enjoyable if \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.5. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The questionnaire was handed out at the end of the afternoon activity on Friday, the last day of the day-by-day activity and at the end of each special didactic unit. The questionnaire was available in two versions: one in Italian and one in English. Noting that some questions required a written production, students of levels 1, 2 and 3 chose the English version. After I made sure that everybody was fluent in English, I asked the students of level 4 and 5 to use the English version too, in order that it would have been easier to compare the answers.

I read each question with the students, explaining them clearly and answering to student's doubts. In order to obtain valid data, in fact, it was important that the students understood the exact meaning of each word. The students filled the questionnaire in class.

Students' answers to items 1, 2, 3 and 6 of the questionnaire have been analysed from a quantitative point of view. On the contrary, with students' answers to items 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 I made a keywords analysis. Given that the subjects were only 81 and their answers were quite short, I hasn't been necessary to use either quantitative nor keywords analysis tools.

## CHAPTER III – RESULTS

In this chapter, the last of the paper, I try to answer the three questions with which my action research began (see 2.1.). I do it on the base of the data I collected via the questionnaire I described in the previous chapter (see 2.3.). I then draw some more general conclusions and try to imagine possible further developments of research on the usage in L2 courses of material collected by the learners themselves by means of pocket technologies.

### 3.1. FEASIBILITY OF THE PROJECT

“Is it possible to set teenage and adult students of the school to collect materials during their daily life in Venice by mean of the technology tools they have in their pockets (i.e. smartphones and cameras) so as to make the Italian language courses they are following more motivating, personalized and so as to help learners to become more autonomous?”. This was the first query at the basis of my study and I tried to answer to it by what the students wrote at item 6 of the questionnaire (see 2.3.). Here I report the part of questionnaire I’m speaking about:

6. Did you take pictures for the lesson? If you didn’t, write down the reason.

Yes

No, because

I didn’t get what I was supposed to do

I didn’t find any writing I didn’t understand

I forgot to

I didn’t have time

I thought the activity was useless

I don’t feel comfortable using this kind of technology

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

In order to make it easier to count and compare the data, I numbered the possible motivations to the negative answer in this way:

- 1) I didn’t get what I was supposed to do
- 2) I didn’t find any writing I didn’t understand
- 3) I forgot to



- 4) I didn't have time
- 5) I thought the activity was useless
- 6) I don't feel comfortable using this kind of technology
- 7) Other

Almost all the afternoon activity participants declared they had taken pictures. Only the over 60 student, who was taking the course in order to enjoy Italian cultural offer in the original language, wrote she didn't take pictures because she didn't felt comfortable using technology.

Only two members of the Austrian class took pictures. The others didn't do it for different reasons. Six of them forget to, another four thought the activity was useless, a student didn't have time, one chose *Other* without specifying and another one didn't find anything she didn't know.

Only one member of the level 2 class where I implemented the day-by-day activity didn't take pictures, she was between 40 and 49, she was learning Italian in order to make it easier to travel in Italy and she stroke on *Other* without better specifying her reasons.

The whole level 4 class where I proposed the Day-by-day activity participated in the material collection.

All the students who took part in "Nizioletti che parlano" declared they took pictures too.

For what concerns "Trovare casa a Venezia" participants, only the Chinese student between 30 and 39, who was learning Italian because of her job, declared he didn't take pictures because he hadn't understood what he was supposed to do.

Each student to whom I proposed the didactic unit "Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia" declared he had taken pictures for the lesson.

Only one of the learners with whom I realised "Arte di strada" didn't take pictures: the teenager who was taking the course because of her study, who wrote she forget to.

Seven out of ten of "Che si fa sabato?" participants didn't take picture. Their motivations were several. Two of them, who were learning the language for pleasure and were between 30 and 39 and between 40 and 49, didn't have time.

The two over 60 students, who was learning Italian for pleasure and in order to enjoy cultural offer in Italian, didn't feel comfortable using technology. The teenager forgot to. The Japanese between 50 and 59, who was learning Italian for his job, didn't understood what I she was supposed to do. The student between 40 and 49, who was studying in order to make it easier to travel in Italy, thought the activity was useless.

In general, as shown in Table 10, most of the learners (more than 70%) declared they had taken pictures. On the contrary, 24 people didn't take any pictures.

Table 10. Students' answers to item 6

Took pictures	Didn't take pictures	TOTAL
57	24	81
>70%	<30%	100%

The most reluctant were teenage students. All the people between 20 and 29 actively participated in the material collection.

Table 11. Students who didn't take pictures' ages

LESS THAN 20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 OR OLDER	TOTAL
15	0	2	3	1	3	24
62,5%	0%	>8%	12,5%	>4%	12,5%	100%

It's worth observing that all the subject who were learning Italian because they lived permanently to Italy took part in the picture collection.

Table 12. Answers to item 6 of the students who lived permanently in Italy

Took pictures	Didn't take pictures	TOTAL
5	0	5
100%	0%	100%

The most popular reason for not taking the pictures is forgetting, but only teenage students chose this reason. 5 students (among which there were 4 teens) didn't take pictures because they thought the activity was useless. 3 people didn't have time and 3 other people (over 60 students) didn't feel comfortable using technology. 2 students didn't understood what their were supposed to do and 2 more chose *Other* without specifying better their motivations. Then, a teen declared she couldn't find any writing she didn't understand.

Table 13. Students' reasons why they didn't take pictures

	Reason 1	Reason 2	Reason 3	Reason 4	Reason 5	Reason 6	Reason 7
less than 20	0	1	8	1	4	0	1
30-39	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
40-49	0	0	0	1	1	0	1
50-59	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
60 or older	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
TOTAL	2	1	8	3	5	3	2
%	>8%	>4%	>33,33%	12,5%	<21%	12,5%	>8%

For what concerns teenagers, only 3 out of 18 took pictures for the course. Among the reasons given for their non-participation, the most popular (8 students out of 15) was that they had forgotten to take the pictures.

Table 14. Teenagers' answers to item 6

Took pictures	Didn't take pictures	TOTAL
3	15	18
<17%	>83%	100%

3 out of 6 learners who were 60 or older didn't participate either; but for a reason peculiar to them: they didn't feel comfortable with the technology I asked them to use.

Table 15. Over 60 students' answers to item 6

Took pictures	Didn't take pictures	TOTAL
3	3	6
50%	50%	100%

Eventually, when I started my project it was the third week of April and I proposed the afternoon activity, but nobody turned up in class. That happens sometimes with the afternoon lessons, independently from the topic of the lesson and especially on sunny days. Therefore, that doesn't mean the afternoon activity isn't feasible, as turned out by the fact that 10 people attended the afternoon activity I organized for the following week.

### 3.2. HOW TO USE THE PICTURES TAKEN BY THE LEARNERS

By items 9 and 10 of the questionnaire, I tried to obtain by the students some hints to answer to the second research question, "How can the teacher make good use of the pictures the students bring into the class from outside by mean of their smartphones and cameras, taking into account the syllabus and the organization of the school?":

Firstly, I proposed a one hour activity in the afternoon after the language courses, in the time usually dedicated to cultural activities. Then, trying to implement what learners suggested, I devised a day by day activity and 5 didactic units.

9. The lesson with the students' pictures would be more useful if \_\_\_\_\_

10. The lesson with the students' pictures would be more enjoyable if \_\_\_\_\_

In the afternoon activity and in the every day activity students were free to take picture of every writing they didn't understand. In the didactic units instead, I told them what kind of writing they had to photograph.

After the afternoon activity, after each one of the didactic units and at the end of the weeks in which I proposed the day-by-day activities, the learners completed the questionnaire. I was so able, in devising the following activity, to apply those among their suggestions that I considered more feasible, useful and relevant.

By key words analysis, I found out forty types of suggestion:

1. take pictures together (suggested by 11 learners)
2. take pictures of things (suggested by 8 learners)
3. the teacher tell the students what should be the subject of their pictures (suggested by 8 learners)
4. take pictures during class time (suggested by 7 learners)
5. guarantee a higher level of participation (suggested by 7 learners)
6. the students take pictures of their everyday life in Venice (suggested by 5 learners)
7. the teacher give indications about where to find subjects for their pictures (suggested by 5 learners)
8. focus the lesson on Venetian dialect (suggested by 5 learners)
9. take class outside (suggested by 4 learners)
10. take pictures of memorials (suggested by 4 learners)
11. make the lesson easier (suggested by 4 learners)
12. take pictures of students' dwellings in Venice (suggested by 3 learners)
13. record dialogues (suggested by 3 learners)
14. the teacher explain the students' pictures everyday (suggested by 3 learners)
15. hold a photography contest (suggested by 3 learners)
16. take pictures of odd objects (suggested by 3 learners)
17. take pictures with the teacher (suggested by 3 learners)
18. sent the pictures to the teacher and got the explanation by e-mail (suggested by 3 learners)
19. take pictures of buildings (suggested by 3 learners)
20. interview Venetian people (suggested by 2 learners)
21. take pictures of event posters (suggested by 2 learners)
22. take pictures of Venetian people (suggested by 2 learners)
23. take pictures of writings the students don't understand (suggested by 2 learners)
24. take pictures of graffiti (suggested by 2 learners)
25. take pictures of something the students like (suggested by 2 learners)
26. the students take pictures of themselves (suggested by 2 learners)

27. see the houses of the announcements the students photographed (suggested by 2 learners)
28. the students explain each other the meaning of the words in their pictures (suggested by 2 learners)
29. take pictures of shops (suggested by 2 learners)
30. take stupid pictures (suggested by 1 learner)
31. take pictures of parties (suggested by 1 learner)
32. take pictures of announcements (suggested by 1 learner)
33. use pictures of students' family (suggested by 1 learner)
34. use videos instead of pictures (suggested by 1 learner)
35. remove the race from the lesson (suggested by 1 learner)
36. include a race in the lesson (suggested by 1 learner)
37. play scavenger hunt (suggested by 1 learner)
38. make a graffiti (suggested by 1 learner)
39. interview the shopkeepers (suggested by 1 learner)
40. tell stories taking the pictures as starting point (suggested by 1 learner)

For what concerns suggestion number 1, that was the most popular one I didn't want the students to take pictures in groups because I was afraid in this way the class would have collect a limited amount of material. Furthermore, allowing them to take pictures of anything different from writings (suggestions 2, 6, 10, 12, 16, 19, 22, 26, 31 and 33) and to use videos instead of pictures (suggestion 34), wouldn't have been consistent with my study.

However, it is important to highlight the fact that 25 learners expressed the wish to take pictures of things, buildings, memorials, Venetian people, Venetian dwellings and everyday life in Venice. In my opinion, this shows the students' wish to gain access not only to Italian language, but also to Italian culture.

Nonetheless, lots of other advice was worthy to be put into practice, in particular those of the students who didn't participate in the material collection phase. Some of them would have liked to take pictures during class time, together, or even with the teacher (suggestions 4, 1 and 17). Another student expressed her need for indications about where to find subject for her pictures (suggestion 7). Two more learners thought I should have found a way for guaranteeing a higher level of participation (suggestion 5).

Table 16. Answers to item 9 of students who didn't take pictures

Suggestion	N° 1	N° 2	N° 3	N° 4	N° 5	N° 6	N° 7	N° 17
Students	1	2	4	3	2	1	1	2

Table 17. Answers to item 10 of students who didn't take pictures

Suggestion	N° 1	N° 2	N° 4	N° 10	N° 16	N° 20	N° 26	N° 27	N° 30	N° 31	N° 35
Students	3	2	4	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1

These requests could have been met by allowing the students to use the last 20 minutes of the previous class to take pictures outside the school and by going with them and showing them some suitable subjects. Sadly, I didn't realize it before collecting and analysing all the questionnaires.

Instead, I had been able to make use of suggestions 3, 8, 11, 14, 21, 23, 24, 29, 32, 35 and 36. Let's see how.

### 3.2.1. Afternoon activity

During the Tuesday class I projected a Power Point presentation with some pictures of different kinds I took in Venice. After each picture there was a word-picture matching exercise (for low levels students) or a multiple choice question (for students from higher levels) based on a word that appeared on the picture. I divided the class into 2 teams composed of people of different levels and proposed a short race: the teams, in turn, had to do the word-picture matching exercise or to answer the questions and the one that guessed more answers right won.

Then I explained the utility of taking pictures of words and texts they don't understand while walking around the city: in this way the city itself will help them to learn Italian. I show them some examples of what they could photograph: posters, placards, graffiti, billboards, packages, public notices, shops signs, selling announcements, restaurants and pub lists, labels, flyers, price tags, etc.

Finally, I asked them to send me their pictures by e-mail or to bring them in a Pen Drive before Friday with a note about what they hadn't understood.

The pictures the students took were very different one from the other (see Afternoon activity slides in Appendix III). They gave me pictures of: 2 graffiti, 2 food packaging, a handmade little shop billboard, a looking for a room announcement, an handmade milkshake list, a journal title, a card used in supermarkets to locate the different types of meat, a work in progress sign and a *nizioleto* (Venetian road signs). Just two questions were about Venetian typicalities: the one about the Venetian word *vedei* and the one about the receipt of *sarde in saor*.

During Friday class I projected a Power Point similar to that of the Tuesday classes, but this time made of the student's pictures, and I proposed again the race. Then, in order to make them reemploy the words they'd just learnt, I asked the two teams to invent a funny story using all words we'd seen. A person from each team read the story in front of the class, while the other members of the group were miming it.

Here's what students wrote at item 9. For the level 1 and level 2 students who hadn't taken pictures and who didn't like the activity, it had apparently been too difficult. They wrote, in fact, that the lesson would have been more useful if the activity had been "easier". The third student from level 2 expressed the wish to get a clear "subject" for the pictures and the last one suggested using not only pictures of writings but also photos of "things, not only writings". One learner of level 2 and another from level 4 would have liked to have everyday the opportunity of asking the teacher for the meaning of words they found going around the city. Moreover, one level 4 student wrote that she wished to have the opportunity to send by e-mail her pictures with her questions to the teacher and to get an answer as soon as possible, again by e-mail.

Two people didn't write anything.

For what concerns item 10, the oldest student gave the tip of avoiding the race between the 2 groups. One level two learner repeated she wanted take pictures of memorials and buildings too. 4 people didn't complete point 10. 2 students (one of them hadn't taken pictures and didn't like the activity) thought that meeting their course mates in order to take pictures for the activity would have been enjoyable. Another would have liked that each student look for the meaning of the words he had photographed and then explained this to the others. Eventually, a student from France prompted to make photographic reportages of learners' daily life and to present them in class.

Those results, made me decide not to carry on with the afternoon activity. Instead, I put in action some of the students' suggestions bringing my experimentation in the morning classes, where students' proficiency was more or less the same. In this way I was able to balance the complexity of the activity and the explanations to the level of each class.

### 3.2.2. Day-by-day activity

I proposed that the students took pictures of every writing they didn't understand while they're walking around the city, doing shopping, at the restaurant, drinking a spritz, visiting a museum, taking the vaporetto, eating an ice-cream etc. I didn't have time to prepare a Power Point presentation before the lesson, so I asked them to send me the pictures by e-mail the same day they took them. Each evening I made a presentation with the photos I'd received during the day and I projected it at the beginning of the lesson the day after, answering their lexical doubts.

The pictures the students gave me were very different (see Day-by-day slides in Appendix III). Level 2 students took pictures of: 2 handmade pastries price tags, 2 nizioleti, a card used in supermarkets to locate the different type of meat, an

advertising sticker, a graffiti, a handmade writing on a letterbox earmarked for advertisement, an advertising flier, a church plate, a handmade fantastic plaque on a tree, a restaurant menu and a restaurant list.

Level 4 students took pictures of: food packaging, 2 protest stickers, a secondhand books collection announcement, an event poster, a master course advertising flier, a supermarket tomatoes price tag, a book title, a stroller selling announcement, a pastry shops logo, a banner, 5 public announcements, a missing cat announcement, an advertising flier, a journal title and a billboard.

The Austrian class' pictures were a poem and the Court of Audit plate.

Four questions were about words in Venetian dialect: *brachetta*, *su e zo*, *sconta* and *venexiani*. Moreover, one was about a typical Venetian dish: *fegato alla veneziana*.

Here I report the Day-by-day activity participants wrote in item 9 of the questionnaire.

The answers of the Austrian students are of particular importance because their participation was extremely low, with only two out of fifteen students who took pictures. Four of the Austrian students (including the two who took pictures) realized that, if more of them had taken pictures, the activity would have been much more useful. Three of them, who hadn't taken pictures and didn't like the activity, expressed the need for having a clear subject for their pictures. Moreover, a student suggested that I use class time to take the pictures we need for the lesson and another wrote that I should be with them while they're taking pictures. Eventually, a girl had the idea of taking things (instead of writings) as picture subjects.

Also four of the learners of level 2 expressed the need for only one picture subject, and among them there was the woman who hadn't taken pictures. Another one that of taking pictures with the teacher. In a Portuguese man's opinion, it would have been more useful to take pictures of ancient buildings and to speak about their architectonic features and, for an elderly French woman, to bring to class pictures of writings in Venetian dialect. A Dutch girl, instead, found the activity too difficult.

For what concerns level 4 students, also a Polish woman revealed the need for having a definite subject to photograph; and another Polish student, who was living permanently in Italy, asked for an activity focused on pictures of writings in Venetian dialect. Then, an Austrian girl proposed taking pictures of objects, too; and Israeli proposed to photograph monuments and buildings

Let's see ideas of the Day-by-day activity participants on how to make the lesson more enjoyable.

Again, Austrian class' answers to item 10 are very important because of the low level of active participation in the class. Only one of the students who took pictures completed point 10, proposed taking pictures of something the students like. Three of the teens wanted to take the pictures during class time. The other



seven that answered, proposed alternative subjects: odd objects, themselves, stupid things or situations, parties and objects in general.

The Japanese girl of level 2, too, proposed to take pictures of odd objects and another student to take as subjects Venetian people. The Portuguese girl had the idea of taking class outside and the man from Argentina suggested to organize a photography contest. The woman from the US who didn't take pictures expressed the desire to do it during class time and the over 60 learner advised me to use photographs of students' everyday lives.

Level 4 class proposals were the following: use pictures of students' everyday life scenes and of students' themselves, asking the students to explain to their partners the meaning of the words they photographed (previously explained to them by the teacher) and use recorded dialogue in Italian as audio material for the lesson. The last one was a proposal of the girl who was learning Italian because she had moved in Italy.

I wanted to meet the requests that some of the students made me of having a clear subject for their pictures and of dedicating more time to the study of Venetian dialect by creating the first of five didactic units: "Nizioleti che parlano".

### 3.2.3. Didactic units

I devised 5 didactic units ad hoc, in which it was possible, in different ways, to use the student's pictures.

The didactic unit has been the core foundation of language teaching in recent decades. The structure of the didactic unit used here is based on the three phases of the perception for the Gestalt psychology: globality, analysis and synthesis; to which a phase of reflection is added for educational purposes.

The grammatical, socio-pragmatical, textual and lexical goals of the units are among those of the syllabus of the Institute (see Appendix I) and their duration is 1 hour and 45 minutes.

In order to explore the various possibilities of using students' photos, I put them at different points of the units. In "Che si fa sabato?" the pictures were employed in the globality phase, precisely in the pre-listening activity, and in the synthesis phase. In "Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia" and in "Nizioleti che parlano" they were the text around which the units are built, so they were used in the globality and analysis phases. Also in "Trovare casa a Venezia" the pictures were the main text and were employed in all the five phases on the didactic unit. Finally, in "Arte di strada" I made use of them in the pre-reading activity and in the reflection phase.

Some days before the lesson I'd taken all the pictures I needed, in case the students wouldn't bring them.

Two days before the lessons, I presented my project to the students and explained them the benefits of learning via the texts they can find walking around the city. I asked them to take the pictures I wanted and I projected some pictures I'd taken as an example. I told the class to send the pictures to me by e-mail or to bring them the day after to school.

### 3.2.3.1. "Nizioleti che parlano"

This unit fits some of the goals planned for the first week of level 4.

It allows the learners to acquire some cultural and lexical aspects related to Venetian toponymy. They will practise the socio-pragmatic skills of convincing, proposing and expressing opinions, as well as the textual skill of writing definitions.

For the lesson, the class brought me 19 pictures of nizioleti and of what there was around them.

As pre-viewing activity, I divided the class into two teams and I projected three multiple choice questions on the TV screen. The teams had some minutes to agree on the answers. The group that had guessed more answers right was the winner. I projected the photos of nizioleti the students had taken (see "Nizioleti che parlano" slides in Appendix III), while the students wrote on a chart all the different terms they saw on the nizioleti (see "Nizioleti che parlano" worksheets in Appendix III). Then, we corrected the exercise in plenum.

As post-viewing activity, I showed two Venetian road sign pictures (see "Nizioleti che parlano" slides in Appendix III) and I asked the class if there were some similarities between the road signs and the nizioleti, making so a discussion start.

In the analysis phase, I projected the photos again and the students had to write on the chart what they saw around the nizioleti (see "Nizioleti che parlano" worksheets in Appendix III).

As synthesis activity, the two teams invented some nizioleti and wrote them on a picture of a campo I had handed out (see "Nizioleti che parlano" worksheets in Appendix III). The group that had made less mistakes and had invented the most funny names was the winner.

Eventually, the students had to match the term and its definition choosing between three options (see "Nizioleti che parlano" worksheets in Appendix III). Subsequently, each team received a different list of terms for which he had to write a definition, taking as example the definitions we had seen. After I'd verified the accuracy of the definition, the groups read to each other their definitions and tried to guess the right term. The terms were the following: *rio*,

*corte, fundamenta, sottoportego, campiello e ruga.*

The students had different opinions about how the lesson could be more interesting. The learner who were living permanently in Italy showed the desire to dedicate more time to the study of Venetian dialect; the Polish man advised me to make a lesson using picture of event posters; and the student from Switzerland wrote it would have been useful to record dialogues in Italian and listen to it in class.

In order to make the lesson more enjoyable, the students proposed to take pictures together, to interview Venetian people about the Venetian toponomastic and to make a video of the nizioleti and what was around them (in order to make the analyses exercise more clear).

Wanting to accept the advice the Polish student wrote at item 9, I created the didactic unit “Trovare casa a Venezia”, where I asked the students to take pictures of houses, flats and rooms announcements.

#### 3.2.3.2. “Trovare casa a Venezia”

“Trovare casa a Venezia” can be used in the second week of a level 2 course.

The skills that the students can learn and practice are, from the morpho-syntactic point of view, *mi è piaciuto/non mi è piaciuto* and some adverbs of place; and, from the communicative point of view, to find accommodation and to set an appointment. The unit allows the students to practise some socio-pragmatic and textual skills too. The former are those of describing places and expressing judgments; and the latter are oral comprehension of face-to-face dialogues, written comprehension of announcements and oral production in face-to-face conversation context. This unit promotes the acquisition of the lexicon relating to the house (expansion of the vocabulary already met in level 1) and some expressions of location (*in centro storico, zona..., nelle vicinanze di..., affacciato su..., vicinanze..., vicino a..., a...*).

For the lesson, the class brought me 12 pictures of announcements.

I started the globality stage with a brainstorming session in which the students told the class where they were living in Venice, what their home was like and how had they found it. After that, they had to make certain assumptions about what is meant by *singola, doppia* and *tripla*. I then projected a Power Point presentation with the student’s photos of houses, flats and room announcements (see “Trovare casa a Venezia” slides in Appendix III) and the students filled in a chart with the different types of dwellings, whether they were for sale or for rent and their prices (see “Trovare casa a Venezia” worksheets in Appendix III). While I projected the

presentation for the second time, they completed a word-picture matching exercise based on the lexicon we had found in the photos (see “Trovare casa a Venezia” worksheets in Appendix III). As post-viewing activity, the learners, in teams, had to guess the meaning of the abbreviations *risc. aut.*, *cucina abit.*, *lav.*, *rip.* and *vic.ze*. Then I projected again to the picture of the flat with an altana and I asked the students if they had ever been on an altana. Some had and some had not. The analysis consisted in identifying the expressions of location there were in the photos (ex. *in centro storico*, *zona excelsior*, etc.).

In the synthesis phase, then, the students formed groups of four and chose one of the announcements. They played a role making in which two students were tenants and the others possible lodgers. They set up an appointment during which it was imagined that the tenant show the house to the lodger. Then the potential lodgers told the tenants what they liked and what they didn't like of the house/flat/room using the expressions *mi è piaciuto/non mi è piaciuto* we saw during the last lesson. The tenants had to try to close the deal.

In the reflection exercise, the students divided the adverbs of place they found in the photos into three groups. All the adverbs in a group had to share a similar meaning.

Students' opinions about how to make the didactic unit more interesting were different. Two students encouraged me to ask the students to bring pictures of their own dwellings in Venice and another one of their families. Two other people wrote a similar activity could be made using pictures of shops in Venice. The Chinese student who didn't take any pictures because he didn't get what he was supposed to do suggested taking pictures during class time. A man over 60 who didn't like the lesson manifested the need to get clear indications about where to find announcements. A German woman had the idea of recording dialogues in Italian and using them instead of the non-authentic audio materials we use to employ. Then, a Japanese wrote he wished to get his pictures explained by e-mail every day.

For what concerns item 10, the woman over 60 who didn't like the lesson and the Japanese learner wrote they would have liked to take pictures with the rest of the class. Two people (including the Chinese student) suggested making a real appointment with the tenants and see the flats of the announcements. A German man wrote it would have been nice to take class outside. Other students wanted to make use of different types in the lesson: pictures of something they liked, pictures of memorials and even pictures of Venetian people.

I found the suggestion of two of the German students about taking pictures of shops interesting and I worked out a didactic unit based on shop signs pictures: “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia”.

Moreover, I took account also of the suggestion of the man from the USA to make a lesson using event posters pictures.

### 3.2.3.1. “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia”

This unit has been devised to be used in the second week of the first level course. It helps the students to learn the following morpho-syntactic aspects: the first, the second and the third person singular of the present tense conjugation of regular and irregular verbs and some articulated prepositions (*dal...al...*, *dalle...alle...*, etc.); it introduces them to reflexive verbs and make them meet *c'è/ci sono* again. Moreover, the learners can practise the socio-pragmatic skills of expressing agreement and disagreement; and also some textual skills: the reading comprehension of the time and the oral production of very short presentations. The main lexical area deepened by the unit is that of the shops.

The learners took 38 pictures of the signs and of the opening times of shops in S. Margherita. I received moreover 7 pictures of other shops.

In the globality phase, as pre-viewing activity, each student had to tell the rest of the class in which kind of shops he had gone to since he arrived in Venice. Then they compared the opening time of shops in Italy and in their countries. After this, I projected a Power Point presentation with the student's pictures of the shops in Campo S. Margherita (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” slides in Appendix III) and I asked the students to write on the map (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” worksheets in Appendix III) the signs and the opening times of Campo S. Margherita shops. Then I projected the presentation a second time and the students completed a word-picture matching exercise based on the lexicon of the photos (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” worksheets in Appendix III). After this, we corrected the sheet in plenum, following this model: *In Campo S. Margherita c'è una macelleria. La macelleria si chiama Fiore e apre dal lunedì al mercoledì dalle 7:30 alle 14; e dal giovedì al sabato dalle 7:30 alle 13 e dalle 16 alle 19:30.*

In the analysis phase, I asked the students to write on the map the common name of the shops they could find on the right side of the paper (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” worksheets in Appendix III). Then I divided the students into two teams and I projected the photos taken from the other half of the class (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” slides in Appendix III). The teams, in turn, had to guess the common name of the shops and I taught them the names we hadn't already met.

As synthesis, I projected a picture of Acqua Alta (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” slides in Appendix III), a bizarre Venitian library where the books are scattered everywhere and stuffed into boats of different shapes and colours, into a gondola and even into a bath tub. I divided the students into groups of three and I asked them to pretend to want to open their *negozio bizzarro* in Venice. They had to decide the location, the type of the shop, the products they wanted to sell or the services they wanted to offer, the opening times and the prices. They also had to

design the shop sign. Subsequently, they presented their projects to the rest of the class.

Finally, as reflection on the grammatical aspects, each student wrote a chart with the first, the second and the third person singular of the verbs in the simple present they used in their presentation (ex. *essere, aprire, chiudere, vendere, esserci, offrire, costare...*). We checked the charts in plenum.

Students' indications about how to make the lesson more useful are the following. Two people (one of whom was living permanently in Italy) wished to have the opportunity of being given explanations every day of the writings they photograph around the city; and one of them suggested a way to realize this: by e-mail. Others had the idea of taking pictures of their home in Venice and describing them in class; of taking pictures of writings they don't understand and asking the teacher to explain them; of bringing to class pictures of Venetian memorials and buildings and to discuss about them. A learner who didn't like the lesson suggested allowing the students to take pictures of things too. For other students, similar didactic units could be created using pictures of graffiti and of writings in Venetian dialect.

Each student wrote something different at item 10. One proposed a "picture race" in which the one who took the most pictures won; other students suggested taking pictures in groups and to take class outside; a Dutch woman wanted to interview the shopkeepers; the Japanese girl had the idea of using pictures of students' everyday life in Venice; and the other Dutch student, who didn't like the lesson, repeated the advice of taking pictures of graffiti that he gave at item 9.

I accepted the advise of the Dutch learner and I created a didactic unit about graffiti titled "Arte di strada".

#### 3.2.3.5. "Arte di strada"

I created this didactic unit for a level 5 class where more than half of the students was under 29 years.

It offers the students the opportunity to improve some socio-pragmatic competences: to report, to express opinions and judgments and to express agreement and disagreement. The learners can also practise textual competences: to report and to discuss, for what concerns oral production, and written comprehension of art informative textes and of the Italian Penal Code. The lexicon used is young Italian people slang and graffiti slang and technicalities. The students will get some cultural knowledge of the young Italian subculture.

For the lesson, the class brought me 16 pictures of graffiti.

After a brief brainstorming, the students, in pairs, matched the words of the pictures they have taken with their synonyms, choosing between the words in italics at the top of the sheets (see “Arte di strada” worksheets in Appendix III).

After having corrected in plenum the exercise, each student read a short text about the graffiti in his language. Since there were two girls from the same country, one of them read a text about Italian graffiti. They had to match the street artists’ bold names with their works (see “Arte di strada” worksheets in Appendix III for an example).

After I’d answered their questions about words or expressions they didn’t know, each student had to refer to the rest of the class about the text he had read.

At the analysis stage, I asked the class to underline in their text the terms they thought to be peculiar to the graffiti world.

As synthesis activity, I projected the 639° article of the Italian Penal Code (see “Arte di strada” worksheets in Appendix III) declaring that the writers will be punished. We use this as a starting point for a discussion in which part of the class was standing for the street art and the other part was opposing it.

In the reflection phase, the students, in groups, had to make a word definition matching exercise based on the slang terms we’d found in the texts (see “Arte di strada” worksheets in Appendix III). At last, I asked them to recognize some of the techniques mentioned in the worksheet in their pictures of graffiti.

Learners’ opinions on how to make the didactic unit more useful were the following. Three of them (one of which had moved permanently to Italy) asked for indications about where to find graffiti that meet the class purposes. A Swiss woman advised to do a similar lesson but with pictures of writings in Venetian dialect, and a German man suggested photographing event posters, so that the class will be informed about what is going on in Venice.

Here I report, instead, what the “Arte di strada” participants written on how to make the lesson more enjoyable. The teenager who forget to take pictures and a girl between 20 and 29 wanted the whole class to meet and take pictures together; and two male students suggested to hold a picture contest. Moreover, a French girl proposed that the teacher organize a scavenger hunt to make the students find the graffiti; to a Spanish one came into mind that the class could make a real graffiti; and a Swiss woman wanted the students to invent stories taking the graffiti pictures as prompts.

I put into practice the suggestion of the German man and of the students from the USA of “Trovare casa a Venezia” and I devised a didactic unit that moves from pictures of event posters: “Che si fa sabato?”.

### 3.2.3.3. “Che si fa sabato?”

“Che si fa sabato?” is made to be used in the fourth week of level 3.

It teaches the students how to use pronouns with informal imperative and promotes the acquisition of the socio-pragmatic competence of convincing someone to do something. The textual competences the students acquire are oral comprehension of semi authentic face-to-face dialogues, reading comprehension of tourism and cultural informations and oral production in a context of face-to-face conversation. The lexicon used in the unit is mostly that relating to the city and the transports.

The students brought me only 4 pictures pictures, so I had to use some pictures of mine.

I started the lesson with a brainstorming session in which the students discussed what they do in the evening in their country and what they had done since they had arrived in Venice. After this, while watching the Power Point presentation of their photos of events posters (see “Che si fa sabato?” slides in Appendix III), the students completed a chart (see “Che si fa sabato?” worksheets in Appendix III) in which they entered title, type, date, time and place of the different events. Then I answered their lexical questions. Then, I asked them to identify the locations of the events on a map of Venice. At this point, the class listened 3 times to a dialogue between Elisa and Ludovico in which they are discussing what to do at the weekend and completed a cloze test based on the transcript of the dialogue (see “Che si fa sabato” worksheets in Appendix III). After the listening activity, I asked the students if in their opinion in the dialogue there is irony; and to make their cases by means of textual evidences.

In the analysis phase, they identified all the imperative verbs and noted the position of the pronouns.

As synthesis activity, the students, in groups, performed a role making in which they had to agree on something to do together that weekend. They had to choose between the events of the Power Point presentation. They were told to use the imperative and some expressions (see “Che si fa sabato” worksheets in Appendix III).

In the end, they completed the rules of the position of the pronouns with informal imperative (see “Che si fa sabato” worksheets in Appendix III).

Let’s see what the learners who took part in the class wrote at item 9 of the questionnaire. These results are of particular importance because the participation at this didactic unit was extremely low, with only three out of ten learners who took pictures. Those three indicated a higher level of participation as an important feature of a more useful lesson. One of them also suggested finding a way to guarantee the active participation of all the students. Three other students wished



to take pictures, respectively, during class time (a German teenager who didn't like the activity), together with their classmates (a Brazilian over 60) and with the teacher's supervision (a Japanese man). A Russian girl, moreover, asked for indications about where to find suitable subjects. A French man prompted, instead, to take pictures of objects too.

Now I report the learners' suggestions to make the lesson more enjoyable. Again, their opinions are primary. Two more students expressed the desire to take pictures in a group: the teenager and a German woman over 60, who both didn't like the activity. The other over 60 student proposed, instead, to take pictures of memorials and comment on them in class. Other suggestions were: take class outside, take pictures of student's everyday life in Venice, take pictures of odd objects and guess what they are and interview Venetian people.

### 3.3. LEARNERS' FEEDBACK

The answer to the third research question, "Do the students like teacher's didactic proposals, what do they like and what don't they like?", is paramount to decide if it's worthy to make of a didactic innovation a class routine. That because, as we saw in the first chapter (see 1.2.), there's no learning without motivation and pleasure is the most effective kind of motivation.

I made the learners answer this question through items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 of the questionnaire.

#### 3.3.1. Item 1

Item 1 allowed me to investigate how the students' appreciated, in the main, what I proposed them:

1. How did you like the lesson/activity with students' pictures from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much)?

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

I decided to consider numbers from 1 to 3 as negative, number 4 as neutral and numbers from 5 to 7 as positive. That means that students who chose 1, 2 or 3 hadn't enjoyed the activity/lesson, students who chose 5, 6 and 7 had appreciated it, and who stroke through 4 had been indifferent to it.

For what concerns the afternoon activity, seven students liked it, and among them there was also the man over 60 who hadn't taken any pictures because he didn't feel comfortable using pocket technology. The two students from level 1 and one from level 2, instead, expressed their dislike.

On the opposite, in the Austrian class only three of the teenagers judged the afternoon activity in a positive way. Among them there were the two students who took the only two pictures I received during that week. Other four students, moreover, ticked number 4.

All the members of the level 2 and level 4 classes where I put into practice my day-by-day activity found it enjoyable, even the student who hadn't participated in the photograph collection.

"Nizioletti che parlano" was enjoyed by all the participants, too.

Only two of the "Trovare casa a Venezia" participants' disliked the lesson and both of them were students over 60. The student between 30 and 39 who hadn't taken pictures, instead, ticked number 4.

Only two of those who took part in "Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia" didn't like the lesson: a teenager, who was learning Italian for her studies, and a man between 30 and 39, who was taking the course for pleasure.

For what concerns "Arte di strada" participants, 7 out of 8 expressed a high appreciation of the lesson. The teen who hadn't taken pictures, instead, chose number 4.

Three of the students who took part in "Che si fa sabato?" didn't like the lesson. One of them was a teenager and another a woman over 60; none of them had taken any picture. A student between 30 and 39, who hadn't taken pictures either, expressed neutrality. Apart from the teenager, the other three learner who had taken pictures enjoyed the lesson.

In synthesis, almost 70% of the learners liked the didactic innovation: number 7 was chosen by twenty one, number 6 by twenty seven and number 5 by eight students. Only little more than 22% of the people chose low numbers: eleven learners ticked number 3, three chose number 2 and four struck through number 1. 9% chose the number 4.

Table 18. Students' answers to item 1

N° 1	N° 2	N° 3	N° 4	N° 5	N° 6	N° 7	TOTAL
4	3	11	7	8	27	21	81
<5%	<4%	<14%	<9%	<10%	>33%	<26%	100%

If you look at Table 19 and Table 20, you'll see that almost 88% of the students who had taken pictures liked the activity; among the students who didn't take pictures, instead, only 25% of enjoyed it. That's why it seems important to me to find out the way to make everyone actively participate in the collection of

photographic material.

Table 19. Students who took pictures' answers to item 1

Positive (5, 6, 7)	Negative (1, 2, 3)	TOTAL
50	7	57
<88%	>12%	100%

Table 20. Students who didn't take pictures' answers to item 1

Positive (5, 6, 7)	Neutral (4)	Negative (1, 2, 3)	TOTAL
6	7	11	24
25%	>30%	>46%	100%

It's also worth noting that the appreciation of the activity between the subjects who lived permanently in Italy was high. In fact, they stroke only through number 6 and number 7.

Table 21. Answers to item 1 of students who lived permanently in Italy

N° 1	N° 2	N° 3	N° 4	N° 5	N° 6	N° 7	TOTAL
0	0	0	0	0	2	3	5
0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	%	%	100%

On the contrary, if we look at teenagers' answers, we see that the majority of them didn't appreciate the activity or the lesson I had proposed. Moreover, lots of them expressed their indifference towards them. Three learners chose "positive" numbers; however, none chose number 7 (very much). So, the appreciation of the didactic innovation among teenager students was very low.

Table 22. Teenagers' answers to item 1

Positive (5, 6, 7)	Neutral (4)	Negative (1, 2, 3)	TOTAL
3	5	10	18
<17%	<28%	<56%	100%

### 3.3.2. Item 2

The second item of the questionnaire investigated learners' opinions in a deeper

way about the activity in which I made use of the pictures they took:

2. How do you consider the activities with students' pictures

Boring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Interesting
Unenjoyable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Enjoyable
Meaningless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Meaningful
Useless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Useful
Dull	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Exciting
Unsatisfying	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfying
Unappealing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Appealing
Monotonous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Absorbing

From the people who participated in the Afternoon activity, this has been judged more interesting than boring, more enjoyable than unenjoyable, more meaningful than meaningless, more useful than useless and more satisfying than unsatisfying. However, both the level 1 learners who didn't like the activity expressed negative judgements. The level 2 student, who didn't like the activity either, evaluated the activity as more unenjoyable, meaningless and unsatisfying. For what concerns the couples *dull/exciting*, *unappealing/appealing* and *monotonous/absorbing*, a great deal of the class didn't have a strong feeling and marked number 4. The three students who declared they didn't enjoy the activity judged it as more dull and monotonous and two of them as more unappealing. For one of the three students who disliked the activity it was totally dull and monotonous.

The majority of the Austrian class recognized the meaningfulness and the usefulness of the Day-by-day activity. On the contrary, no one perceived it as enjoyable, exciting, appealing or absorbing. Concerning the *boring/interesting* and *unsatisfying/satisfying* couples, some of them expressed positive evaluations, but the majority of the class chose numbers from 1 to 3.

In general, the level 2 class to which I proposed the Day-by-day activity appraised it positively. They choose number 4 ten times, for each of the adjectives couples but for *meaningless/meaningful* and *useless/useful*. Half of the students stroke on it when they had to chose between *dull* and *exciting*. The only one who marked a negative number was the Portuguese man, who perceived the lesson as unappealing.

Also the results of the level 4 class with which I performed the day-by-day activity were positive. No one crossed through the low numbers but 10 people didn't know what to choose between *dull* and *exciting*, *unsatisfying* and *satisfying*,

*unappealing* and *appealing*, and *monotonous* and *absorbing*. In the first case, all the class but one preferred not to express a strong opinion.

“Nizioletti che parlano” participants explicited no negative point of view about the lesson. Only two of them were neutral about, respectively, *useless/useful* and *dull/exciting* pairs.

The two students over 60 perceived “Tovare casa a Venezia” as boring, unenjoyable, useless, dull, unsatisfying, unappealing and monotonous. The Chinese woman who hadn’t taken pictures judged it as meaningless. The man from Russia wrote it had been useless. No one else expressed negative judgements, but lots of people crossed through number 4. Even seven people ticked it when they had to decide between *dull* and *exciting*.

The “Un negozio bizzarro” learners who expressed negative judgements are three: a woman who thought the activity had been totally monotonous and two students who declared they hadn’t enjoyed the lesson and for which it had been boring, unenjoyable, meaningless, useless, dull, unsatisfying, unappealing and monotonous. Between those two learners, the teen expressed the most severe judgement.

A great deal of the people who took part in “Arte di strada”, shared positive opinions about the didactic unit. Four number 4s were crossed: one for *meaningless/meaningful*, another for *useless/useful*, a third for *unsatisfying/satisfying* and the last one for *unappealing/appealing*. Only the teenager who declared she hadn’t taken pictures because she had forgotten to, thought something negative of the lesson, that is, that it had been boring and useless. Giving that she was studying Italian because of her studies, it’s easy to understand she had the impression that a lesson about graffiti was useless. But, in my opinion, if she had contributed to the lesson with some pictures, she would have seen the lesson as more interesting and useful.

For what concerns “Che si fa sabato?”, the situation is more complex. Most of the learners thought the lesson had been interesting, enjoyable, meaningful and useful. For the teenager, the woman over 60 and the Canadian man who hadn’t taken pictures, the lesson had been, on the contrary, boring, unenjoyable, meaningless and useless. Only four learners judged the lesson as exciting, satisfying, appealing and absorbing; the others crossed out either a negative or the neutral number. All the people who participated actively in the material collection showed only positive evaluations.

In the main, people who ticked positive numbers (5, 6 and 7) were definitely more than people who crossed out either negative numbers (1, 2 and 3) or the neutral number (4). However, when the students were asked to choose between *dull* and *exciting* and between *unappealing* and *appealing*, the majority of them opted either for negative numbers or for number 4.

Table 23. Students' answers to item 2

	N° 1	N° 2	N° 3	N° 4	N° 5	N° 6	N° 7
Boring/Interesting	5	2	10	5	18	21	20
Unenjoyable/Enjoyable	8	5	10	4	13	21	20
Meaningless/Meaningful	5	3	6	8	14	28	17
Useless/Useful	6	3	8	6	16	24	18
Dull/Exciting	12	3	8	26	14	9	8
Unsatisfying/Satisfying	7	4	6	14	9	27	14
Unappealing/Appealing	10	4	8	19	12	16	12
Monotonous/Absorbing	10	6	7	16	13	18	11

Some people from level 1, moreover, shared the opinion that the activity was useless. That's probably because some of the writings they photographed were too difficult to remember for them. In fact, at items 9 and 10, they suggested taking pictures of things and making the lesson easier.

Table 24. Level 1 students' answers to item 2

	Negative (1, 2, 3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (1, 2, 3)	TOTAL
Useless/Useful	4	0	8	12
PERCENTAGE	>33%	0%	<67%	100%

None of the students who moved to Italy chose low numbers. All of them judged the activity as interesting, enjoyable, meaningful, useful, satisfying, appealing and absorbing.

Table 25. Answers to item 2 of students who lived permanently in Italy

	Negative (1, 2, 3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5, 6, 7)
Boring/Interesting	0	0	5
Unenjoyable/Enjoyable	0	0	5
Meaningless/Meaningful	0	0	5
Useless/Useful	0	0	5
Dull/Exciting	0	2	3
Unsatisfying/Satisfying	0	0	5
Unappealing/Appealing	0	0	5
Monotonous/Absorbing	0	0	5

None of the Austrian students perceived the Day-by-day activity as enjoyable, exciting, appealing or absorbing. Those are both causes and consequences of the low level of participation. That's why it's vital to find a way to make students collect material.

Surprisingly, the majority of the class recognized the meaningfulness and the

usefulness of the activity, but this wasn't enough to guarantee a more active participation. So, the suggestions that students wrote about how to make the activity more enjoyable (item 10 of the questionnaire), should be taken into greater consideration than those about how to make it more interesting (item 9).

Table 26. Austrian students' answers to item 2

	Negative (1, 2, 3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5, 6, 7)
Unenjoyable/Enjoyable	13	2	0
Meaningless/Meaningful	6	1	8
Useless/Useful	5	1	9
Dull/Exciting	14	1	0
Unappealing/Appealing	12	3	0
Monotonous/Absorbing	12	3	0

### 3.3.3. Item 3

Item 3 explored if the learners were willing to repeat the experience:

3. Would you like to have more opportunities to take part in classes where students' pictures are used?

Yes

I don't know

No

Among the students to which I proposed the Afternoon activity, two from level 1 and one from level 2 didn't want to repeat the experience; and another level 2 learner was uncertain.

Among the Austrian students', only three wrote they wanted to repeat the activity and the one of two learners who took pictures was among them. The other student who had taken a picture and a classmate expressed their indecisiveness. The rest of the class stroke through *No*.

On the contrary, the level 2 and level 4 classes where I implemented my Day-by-day activity were willing to take part in something similar, even the woman from level 2 who hadn't taken pictures.

The whole class in which I put into practice "Nizioletti che parlano" wanted to repeat the experience of learning through students' pictures.

Three members of the class where I experimented "Trovare casa a Venezia" revealed their unwillingness to take part in another class where students' pictures were used. Two of them were over 60 students.

From “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” participants’ answers to point 3, you can see that all the students but two (including a teen) declared to be willing to take part in a similar lesson.

Almost all the “Arte di strada” participants wanted to repeat the experience. Only the Italian teenager who hadn’t participated in the pictures collection expressed her doubts.

Even if the majority of the learners who took part in the didactic unit “Che si fa sabato?” didn’t take pictures, only three of them said they didn’t want to take part in a lesson in which there was a similar use of students’ pictures. One of them was a teen and another a woman over sixty and none of them had taken pictures.

Almost 70% of the students wanted to repeat the experience, less than 26% answered *No* and less than 5% were uncertain.

Table 27. Students’ answers to item 3

Yes	I don’t know	No	TOTAL
56	4	21	81
<70%	<5%	<26%	100%

Among the students who either didn’t want to repeat the experience or were uncertain, all but one at item 1 had declared they hadn’t liked the activity/lesson or had chosen number 4.

Table 28. Answers at item 1 of the students who chose either *No* or *I don’t know*

Negative (1, 2, 3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5, 6, 7)	TOTAL
18	6	1	25
72%	24%	4%	100%

64% of them hadn’t taken pictures. Again, the issue of participation reveals itself as paramount.

Table 29. Participation in the material collection of the students who chose either *No* or *I don’t know* at item 3

Took pictures	Didn’t take pictures	TOTAL
9	16	25
36%	64%	100%

More than 83% of the teenagers either didn’t want to take part in other classes



where students' pictures were used or was unsure.

Table 30. Teen students' answers at item 3

Yes	I don't know	No	TOTAL
3	3	12	18
<17%	<17%	<67%	100%

50% of the over 60 students declared they didn't want to take part in another class where students pictures were used.

Table 31. Over 60 students' answers to item 3

Yes	I don't know	No	TOTAL
3	0	3	6
50%	0%	50%	100%

However, out of the 3 over 60 people who declared they hadn't taken pictures because they didn't feel comfortable using pocket technology, 2 wanted to repeat the experience. I think it's important to guarantee their right of taking part also in the preliminary stage of the lesson finding out a way in which they can participate in the pictures collection.

Table 32. Answers to item 3 of the over 60 students who declared they hadn't taken pictures because they didn't feel comfortable using poket technology

Yes	I don't know	No	TOTAL
2	0	1	3

#### 3.3.4. Item 4

Item 4 enabled me to find out about what the students had liked of the innovation:

4. The aspects that I liked of the teacher using students' picture in the lesson had been \_\_\_\_\_

By key words analysis, I found out twenty five aspects of the innovation for which the learners expressed their appreciation:

- 1) Venetian dialect (3 students)
- 2) something different (2 students)
- 3) not boring (1 student)
- 4) technology (11 students)
- 5) it drew the attention (1 student)
- 6) more active students (3 students)
- 7) authentic materials (4 students)
- 8) not detached from reality (3 students)
- 9) less theoretical lesson (1 student)
- 10) meaningful material (2 students)
- 11) I can use what I've learned in class in the daily life (4 students)
- 12) traditional didactic material wasn't used (2 students)
- 13) Venetian peculiarities (3 students)
- 14) taking pictures (3 students)
- 15) having learnt something I really needed (3 students)
- 16) have known the city more deeply (1 student)
- 17) the students' weren't passive (2 students)
- 18) having to explore the city (1 student)
- 19) the students bring their personal contribution to the lesson (3 students)
- 20) to remember more easily (4 students)
- 21) learning what's going on in Venice (4 students)
- 22) absorbing (2 students)
- 23) having learned how to find a cheap accommodation in Venice (1 student)
- 24) youth slang (2 students)
- 25) abbreviations (1 student)

For what concerns afternoon activity participants, students' answers are different. One of the French women thought the lesson hadn't been boring and the other two were happy of having learnt Venetian dialect and peculiarities. The level 4 learner over 60 who hadn't taken pictures was anyway happy to have learnt some words in Venetian dialect. Among the three learners who had expressed their dislike for the activity, the Finnish woman didn't complete item 4, the Canadian student wrote she liked that the students hadn't been passive and the Japanese appreciated the using of technology. Also another Japanese student liked most of all the using of technology; and the third learner from Japan, from level 2, was happy that the lesson had been different from the others. The level 2 student from Norway, instead, wrote he appreciated that the lesson hadn't been "detached from reality". Four of the Austrian students who hadn't taken pictures wrote that they liked the fact that they were supposed to use technology. The two students that had taken pictures wrote that, learning by their own pictures, they remembered more easily. Two of the teens that didn't enjoy the activity wrote they liked anyway the fact

that the students had brought their personal contribution to the lesson and the fact that traditional didactic material wasn't used.

For what concerns the level 2 class to which I proposed the day-by-day activity, the student who hadn't taken pictures liked the fact that the lesson had been "different from the others". A Portuguese man declared he had fun during the material collection, a Japanese girl liked having learnt something she really needed and a woman from the US enjoyed having learned some Venetian dialect. The other learners liked the opportunity of using what they'd learned in the daily life and of learning some Venetian peculiarities, the fact that the students are "more active" than usually and that the activity had drawn their attention.

Two of the day-by-day participants appreciated the usage of authentic materials. The Austrian girl liked the fact that the students were supposed to be active. The learner, who had moved to Italy, was happy of having learnt something she needed and the Polish student, who was attending the course in order to make their frequent vacations in Italy easier, wrote she had known the city more deeply.

The people who took part in "Nizioletti che parlano" declared they had enjoyed: the opportunity of using the acquired knowledge in the daily life (written by the German woman who was living permanently in Italy), the fact that the lesson had been absorbing, that they had learned something typical of Venice and the using of meaningful material.

Two of the young Japanese students who took part in "Trovare casa a Venezia" enjoyed the usage of technology and the other was content of having learned the abbreviations. The Dutch woman over 60, who hadn't enjoyed the lesson, wrote she liked anyway the fact that the lesson hadn't been detached from reality; a German woman described the lesson as "absorbing"; and another learner from Germany liked the authentic material. A man from the US appreciated the fact that the students had brought their personal contribution to the lesson and a Russian liked that the lesson had been "less theoretical". Lastly, a learner who was studying Italian in order to make it easier travel in Italy, was satisfied of having learned how to find a cheap accommodation in Venice.

Among "Un negozio bizzarro" participants, two students wrote they could remember better what they had learned. A Japanese and a Dutch between 30 and 39 years appreciated the using of pocket technologies. A Dutch woman liked the fact that the students brought their contribution to the lesson and a Canadian man declared he had liked taking pictures. A woman who was learning Italian because she used to spend her holidays in Italy declared she had learnt something really useful and a student who was living permanently in Italy was pleased of having learned something she could use in her daily life.

The answers of the class where I experimented "Arte di strada" are the following. The Italian teen who hadn't taken pictures enjoyed anyway that I hadn't made use of traditional didactic material and a Spanish girl wrote she had liked the using of authentic material. Two young students, instead, appreciated the using of technology. The French learner who was living permanently in Italy expressed her satisfaction for having learnt something useful in the daily life. A German woman

was pleased the students had been asked to participate more actively; a Swiss woman had “lots of fun” taking pictures; a young Spanish student was content of having learned some words in youth slang.

Four of the people who took part in “Che si fa sabato?” (including the student who was living permanently in Italy) were happy of having learnt what was going on in Venice. The teen, who hadn’t taken pictures and who hadn’t liked the lesson, appreciated anyway the using of technology. Another student who had’t liked the class, wrote she regarded as positive the fact that the students had been supposed not to be passive. Two other students enjoyed the usage of authentic and meaningful material.

In general, the students wrote they had appreciated aspects of the lesson/activity related to its originality, to the using of technology, to the fact they had been asked to participate actively in organizing it, to the content of the material, to the fact that the material was authentic, but, most of all, to the tight connection between what they had learnt in class and the reality that surrounded them.

Table 33. Students who appreciated the connection between what they had learnt and the reality around them

Appreciation	N° 8	N° 10	N° 11	N° 15	N° 16	N° 18	N° 21	N° 23	TOTAL
Students	3	2	4	3	1	1	4	1	19

In particular, all the learners who were living permanently in Italy appreciated this aspect.

Table 34. Answers to item 4 of the students who were living permanently in Italy

Appreciation	N° 11	N° 15	N° 21	TOTAL
Students	3	1	1	5

Eleven students appreciate the using of technology. All of them were under 40: five of them were teenagers, four were from 20 to 29 years and two from 30 to 39.

Table 35. Age of the students who appreciated the using of technology

Less than 20	20-29	30-39	TOTAL
5	4	2	11

So, proposing to collect material for the lesson by pocket technologies, seems to be more appropriate when you face young students.

### 3.3.5. Item 5

Item 5, on the contrary, allowed me to know which aspects of my didactic proposal hadn't been appreciated:

5. The aspects that I didn't like of the teacher using students' picture in the lesson had been \_\_\_\_\_

By key words analysis, I found out twenty aspects of the innovation that the learners didn't appreciate:

- 1) take pictures (1 student)
- 2) too difficult words (5 students)
- 3) technology (4 students)
- 4) wasting of time (1 student)
- 5) boring (1 student)
- 6) useless (1 student)
- 7) Venetian particularity (1 student)
- 8) no indications (4 students)
- 9) dialectal words (3 students)
- 10) everything (2 students)
- 11) monotonous (3 students)
- 12) no free subject (3 students)
- 13) no given subject (5 students)
- 14) low level of participation (8 students)
- 15) no pictures of things (4 students)
- 16) I prefer listening activities (2 students)
- 17) childish (2 students)
- 18) out of class time (4 students)
- 19) unclear instructions (2 students)
- 20) pictures subject (5 students)

Afternoon activity participants' answers are the following. The three students who hadn't enjoyed the lesson complained the lexicon was too difficult. The Russian woman who hadn't taken pictures wrote she didn't like most of all the fact that she was supposed to use technology. The student from Norway, who was studying Italian because of his job, and one of the Japanese student, didn't appreciate the fact that lot of the words that appeared in the pictures were in venetian dialect. The third Japanese, expressed his feeling of confusion in front of the lack of a given subject for the pictures.

All the Austrian students expressed their dislike for different aspects of the activity. Five of them (including the two students who had taken pictures) complained for the low level of participation and two of them for the lack of a given subject. Two other students thought the activity had been monotonous and one it had been boring. A girl disliked having had to take pictures a boy that I had given them a task to accomplish out of class time. A girl declared she hadn't appreciated anything of the activity and another one that she preferred listening activities.

Two members of the level 2 class where I implemented the day-by-day activity complained the lexicon had been too difficult. The learner from the US who hadn't taken pictures didn't like the fact of having had "to do something out of class time". The Portuguese man was bothered by the fact that he hadn't been allowed to taking pictures of things and the Portuguese girl by the lack of a given subject.

In the level 4 class where I proposed the day-by-day activity, three students wrote they had minded the pictures of dialectal words, the lack of a precise subject and the fact that it wasn't allowed to take pictures of objects.

Noone the people who took part in the didactic unit "Nizioletti che parlano" completed item 4 but a German student, who was learning Italian because of her job and who didn't like the fact that the lesson had been only about Venetian peculiarities.

Two of "Trovare casa a Venezia" students, who were learning Italian because of their job, didn't appreciate pictures' subject. Two other learners complained they hadn't been allowed to bring pictures of whatever they wanted. The Chinese learner who hadn't taken pictures wrote the instructions I had given hadn't been clear. The two students over 60 who hadn't liked the lesson complained for the lack of indications and for having to use technology. Two other students didn't like that I had given them homework and that I hadn't allowed them to take pictures of things. A German woman, eventually, wrote she would have preferred to do a listening activity.

Two of the learners who participated in "Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia" and who were learning Italian because of the job and the study didn't liked the subject of the pictures. The teen who had disliked the lesson declared she had disliked every aspect of it; and the other student who didn't liked the didactic unit had perceived it as "childish". A Dutch learner had found the lesson monotonous and the Japanese who was attending the course because of his job was bothered by the fact that the pictures subject hadn't been a learners' choice.

Table 80 shows "Arte di strada" participants' answers. Two of them complained for the fact that I hadn't given them indications about where to find graffiti that could be suitable for the lesson. For the Italian teen who hadn't taken pictures the lesson had been "quite useless" and a Swiss woman hadn't liked the pictures subject.

Three of the students to whom I proposed "Che si fa sabato?" complained for the low level of students' participation. Two of the three students who hadn't liked

the lesson hadn't been happy about having homework (the teenager) and having to use technology (the learner over 60). The other one perceived the activity as childish. The other student over 60 hadn't liked the fact he had been supposed to use technology. A Russian who hadn't taken pictures complained he hadn't received indications about where to find event posters; and the Japanese student, who hadn't taken pictures either, wrote my instructions hadn't been clear enough. Eight students of the Austrian class and the level 3 class where I implemented "Che si fa sabato" complained for the low level of students' participation. In general, what the students disliked most had been the low level of participation: eight students among the Austrian class and the level 3 class of "Che si fa sabato?" complained about it. This is another demonstration of the importance to guarantee participation.

Five people from level 1 and level 2, who participated in the afternoon and the day-by-day activity, shared the opinion that the lexicon we saw was too difficult for them. In particular, all the level 1 and level 2 students who took part in the Afternoon activity and who completed item 5, declared the words we had seen in class were too difficult.

Table 36. Answers to item 5 of level 1 and level 2 students who took part in the Afternoon activity

Answer	N° 2	TOTAL
Learners	3	3
Percentage	100%	100%

Table 37. Answers to item 5 of level 2 students who took part in the Day-by-day activity

Answer	N° 2	Other answers	TOTAL
Learners	2	3	5
Percentage	40%	60%	100%

That didn't happened in the level 1 and level 2 classes to which I propose the didactic units. No one among the level 1 students who took part in "Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia" and the level 2 learners who participated in "Trovare casa a Venezia" complained about the complexity of the words we had dealt with.

Table 38. "Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia" participants' answers to item 5

Answer	N° 2	Other answers	TOTAL
Learners	0	6	6
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

Table 39. “Trovare casa a Venezia” participants’ answers to item 5

Answer	N° 2	Other answers	TOTAL
Learners	0	6	6
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

That’s why, in low level classes, it’s better to assign the students a given subject for their pictures. Only in this way, in fact, it’s possible to guarantee that a great deal of the lexicon they will bring into the class, will fit their linguistic competence.

Four people declared the fact they had been required to use technology had bothered them. They were all among the six learners over 60.

Table 40. Over 60 students’ answers to item 5

Answer	N° 3	Other answers	TOTAL
Learners	4	2	6
Percentage	<67%	>33%	100%

### 3.3.6. Item 7

The purpose of item 7 was that of getting some insights in the learners’ feelings about the fact that they had to collect photographic material for the course:

7. The fact that I had to take pictures for the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

By key words analysis, I found out 18 words with which the students expressed their feeling in the first space (The fact that I had to take pictures for the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_) and I divided them into positive (from n° 1 to n° 7) and negative (from n° 8 to n° 18) feelings. Then I found 23 key words of the motivations the students gave in the second space (because \_\_\_\_\_) and I divided them into positive (from n° 1 to n° 10), both positive and negative (n° 11), and negative (from n° 12 to n° 22) motivations.



First space:

- 1) excited (7 students)
- 2) happy (5 students)
- 3) involved (8 students)
- 4) curious (5 students)
- 5) interested (6 students)
- 6) enthusiastic (4 students)
- 7) inspired (6 students)
  
- 8) unhappy (3 students)
- 9) sad (1 student)
- 10) disoriented (6 students)
- 11) upset (2 students)
- 12) afraid (2 students)
- 13) bored (3 students)
- 14) treated like a child (2 students)
- 15) sceptic (5 students)
- 16) doubtful (1 students)
- 17) annoyed (2 students)
- 18) concerned (5 students)

Second space:

- 1) something new (4 students)
- 2) good idea (4 students)
- 3) to take pictures (4 students)
- 4) interesting (3 students)
- 5) active role (4 students)
- 6) knowing the city (3 students)
- 7) interested in the pictures subject (2 students)
- 8) Venetian dialect (2 students)
- 9) Venetian typicalities (2 students)
- 10) learn something useful (9 students)
  
- 11) feel responsible (4 students)
  
- 12) not interested in the pictures subject (3 students)
- 13) lazy (1 students)
- 14) waste of time (4 students)
- 15) technology (4 students)
- 16) prefer doing things I like more (1 student)
- 17) no time (1 student)
- 18) suitable kinds of picture (4 students)

- 19) I didn't know where to find the pictures subjects (4 students)
- 20) don't like homework (5 students)
- 21) learn grammar (1 student)
- 22) other homework (3 students)

Seven of the afternoon activity participants wrote they experienced positive sensations as I asked them to take pictures for the activity. Two felt enthusiastic about the opportunity they had of learning some Venetian dialect. Two other students (including the Japanese boy who didn't like the activity) felt excited, the French because the experience was new for him and the Japanese because he thought it was a good idea. The Japanese student from level 2 felt curious because she could learn something useful and the Canadian who didn't like the activity at the beginning was interested in it because he liked the idea of playing a more active role in the lesson. The third Japanese student, instead, felt inspired because she likes taking pictures.

On the contrary, three of the students went through negative impressions. Two of them (including the student over 60 who didn't take pictures) felt disoriented; the over 60 student because she didn't like to use technology, and the other learner because she didn't know which kinds of picture would have been suitable for the activity. Lastly, the Finnish student who didn't enjoyed the activity declared she was sceptic and she believed the activity to be a waste of time.

For what concerns the Austrian students, ten of them reported they had experienced bad feelings. Two teenagers felt disoriented because they didn't know where to find suitable subjects to photograph. Two other learners felt unhappy, one because she "felt lazy" and the other because she didn't like homework. Two other students felt bored, one because she didn't like homework either, and the other because she considered the activity a waste of time. The boy who didn't take pictures felt annoyed because he disliked homework; a girl felt sad because she would have preferred to do something more enjoyable; and another was sceptic because she abhorred homework.

Only the two students who took pictures reported to have experienced positive feelings. One felt interested because the activity looked like an interesting one, and the other felt involved because he had the believed it would have been an opportunity to learn something useful.

In the level 2 class where I implemented the day-by-day activity, four people didn't have positive sensations as they knew what they had to do. Two of them was concerned, the one who didn't take pictures because she wasn't sure of the subjects she had to photograph, the other because she felt responsible for the success of the activity. The Japanese girl felt disoriented because she wasn't sure of the subjects she had to photograph, either; and a Portuguese man was sceptic because didn't know which type of pictures he had to take.

Only three went through positive feelings. The learner from Argentina felt happy of doing something new; the Dutch girl felt involved and responsible for the

success of the activity; and the French over 60 was excited about the thought he would have learned lots of things typical of Venice.

All the level 4 students to whom I proposed the day-by-day activity experienced good feelings. Two of them were interested because they thought they would have learned something useful. The Austrian girl felt involved and felt responsible for the outcome of the activity; the Polish woman was inspired by the fact that the activity appeared to be interesting; and the man from the USA was excited about playing an active role in the course.

All the students who took part in “Nizioletti che parlano” experienced positive sensations too. Two of them were happy, one of having the opportunity of knowing the city better and the other because she was interested in the pictures subject. The German woman was enthusiastic about learning something useful and the Polish man felt involved because he was supposed to play an active role in the material collection.

Seven of “Tovare casa a Venezia” participants had good sensations. Two learners felt involved, one because of the active role she had been asked to play, and the other because she felt responsible for the outcome of the lesson. The Japanese girl was excited because, in her opinion, using students’ pictures in the lesson was a good idea. The German man was happy of having an opportunity for knowing Venice more deeply. The woman from the US was interested because she knew she would have learned something useful. One of the Japanese students who likes photography felt inspired and a German woman was curious about learning something useful.

Two students felt concerned, the over 60 about where to find announcements, and the Japanese because he had other homework to do. The other learner over 60, instead, was afraid because she didn’t know neither how to send her pictures by e-mail nor how to store them in a pen drive. Lastly, the Russian man was sceptic because he wasn’t interested in the pictures subject.

Among “Un negozio bizzarro participants”, six people wrote their sensations had been positive. The German was curious of learning useful vocabulary; the Dutch woman was happy and considered my idea to be a good one; the Japanese was excited about doing a new activity; and the American was interested in learning useful expressions. Moreover, a Dutch man whose hobby was photography felt inspired; and the Canadian was enthusiastic about having the occasion of knowing Venice better.

Nevertheless, a man felt bored because he wasn’t interested in shops; the teenager felt annoyed because she already had lots of homework; the Dutch man felt treated like a child and believed the task to be a complete waste of time; and the Chinese was doubtful because she wasn’t interested in shop signs.

Five of the people to whom I proposed “Arte di strada” experienced positive feelings. Two students felt involved, one of them because it was interesting in the pictures subject. The Brazilian guy was excited because the innovation I proposed them was interesting; the French woman felt inspired because she loves to take

pictures; and the Swiss woman was curious because the use of students' pictures in the language course was something new for her.

On the contrary, the teen who didn't take pictures felt upset because she had already lots of homework; and the Spanish learner was concerned about where she could find some graffiti.

All the five students who took part in "Che si fa sabato?" and had bad sensations didn't take pictures. The teenager felt unhappy because she had no time to take them, the German over 60 was afraid of having to use technology, the Canadian man felt treated like a child and believed the activity to be useless, the Brazilian over 60 was upset because he doesn't like to use technology and the French man was sceptic because he doesn't like homework.

In the main, having to take pictures, inspired in 41 students positive sensations, while 32 experienced negative feelings.

Table 41. Students' answers to the first part of item 7

Feelings	Positive (from n° 1 to n° 7)	Negative (from n° 8 to n° 18)	TOTAL
Learners	41	32	73
Percentage	>56%	<44%	100%

Among the students who didn't take pictures, those who completed item 7 declared they had experienced negative feelings while I told them what they were supposed to do. These negative feeling have probably influenced the students' decision not to accomplish the task.

Table 42. Answers to the first part of item 7 of the people who didn't take pictures

Feelings	Positive (from n° 1 to n° 7)	Negative (from n° 8 to n° 18)	TOTAL
Learners	0	18	18
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

So, when the teacher demands the students to take pictures, he/she should ask their opinion about it. In this way the teacher can contest students' false believes and, when it's possible, can meet students' needs.

All the subjects over 60 but one didn't like having to take pictures. Four out of those five learners, declared they didn't feel comfortable using technologies.

Table 43. Answers to the first part of item 7 of the learners over 60

Feelings	Positive (from n° 1 to n° 7)	Negative (from n° 8 to n° 18)	TOTAL
Learners	1	5	6
Percentage	<17%	>83%	100%

Table 44. Answers to the second part of item 7 of the learners over 60 who didn't like having to take pictures

Reasons	N° 15	N°19	TOTAL
Learners	4	1	5
Percentage	80%	20%	100%

All the students under 20 who answered but 2, didn't like having to take pictures. Among them, more than a half wrote they didn't have time for extra homework (17), they didn't like homework (20) or they had already other homework to do (22).

Table 45. Teenagers' answers to the first part of item 7

Feelings	Positive (from n° 1 to n° 7)	Negative (from n° 8 to n° 18)	TOTAL
Learners	2	13	15
Percentage	>13%	<87%	100%

Table 46. Answers to the second part of item 7 of the teenagers who didn't like having to take pictures

Reasons	N° 17, 20 or 22	Other	TOTAL
Learners	7	6	13
Percentage	<54%	>46%	100%

From what the students who didn't take pictures wrote at item 7, I could get some more hints about the reasons why they didn't taken pictures. For example, five teenagers wrote they didn't like homework and another one wrote she preferred to do something more enjoyable. That could have played a role either in their decision of not to participated or in their "forgetfulness".

### 3.3.7. Item 8

Eventually, thanks to item 8, I was able to gain some understanding of the learners' sensations about the fact that the material they collected were used in the lesson:

8. The fact that my pictures were used in the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_

Obviously, the 24 students who hadn't taken pictures didn't answer to item 8.

By key words analysis, I found out 10 words with which the students described their feelings in the first space (The fact that my pictures were used in the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_) and I divided them into positive (from n° 1 to n° 5) and negative (from n° 6 to n° 11) feelings. Then I found 12 types of motivations the students gave in the second space (because \_\_\_\_\_) and I divided them into positive (from n° 1 to n° 7) and negative (from n° 8 to n° 14).

First space:

- 1) proud (6 students)
- 2) happy (12 students)
- 3) pleased (8 students)
- 4) involved (11 students)
- 5) excited (3 students)
  
- 6) embarrassed (3 students)
- 7) bored (1 student)
- 8) stupid (1 student)
- 9) childish (1 student)
- 10) disoriented (2 students)
- 11) indifferent (3 students)

Second space:

- 1) active role (5 students)
- 2) remembered better (4 students)
- 3) learnt something useful (6 students)
- 4) knowledge usable in everyday life (2 students)
- 5) interested in (6 students)
- 6) meaningful learning (5 students)
- 7) give opportunity to classmates (5 students)
  
- 8) useless activity (1 student)
- 9) didn't get the explanation (2 students)
- 10) already knew (1 student)
- 11) no interested in the subject (2 students)
- 12) noone interested (2 students)
- 13) dull activity (1 student)
- 14) no sure of having taken a suitable picture (2 students)

Among the afternoon activity, two students were happy, one of them because she could use also out of the class what she was learning. The Japanese boy, who didn't like the activity, was proud of having played a more active role in the lesson; the man from Norway was pleased of learning useful for him; and a French woman felt involved because she was leaning something she was "really interested in". Another French woman, instead, showed a lack of interest because she already knew the meaning of the writings she had photographed. A student from level 1 and another from level 2, who both didn't like the activity, felt embarrassed and disoriented because they didn't get the meaning of the writing.

The two Austrian teenagers who took pictures felt stupid and embarrassed because no one among their classmates seemed interested in their pictures.

All the level 2 students who participated in the day-by-day activity experienced good feelings about me using their pictures for the activity. Two students felt involved, one because he was learning something useful for him and the other because he was learning something "meaningful". Two other learners felt happy, the over 60 one because he was learning something he was interested in. The Portuguese girl felt pleased and the Japanese girl felt proud of showing to the other students something they didn't know.

Also the level 4 learners to whom I proposed the day by day activity had positive feelings. Two of them felt involved because they were learning useful words and expressions. Another one felt proud of bringing her contribution to the lesson and the fourth one who completed item 8 was happy to show something new to the others.

Among "Nizioleti che parlano" students, one felt happy because she thought she could use in her daily life what she was learning; another felt excited; a third was pleased because she contributed to the lesson success; and the last one felt involved by the fact that she was learning something "really meaningful".

Only one student who took part in "Trovare casa a Venezia" experienced something negative as I projected his picture: the man over 60, who didn't like the lesson and who felt embarrassed because he wasn't sure he had taken a picture suitable for the lesson.

Three learners felt involved. One because she was learning "interesting words", the second because she was learning something meaningful, and the third because she was bringing her contribution to the lesson. Two other people were happy; one because he thought he would have remembered the lexicon better, and the other because the expressions she was learning were something meaningful to her. The German man was proud of having helped the other students to learn some Italian; and a Japanese guy was pleased because he would have easily remember the writings in his pictures.

For what concerns "Un negozio bizzarro" participants, everyone but three students experienced good perceptions. Two learners felt pleased; one of them because, in his opinion, he would have better remembered the lexicon he would learn. Two other people were happy; one of learning something useful and the other because of the relationship between what she was learning and her daily life.

The Japanese woman was excited; the Dutch woman was proud of giving to the others an opportunity for learning; and a Dutch man felt involved. The teenager who didn't like the lesson felt bored because, in her opinion, the activity "was stupid"; the Dutch man, who didn't like the activity either, felt childish because he judged the activity as "useless"; and the Chinese student was indifferent because she wasn't interested in shops.

The people who took part in "Arte di strada" experienced different emotions as I used their pictures. The Brazilian boy was excited because he was interested in learning some youth slang; a Spanish girl felt involved because she learned something meaningful to her; the German man was happy because he believed in this way he would have remember the lexicon better; and the other Spanish girl was pleased of actively collaborating o the lesson.

Nevertheless, a French girl felt disoriented because she wasn't sure of having taken a suitable picture, and the Swiss woman was indifferent because she wasn't interested in the picture subject.

The "Che si fa sabato?" participants' feelings have been different. The French woman was happy of learning something useful; the Croatian woman was proud of having given her classmates the opportunity of learning what was going on in Venice; and the Russian man was pleased of learning something he was interested in.

In the large, when I used their pictures during the lesson/activity, 40 people had positive perceptions and 11 students had negative ones.

Table 47. Students' answers to item 8

Feelings	Positive (from n°1 to n°5)	Negative (from n°6 to n°11)	TOTAL
Learners	40	11	51
Percentage	>74%	<22%	100%

Five of the seven students who didn't enjoy the activity/lesson wrote they experienced negative emotions.

Table 48. Answers to item 8 of the students who didn't like the activity/lesson

Feelings	Positive (from n°1 to n°5)	Negative (from n°6 to n°11)	TOTAL
Learners	2	5	7
Percentage	<29%	>71%	100%

The sensations of all the three teens who took pictures had been bad.



Table 49. Answers to item 8 of the students under 20

Feelings	Positive (from n°1 to n°5)	Negative (from n°6 to n°11)	TOTAL
Learners	0	3	3
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

For what concern the Austrian teens results, the two students who took pictures felt bad because no one among their classmates seemed interested in their pictures.

I think that, if the class participation had been higher, also the level of interest would have raised, and the students who had taken pictures wouldn't have felt bad as I used them as didactic material.

Also in "Che si fa sabato?" the level of participation had been very low; but the students who took pictures underwent positive sensations as I used them.

Table 50. "Che si fa sabato?" partecipats' answers to item 8

Feelings	Positive (from n°1 to n°5)	Negative (from n°6 to n°11)	TOTAL
Learners	3	0	3
Percentage	100%	0%	100%

I suggest that's also because, having to perform some tasks using the pictures, the students must to be interested in them. Another reason is that I added to students' pictures some others taken by me, so that they perceived the participation level hadn't been high (as shown by their answers to item 5 and 9) but they thought it had been higher than how it actually was.

### 3.4. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, making the adult and teenage students of the school to collect textual materials around the city using the pocket technologies they already have and using those materials in class is possible and worthy, and most of the learners appreciate it.

However, only the didactic units should be proposed with students from all the 5 levels. In the afternoon activity, in fact, the low levels students could find the lexicon too difficult. For the same reason, it's better to implement the Day-by-day activity only in intermediate and advanced classes.

Teenage and senior students' participation wasn't satisfying. This constitutes a

big problem, because one of my experimentation ends was that of teaching the students how to look for and to learn from the “authentic material” there’s around the city, in order to become more autonomous. Moreover, a low level of participation seems to affect in a bad way the feelings of the whole class.

I therefore suggest using the last twenty minutes of the previous class to send the learners out in the street to take the pictures that will be used the following lesson. In this the only way to avoid giving unwanted extra work and to be sure the students will complete the assignment.

This would be a good solution also to the fact that many learners over 60 years didn't feel comfortable with pocket technologies: the teacher can divide the class in couples, taking care to match older students with someone more accustomed to this kind of technology, who will take the pictures and send them to the teacher.

If that’s not possible, the teacher should have taken some pictures to add to students’ ones, so that they won’t perceive the participation level as too low.

Moreover, the 44% experienced negative feelings when I asked them to take pictures for the lesson, and this affected the participation of some of them. In order to avoid it, the teacher shouldn’t only explain to them the benefits of what they're asked to do, he should also encourage them to express their criticisms, so that he can challenge their opinions, often based on previous learning experiences and outdated teaching approaches. The teacher should also meet students’ needs when it’s possible.

However, I think it’s better not to ask the students to take pictures if in class there’s a high percentage of over 60 students. In this case the teacher can use pictures taken by himself/herself, so that to guarantee at least a strong connection between what the students learn in class and the reality out of it.

### 3.5. FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

My end is that of guarantying a tighter and tighter connection between the didactic materials and the reality the students find out of the class.

I’m going to create a database with the pictures of writings that the students took walking around the city. In order to do that I’m going to implement the day-by-day activity and the didactic units with other classes, and I’m going to devise and experiment new didactic units.

Moreover, I intend to broaden my experimentation allowing the students to take pictures of objects, buildings, memorials and whatever they find interesting. So that they will get access not only to Italian language, but also to Italian and Venetian culture.

Given the very good results obtained with the students who were living permanently in Italy, experimenting my idea with migrant students would be interesting and worthy. This kind of learner are going to live and work in Italy

and, in order to learn life rules in the community, need to know the different codes of the target culture: the linguistic one, the behavioural one, the social one, the socio-cultural one, etc. They need to understand and be understood in the workplace, offices, shops, etc. Moreover, they need not to feel strangers. That's why it would be worthy making use of material that is not only authentic but that comes from the community of which the migrants need to feel part.

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## APPENDIX I – THE SCHOOL

The school where I made my experimentation is an Italian language school recognized by Italian Ministry of Education and member of ASILS – Italian as Second Language Schools Association and Tandem International - International Network of Quality Language Institutes.

The courses are attended by people from all over the world. The composition of the class is very diverse and they never have a concentration of students from a single Country. This promotes the use of Italian for communication outside of the classroom, in everyday communicative situations and during social and cultural activities in the afternoon.

Since the courses are pretty expensive, the students are mainly wealthy adults who study Italian at the University, for their job or just for pleasure.

The classes are always in Italian in this way student's progress will be fast and durable. The teachers follow a communicative approach that promotes the active participation of students and has as its principal objective the communication, both oral and written. They use authentic materials in the classroom because they are examples of real communication and introduce the students to Italian culture and society.

In order to discover the language together with the students and to practice it, they alternate:

- listening to strengthen oral comprehension
- activities of speaking and writing
- readings to improve reading comprehension
- activities in pairs and in groups
- grammar
- exercises on vocabulary
- educational games to make learning funny
- vision of video sequences to learn more about Italian reality

During the course of the major communicative skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing - are developed at all levels in a gradual and balanced way. Each week teachers adapt and integrate the program to meet student's needs and interests.

The language courses are for any tastes:

- The Intensive Course lasts four hours a day, from Monday to Friday and it's divided between two teachers. A complete course lasts 4 weeks - 80 hours. For this reason it is advisable to get to school on the first day of the course at 8:30. Beginners can only start from the first Monday of every month course (the table in the dates and prices highlights the first week). Groups are limited to 12 students.
- Low Budget Intensive Courses are intensive courses that take place in the afternoon from 16:30 to 20:30. They are ideal for those who want the day to visit museums and churches and enjoy the sea and the beach. They take place from April to October, from Monday to Friday, 4 hours per day and they're divided between two teachers. The groups are composed of a maximum of 12 students divided into three levels: beginner, intermediate, medium - advanced and advanced. Training materials and participation in cultural activities in the afternoon are included.
- Superintensive Courses consist of a combination between the Intensive and 1 or 2 hours of individual lesson in the afternoon. The combination is designed for the student who wants to make the most of the language course. The alternation between group work and individual work allows the students to intensify the learning of Italian by constantly adapting to their needs.
- Students can decide to start an Individual Course at any time of the year. The time, duration and number of hours are decided according to their requests. The program of the course suits student's needs and interests. The minimum enrollment for this course is at least 5 hours. Each lesson lasts 60 minutes. It is ideal for those who can not attend during the hours of group lessons for those who are not free everyday or wants to do a crash course of a few days, for those who are not suited to the dynamics of the group or wants to delve into certain aspects of the language for reasons of work or study.
- Semi-individual Courses are for mini-groups of two, three or four students of the same level.
- Weekend courses are intended for those who want to take advantage of the weekend to make rapid progress with the study. Lessons can be individual, semi-individual or in a small group of students of the same level. The course can be at school, at student's or outside, in order not to miss the beauty of the city.

There are also Italian courses via Skype, cooking courses and art courses.

Each of the Italian language courses is available at all levels, from beginner to advanced. At the beginning of the course, students make a simple written test and an oral interview that allow them to be included in the appropriate level. The organization and contents of the levels are based on CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages):

- Level 1 (European framework A1) courses are intended for those who do not know Italian. At the end of the course students are able to interact more frequently in communicative situations of everyday life using basic vocabulary and grammatical structures.
- Level 2 (European framework A2) courses are for those who already have a basic knowledge of Italian. They provide for a resumption of basic grammatical structures and the gradual expansion of communication skills.
- During Level 3 (European Framework B1) courses the students complete the study of grammatical structures and strengthen the skills of understanding, speaking and writing.
- The Level 4 (European Framework B2) courses enable students to achieve a good command of the language, deepening the more complex grammatical structures, enriching vocabulary and improving fluency.
- Level 5 (European Framework C1) is an advanced course and can be repeated by students who wish to improve all aspects of Italian language.

In the following pages I report the syllabus of the five levels of the morning courses offered by the school.

## LEVEL 1 (A1)

### **Morpho-syntactic and lexical competences:**

#### *First week*

Introductions, greetings, and routine expressions (informal/informal), useful phrases for the class,

Adjectives of nationality and recognition of other adjectives

Verbs *essere* and *avere* (usage and present simple conjugation)

Basic nouns (masculine/feminine, singular/plural)

First approach to the definite and indefinite articles

Numbers, days, hours

#### *C'è/ci sono*

Basic verbs (1st and 2nd person) and irregular ones (*vado, faccio, bevo, devo, posso, voglio ...*)

Vocabulary: School and learning of the language

#### *Second week*

Habitual actions (the typical day)

Regular verbs (simple present conjugation)

Irregular verbs (*esco, arrivo, sto, rimango...* 1st, 2nd and 3rd person)

First approach to reflexive verbs

Adverbs of frequency

Revision of *c'è/ci sono*

Usage of *vorrei*

First approach to the imperative form

Interrogative forms

Hours (some articulated prepositions)

Vocabulary: everyday objects (work and leisure), the city (shops, transports, places)

#### *Third week*

Systematization of the simple present conjugation of frequently used regular verbs

Modal verbs

Introduction to *passato prossimo* (*ho fatto, sono andato/a...*)

Possessive adjectives and pronouns

Usage of *piacere*

Vocabulary: the family, the house (my room, the rooms), physical description

#### *Fourth week*

Strengthening of the *passato prossimo*

Irregular participles

General revision of the structures met

Vocabulary: clothes (colors)

In the course of the month you have to work on the following situations:

at the bar - enrollment at the administrative office of the institute - at a party -  
food shopping - street directions - tourist information - hotel - shopping in stores -  
finding out about exhibitions - at the ticket office

The students had to meet also prepositions, articles and conjunctions (*e, ma, o, mentre, quando, perchè*)

### **Socio-pragmatic competences:**

During the course the students will meet the following communicative functions:

Introducing themselves and talking about themselves

Talking about oneself habits

To ask for and giving information

Offering something, inviting someone, accept, reject

Interacting effectively in the following situations: in class, at the bar, at the station, in the shops, in a language school , in the hotel

To talk about the family

Describing people and objects

To report events that occurred in the past

To ask for explanations about words and language issues

Expressing preferences

Expressing agreement and disagreement

### **Textual competences:**

#### *Listening comprehension*

Face-to-face dialogues (semi-authentic or authentic)

Messages (answering machine, radio)

Video sequences (movies, television)

Advertising

Songs

#### *Reading comprehension*

Times (museums, public transports etc.).

Menù

Reminder

Postcards and informal letters

Diary pages

Simple biographies

Simple announcements

Advertisement  
Comics  
Simple instructions  
Catalogs  
Programs, trips or cultural activities

*Written production*

Fill in forms  
Posts  
Postcards  
Diary pages  
Informal letters

**Lexical competences:**

Vocabulary related to:  
the school and the learning of the language  
objects and activities of daily life  
the city and transports  
space, shape, size, quantity  
the passing of the time

## LEVEL 2 (A2)

### **Morpho-syntactic competences:**

#### *First week*

Brief revision of: introductions, work, family, habitual actions, regular, irregular and modal verbs.

Strengthening of *passato prossimo* (+ *passato prossimo* of reflexive verbs and temporal markers)

*Stare* + gerund

Adverb of place *ci*

Vocabulary: weather and seasons - basic geographical vocabulary

#### *Second week*

*Mi è piaciuto/* did not like

Introduction to *imperfetto*

Vocabulary: the house (expansion of level 1 vocabulary) - physical description and human body - personality, feelings - animals.

Extension: adjectives (synonyms and antonyms)

#### *Third week*

Differences between *passato prossimo* and *imperfetto*

Introduction to direct pronouns and to the partitive *ne*

Informal and formal imperative

Vocabulary: food and cooking - clothes (broadening of level 1 vocabulary)

#### *Fourth week*

Introduction to indirect pronouns

Structure *essere* + infinitive

Future (usages and conjugation)

Recognition of the agreement between the direct pronoun and the participle

Recognition of the impersonal *si*

Vocabulary: *per me* – *secondo me* (to express opinions without using the subjunctive)

In the course of the month the students work on the following situations: at the restaurant – to find accommodation – to make an appointment – arranging an evening with friends

The teacher has to present to the students also prepositions, conjunctions, articles, adjectives, adverbs and useful routines expressions.

### **Socio-pragmatic competences:**

During the course the students will meet the following thematic areas and communicative functions:

- Telling past facts and experiences
- Describing the weather
- To give and take advice and instruction
- Describing people and places
- Making simple phone calls
- Planning a holiday
- To express judgments
- To make predictions and plans for the future
- Asking for permission and consenting
- To apologize
- To offer and to invite
- To accept and to reject
- Expressing opinions (without using the subjunctive)

### **Textual competences:**

#### *Listening comprehension*

- Face-to- face dialogues (semi-authentic and authentic)
- Weather forecasts
- Songs
- Calls
- Video clips (movies, television)
- Advertising
- Recipes

#### *Reading comprehension*

- Informal letters
- Instructions
- Alerts and messages
- Invitations
- Notices
- Fairy tales
- Fiction passages (short and simple)
- Tourism and cultural information
- Horoscope
- Simple newspaper articles

#### *Written production*

- Postcards
- Informal letters



Diary pages  
Summaries  
Fairy tales  
Descriptions  
Invitations

*Speaking*

Face-to-face conversation (socio-linguistic rules, register, pleasantries)

Instructions  
Descriptions  
Tales  
Phone calls

**Lexical competences:**

Expansion of the above-written areas

## LEVEL 3 (B1)

### **Morpho-syntactic competences:**

#### *First week*

Brief revision of: past tense, use of auxiliaries, irregular participles and differences between *passato prossimo* and *imperfetto*

Recognition of *trapassato prossimo*

Revision of reflexive verbs

Agreement between the direct pronoun and the participle

Impersonal *si*

Relative pronouns *che/chi*

#### *Second week*

Introduction to conditional: wishes, giving advices, asking for something in a polite way

Comparatives and superlatives

Indefinite pronouns

#### *Third week*

Introduction to present and past *congiuntivo*: opinions, hopes, doubts, impersonal forms

Resumption of direct and indirect pronouns

Double pronouns

#### *Fourth week*

Informal and formal imperative + pronouns

*Ci* as adverb of place and with other uses: *ci penso, ci credo*

*Ne* as partitive particle and as *complemento di argomento*

During the month the students work on: prepositions, conjunctions, adjectives, adverbs, expressions of useful routines, interjections, synonyms/antonyms and connectives.

### **Socio-pragmatic competences:**

Thematic areas and acts/communicative functions

Telling facts and experiences that happened in the past

To describe people and places

To compare and to contrast

Expressing opinions and judgments

Expressing wishes

Making possible and impossible assumptions  
Expressing feelings and moods  
To give advice and to make recommendations  
To get someone to do something  
Asking for explanations of words and language issues

**Textual competences:**

*Listening comprehension*

Face-to-face dialogues (semi-authentic and authentic)

Songs

Phone calls

Video clips (movies, television)

Advertising

Interviews (radio, television)

*Reading comprehension*

Informal letters

Formal letters (recognition)

Instructions

Regulatory texts

Invitations

Notices

Fairy tales

Fiction passages (short and simple)

Tourism and cultural informations

Simple newspaper articles

Reviews

*Written production*

Attention to the characteristics of different genres and text types and to textual cohesion and coherence strategies.

Informal letters

Diary pages

Summaries

Fairy tales

Descriptions

Invitations

Simple reviews

*Speaking*

Face to face conversation (socio- linguistic rules, register, pleasantries)

Instructions

Descriptions

Stories  
Tales  
Phone calls

**Lexical competences:**

Vocabulary related to the description of people and places, to travels and transports, work, film and television, reading, music and technology.

## LEVEL 4 (B2)

### **Morpho-syntactic competences:**

#### *First week*

Revision and deepening of the past tenses (+ *trapassato*)

Revision double pronouns

Revision simple conditional (introduction to perfect conditional in the main clause)

Relative pronouns

#### *Second week*

Revision of *congiuntivo*. Extension of its uses (with *sebbene, prima che, senza che, malgrado, perchè...*)

*Congiuntivo perfetto e trapassato*

#### *Third week*

Hypothetical period

Passive forms (frequent uses)

#### *Fourth week*

Recognition of *passato remoto*

Most frequent pronominal verbs

Future in the past

Concordance of the tenses and moods

During the month the students will work on: prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions, interjections, connectives, words formation (altered, juxtaposed, composed words and negation prefixes)

### **Lexical competences:**

Vocabulary related to school, work, environment, movies, literature, art and various aspects of society and culture.

For the development of listening skills the teacher will use audio and video materials containing tracks of television news and radio news, film clips, interviews, lectures, documentaries, songs, advertising, phone calls and conversations.

The teacher has to help the students to develop the speaking skills, ensuring in particular the consistency and appropriateness of communication. The following functions have to be implemented: to tell, to inform, to report, to persuade, to protest, to apologize, to make comparisons, to make suggestions and to express opinions.

The reading comprehension skills that the students will develop will allow them to have a comprehensive understanding of newspaper articles, short stories and literary excerpts, reviews, formal letters, announcements of public authorities, biographies, comics, advertisements, instructions and educational texts of scientific or historical subject.

Regarding the written production, it will focus on lexical and stylistic features of different text types and on coherence and cohesion strategies. Students will practice in the writing of narratives and summaries, formal letters, reviews and short essays.

## LEVEL 5 (C1)

This course can be attended by advanced students. It provides for an expansion of linguistic uses and communication contexts.

The course is structured in thematic units that start from authentic texts, always of different types. The proposed texts realize various functions and communicative goals and offer different varieties of Italian. The materials used during the classes will be selected and adapted by the teachers according to the interests and learning needs of each class, so as to make possible the iteration of the course.

In the didactic units, the following points will be investigated:

- tenses and moods agreement
- the complex sentence
- word formation
- reported speech
- gerundio, infinito and participio passato uses
- textual grammar

For the development of *listening* skills, it is provided the use of audio and video materials containing tracks of radio and television news, film clips, interviews, lectures, theater performances. In those texts, in addition to Italian standards, there are regional variations too.

*Oral production* will be developed with particular attention to the morpho-syntactic accuracy, appropriateness, intonation and pronunciation.

As for the *writing*, you will continue the work begun at the previous level paying more attention on the consistency and the lexical accuracy of the texts the students produce. Depending on the students' requests, you will either work on text types related to study or job areas (reports, term papers), or experimenting creative writing.

As for *reading comprehension*, the teachers will bring into class newspaper articles, works of fiction and essay extracts, public authority announcements and poems, of which they will try to give a critical interpretation.

## APPENDIX II – THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Do not write your name on these sheets. Fill it out and give it back to your teacher.

### PERSONAL INFORMATIONS Strike through the answer you choose

Level:            1 2 3 4 5

Sex:             MALE     FEMALE

Country:        \_\_\_\_\_

Age:            less than 20  
                  20-29  
                  30-39  
                  40-49  
                  50-59  
                  60 or more

Education:     no degree        degree        university degree        master

Why do you study Italian?    For my studies  
    For my job  
    For pleasure  
    I live permanently in Italy  
    In order to make easier to travel in Italy  
    In order to enjoy cultural offer in Italian  
    I don't feel comfortable using this kind of technology  
    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you studied Italian before?

YES                    NO

Have you attended an Italian course in this school before?

YES                    NO

Have you already taken part in a lesson where pictures taken by the students were used?

YES                    NO



The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the value of using student's pictures in Italian lessons, not to assess the performance of you or your teacher. This is not a test. There are no right and wrong answers; I want your own ideas and impressions.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT

1. How did you like the lesson/activity with students' pictures from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much)?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

2. How do you consider the activities with students' pictures

Boring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Interesting
Unenjoyable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Enjoyable
Meaningless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Meaningful
Useless	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Useful
Dull	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Exciting
Unsatisfying	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Satisfying
Unappealing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Appealing
Monotonous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Absorbing

3. Would you like to have more opportunities to take part in classes where students' pictures are used?

Yes                      I don't know                      No

4. The aspects that I liked of the teacher using students' picture in the lesson had been \_\_\_\_\_

5. The aspects that I didn't like of the teacher using students' picture in the lesson had been \_\_\_\_\_

6. Did you take pictures for the lesson? If you didn't, write down the reason.

Yes

No, because

I didn't get what I was supposed to do

I didn't find anything I didn't know

I forgot to

I didn't have time

I thought the activity was useless

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

7. The fact that I had to take pictures for the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

If you didn't take pictures skip point 8 and go directly to point 9.

8. The fact that my pictures were used in the lesson made me feel \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_

9. The lesson with the students' pictures would be more useful if  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. The lesson with the students' pictures would be more enjoyable if  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX III –DIDACTIC MATERIALS

## AFTERNOON ACTIVITY SLIDES EXAMPLES



Le **sarde in saor** si fanno con:

- cipolle, aceto, pinoli e uvetta
- cipolle, aceto, noci e uva passa

## DAY-BY-DAY ACTIVITY SLIDES EXAMPLES

I wrote beside the slides the words the students hadn't understood.

### Level 2 students' pictures slides



cestini

### Level 4 students' pictures slides



suino

### Austrian class students' pictures slides



giurisdizionale

“UN NEGOZIO BIZZARRO A VENEZIA” (LEVEL 1, WEEK 2)

**Morpho-syntactic competences:**

Regular verbs (present tense conjugation)

Irregular verbs (1st, 2nd and 3rd person of present tense conjugation)

Introduction to the reflexive verbs

Revision of c'è / ci sono

Some articulated prepositions

**Socio-pragmatic competences:**

To express agreement and disagreement

**Textual competences:**

*Reading comprehension*

Time

*Oral production*

Very short presentation

**Lexical competences:**

Shops

Globality

*Pre-viewing activity*

Each student tell the class in which kind of shops he has gone to since he arrived in Venice. Then they compare the opening time of shops in Italy and in their countries.

*The teacher projects a Power Point presentation with the student's pictures of the shops in Campo S. Margherita (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” Slides).*

*First viewing activity*

The students write on the map (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” Worksheets) the signs and the opening times of Campo S. Margherita shops.

### *Second viewing activity*

Word picture matching exercise (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” Worksheets) based on the lexicon of the photos.

### *Post-viewing activity*

Correction of the sheet in plenum, following this model:

“In Campo S. Margherita c’è **una macelleria**. **La macelleria** si chiama **Fiore** e apre dal **lunedì** al **mercoledì** dalle **7:30** alle **14**; e dal **giovedì** al **sabato** dalle **7:30** alle **13** e dalle **16** alle **19:30**”

### Analysis

The students write on the map the common name of the shops they can find on the right side.

### In-depth analysis

The teacher divides the students into two teams and then projects the photos taken from the other half of the class (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” Slides). The teams, in turn, have to guess the common name of the shops and the teacher helps them with the names they haven’t seen before.

### Synthesis

The teacher projects a picture of Acqua Alta (see “Un negozio bizzarro a Venezia” Slides), a bizarre Venetian library where the books are scattered everywhere and stuffed into boats of different shapes and colours, into a gondola and even into a bath tub.

The teacher divides the students into groups of three and asks them to pretend to want to open their “negozio bizzarro” in Venice. They have to decide the location, the type of the shop, the products they want to sell or the services they want to offer, the opening times and the prices. They also have to design the shop sign. Subsequently, they present their projects to the rest of the class.

### Morphosyntactic reflection

Each student write a chart with the first, the second and the third person singular of the verbs in the simple present they used in their presentation (ex. *essere, aprire, chiudere, vendere, esserci, offrire, costare...*). Then the teacher checks the charts in plenum.



“UN NEGOZIO BIZZARRO A VENEZIA” SLIDES EXAMPLES

Campo S. Margherita shops

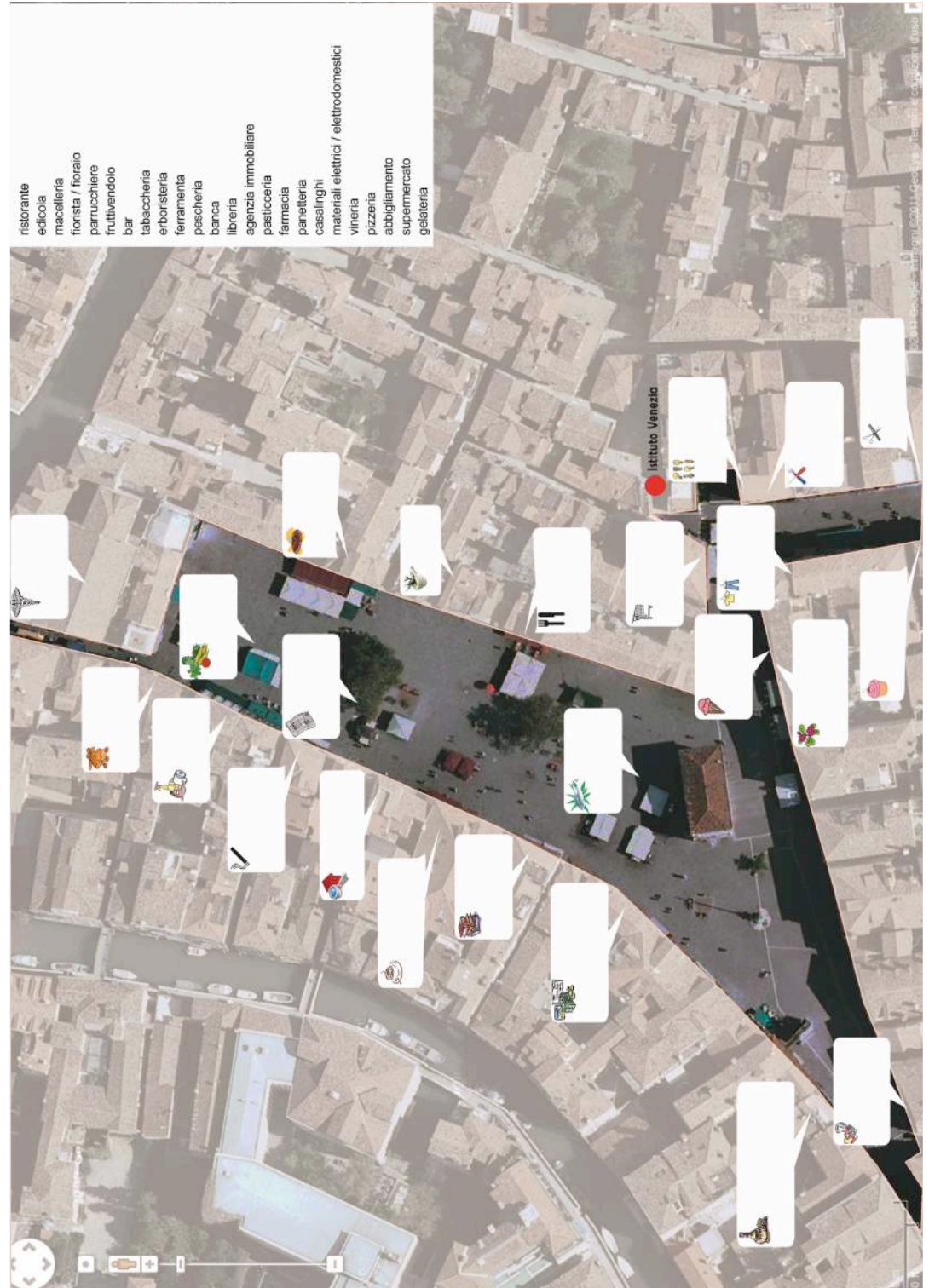


Other shops



# “UN NEGOZIO BIZZARRO A VENEZIA” WORKSHEETS

## Campo S. Margherita shops map



Word picture matching (page 1 of 2)

**Match each word with the correct picture:**

**MELOGRANO**



**DOGE**



**PIATTI**



“TROVARE CASA A VENEZIA” (LEVEL 2, WEEK 2)

**Grammar skills:**

*Mi è piaciuto/non mi è piaciuto*

Adverbs of place

**Communicative situations:**

To find accommodation

Setting an appointment

**Socio-pragmatic competences:**

Describing places

To express judgments

**Textual competences:**

*Oral comprehension*

Face-to-face dialogues

*Written comprehension*

Announcements

*Oral production*

Face-to-face conversation

**Lexical competences:**

The house (expansion of Level 1 vocabulary)

Expressions of location

Globality

*Pre-viewing activity*

Brainstorming session in which students tell the class where are they leaving in Venice, what their home is like and how have they found it. After that, they have to make certain assumptions about what is meant by *singola*, *doppia* and *tripla*.

*The teacher projects a Power Point Presentation with the student's photos of houses, flats and room announcements (see “Trovare casa a Venezia” Slides).*

*First viewing activity*

The students fill in a chart with the different types of dwellings, whether they are

for sale or for rent and their prices (see “Trovare casa a Venezia” Worksheets).

### *Second viewing activity*

They complete a word picture matching exercise based on the lexicon we’ve found in the photos (see “Trovare casa a Venezia” Worksheets).

### *Post-viewing activities*

The students, in teams, have to guess the meaning of the abbreviations *risc. aut.*, *cucina abit.*, *lav.*, *rip.* and *vic.ze.*

Then the teacher projects again the picture of the flat with altana and asks the students if they have ever been on an altana.

### Analysis

The class identify the expressions of location in the photos (ex. *in centro storico*, *zona excelsior*, etc.).

### Synthesis

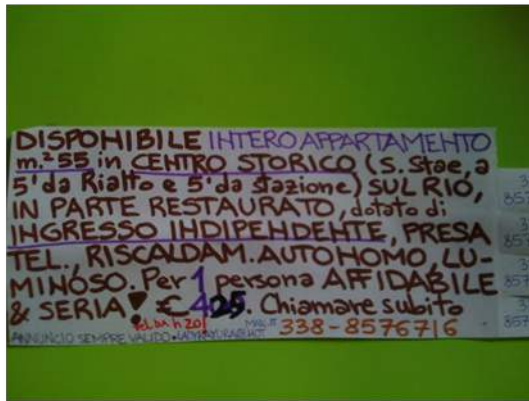
The students form groups of four and choose one of the announcements. They then play a role making in which two students are tenants and the others possible lodgers. They set up an appointment during which the tenant shows the house to the lodger.

Then the potential lodgers told the tenants what they like and what they don’t like of the house/flat/room using the expressions *mi è piaciuto/non mi è piaciuto* they’ve learnt during last lesson. The tenants has to try to close the deal.

### Reflection

The students divide the adverbs of place they’ve found in the photos into three groups. All the adverbs in a group have to share a similar meaning.

“TROVARE CASA A VENEZIA” SLIDES EXAMPLE



“TROVARE CASA A VENEZIA” WORKSHEETS

Chart

TIPO DI ALLOGGIO	VENDITA/AFFITTO	PREZZO

Word picture matching (page 1 of 2)



**TERRAZZA  
ABITABILE**



**BEL  
CONTESTO**



**ANGOLO  
COTTURA**



**SGABUZZINO**





“CHE SI FA SABATO?” (LEVEL 3, WEEK 4)

**Grammar skills:**

Pronouns with informal imperative

**Socio-pragmatic competences:**

To convince someone to do something

**Textual competences:**

*Oral comprehension*

Semi authentic face-to-face dialogues

*Reading comprehension*

Tourism and cultural information

*Oral production*

Face-to-face conversation

**Lexical competences:**

The city and the transports

Globality

*Pre-listening activities*

Brainstorming session in which the students discuss what they do in the evening in their country and what they have done since they have arrived in Venice.

While watching the Power Point presentation of their photos of events posters (see “Che si fa sabato?” Slides), the students complete a chart in which they enter title, type, date, time and place of the different events. Then the teacher answers their lexical questions. Finally the teacher asks them to identify the locations of the events on a map of Venice

*The class listens 3 times to a dialogue between Elisa and Ludovico in which they are discussing what to do at the weekend.*

*Listening Activity*

The students complete a cloze test based on the transcript of the dialogue (see “Che si fa sabato” Worksheets).

### *Post-listening Activity*

The teacher asks the students if, in their opinion, there is irony in the dialogue. They have to make their cases by means of textual evidences.

### Analysis

Then they identify all the imperative verbs and note the position of the pronouns.

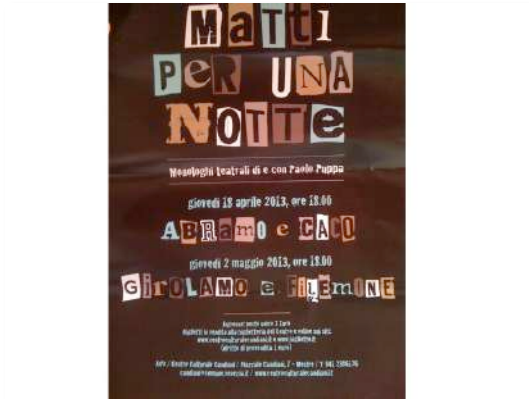
### Synthesis

The students, in groups, perform a role making in which they have to agree on something to do together that weekend. They have to choose between the events of the Power Point presentation. They are told to use the imperative and some expressions (see “Che si fa sabato” Worksheets).

### Reflection

Finally they complete the rules of the position of the pronouns with informal imperative (see “Che si fa sabato” Worksheets).

“CHE SI FA SABATO?” SLIDES EXAMPLE



“CHE SI FA SABATO?” WORKSHEETS

Events chart

TITOLO	TIPO DI EVENTO	DATA	ORA	LUOGO

Cloze test

**Completate il dialogo con le seguenti parole:**

Elisa: Allora, che si fa sabato?  
Ludovico: Io e Giulio volevamo andare a vedere un film al \_\_\_\_\_...  
Unisciti a noi!  
Elisa: Non dirmi che è uno dei vostri soliti \_\_\_\_\_...  
Ludovico: Ahah! Non ti preoccupare: è una \_\_\_\_\_.  
Elisa: E va bene, però il \_\_\_\_\_ stavolta me lo paghi tu!  
Ludovico: Come desidera Sua \_\_\_\_\_! Cerca però di mostrare un minimo di \_\_\_\_\_ e fammi felice: mettiti qualcosa di sexy... Ah, e passa a prendermi per favore, che la mia \_\_\_\_\_ è ancora dal meccanico.  
Elisa: Ahah! Va bene allora se non hi altre richieste sarò lì per le 20:30 con una \_\_\_\_\_ e molto entusiasmo... ma tu fatti trovare con un mazzo di fiori \_\_\_\_\_!

## Role making

**A quale degli eventi che abbiamo visto prenderete parte? Cercate di convincere i vostri compagni a venire con voi. Usate l'imperativo e alcune di queste espressioni:**

*Comprali tu i biglietti!*

*Il ristorante? Prenotalo voi!*

*Marica ha chiesto se qualcuno può andare a prenderla. Vacci tu!*

*Venitemi a prendere, per favore.*

*Troviamoci davanti a teatro!*

*Aspettami al bar all'angolo!*

*Vestiti elegante!*

*Prestami le tue scarpe, per piacere.*

*Portami il rossetto che ho dimenticato da te l'altra volta!*

## Pronouns with informal imperative rules

**Guarda nel dialogo la posizione dei pronomi coi verbi all'imperativo e completa la regola con le parole in corsivo. Scrivi anche un esempio tratto dal testo.**

*unito    davanti    imperativo    infinito*

### LA POSIZIONE DEL PRONOME CON L'IMPERATIVO INFORMALE

Imperativo affermativo

1. il pronome è \_\_\_\_\_ all' \_\_\_\_\_

Esempio \_\_\_\_\_

Imperativo negativo

2a. il pronome è \_\_\_\_\_ all' \_\_\_\_\_

Esempio \_\_\_\_\_

2b. il pronome è unito all'infinito.

Esempio \_\_\_\_\_

“NIZIOLETI CHE PARLANO” (LEVEL 4, WEEK 1)

**Cultural competences:**

Cultural aspects related to Venetian toponymy

**Socio-pragmatic competences:**

To convince

To propose

To express opinions

**Textual competences:**

*Writing production*

Definitions

**Lexical competences:**

Venetian toponymy

Globality

*Pre-viewing activity*

The teacher divides the class into two teams. Then the teacher projects three multiple choice questions on the TV screen. The teams have some minutes to agree on the answers. The group that guesses more answers right is the winner.

*The teacher projects the photos of nizioleti the students have taken (see “Nizioleti che parlano” Slides).*

*Viewing activity*

The students write on a chart all the different terms they see on the nizioleti (see “Nizioleti che parlano” Worksheets). The teacher corrects the exercise in plenum.

*Post-viewing activities*

Then, the teacher shows two Venetian road sign pictures (see “Nizioleti che parlano” Slides) and asks the class if there are some similarities between the road signs and the nizioleti.

### Analysis

The teacher projects the photos again and the students have to write on the chart what they see around the nizioleti (see “Nizioleti che parlano” Worksheets).

### Synthesis

The two teams invent some nizioleti and write them on a picture of a campo the teacher has handed out (see “Nizioleti che parlano” Worksheets). The group that makes less mistakes and invents the most funny names wins.

### Reflection

The students have to match the terms and their definitions choosing between three options (see “Nizioleti che parlano” Worksheets).

Subsequently, each team receives a different list of terms for which it has to write a definition, taking as example the definitions they have seen. After the teacher has verified the accuracy of the definition, the groups read to each other their definitions and try to guess the right term. The terms are the following: rio, corte, fondamenta, sottoportego, campiello e ruga.

“NIZIOLETI CHE PARLANO” SLIDES EXAMPLES

Students' pictures slides



Road signs pictures slides





## “NIZIOLETI CHE PARLANO” WORKSHEETS

### Questions

1. Il nizioleto è...
  - un cartello.
  - un affresco.
2. Dentro un nizioleto sono scritti i nomi di...
  - strade, ponti, piazze, canali ecc.
  - famiglie nobili e personaggi famosi che hanno abitato nei palazzi veneziani.
3. Nei nizioleti, tali nomi sono dipinti dentro...
  - un rettangolo bianco circondato da un riquadro nero.
  - un quadrato giallo circondato da un riquadro blu.

### Chart

TERMINE	AMBIENTE
Rio terà	Strada, case, negozi

Word picture matching

**Scrivi tu i nizioletti rimasti bianchi. Usa molta fantasia e le seguenti parole:**

*calle rio fundamenta campo corte sottoportego*



Word definition matching

**Abbina ogni termine alla definizione corretta:**

*RIO TERÀ*

*CAMPO*

*CALLE*

.....: è una PIAZZA. In passato era ricoperto d'erba e spesso vi pascolavano pecore e cavalli

.....: è una STRADA. Se è stretta può essere chiamata CALLETTA o CALESELA. Mentre se è larga CALLE LARGA.

.....: è un CANALE INTERRATO. In passato era un canale, oggi è una STRADA.

“ARTE DI STRADA” (LEVEL 5, WEEK 3)

**Socio-pragmatic competences:**

- To report
- To express opinions and judgments
- To express agreement and disagreement

**Textual competences:**

*Oral production*

Report

Discussion

*Written comprehension*

Art informative texts

Italian Penal Code

**Lexical competences:**

- Young Italian people slang
- Graffiti slang and technicalities

**Cultural knowledge:**

- Young Italian subculture
- Graffiti art

Globality

*Pre-reading activity*

The students, in pairs, match the words of the pictures they have taken with their synonyms. They choose between the words in *italic* at the top of the sheets (see “Arte di strada” Worksheets).

*Each student read a short text about the graffiti in his country. If there are students from the same country, one of them read a text about Italian graffiti* (see “Arte di strada” Worksheets for an example).

*Reading activity*

The students have to match the street artists’ bold names with their piece of art (see “Arte di strada” Worksheets for an example).

### *Post-reading activity*

After the teacher has answered their questions about words or expressions they don't know, each student has to refer to the rest of the class about the text he has read.

### Analysis

The teacher asks the class to underline, in their texts, the terms they think to be peculiar to the graffiti world.

### Synthesis

The teacher projects the 639° article of the Italian Penal Code (see “Arte di strada” Worksheets) declaring that the writers will be punished. The class uses this as a starting point for a discussion in which part of the class stands for the street artists and the other part opposes them.

### Reflection

The students, in groups, have to make a word definition matching exercise based on the slang terms they've found in the texts (see “Arte di strada” Worksheets). Finally, the teacher asks them to recognize some of the techniques mentioned in the worksheet in their pictures of graffiti.

“ARTE DI STRADA” WORKSHEETS EXAMPLES

Word synonymous matching sheet 2

**Collega le parole che trovi nelle foto con il loro sinonimo.**

*giullare      bastonate      far esplodere      meridionali*

*ingenuo      nulla      stupido      guerriglia*



## Text A

**Leggi e prova a collegare le parole scritte in grassetto con le immagini corrispondenti.**

### **L'ARTE DI STRADA IN ITALIA**

L'Italia è famosa per il bombing dei treni. Questo perché per anni è stato particolarmente facile dipingerli, hanno una lunga vita e le loro tratte di percorrenza coprono tutto il territorio nazionale. Oggi la presenza di custodi costringe i writer a lavorare molto più in fretta di prima e i treni vengono ripuliti più spesso.

La street art italiana ha raggiunto una notorietà europea dai primi anni duemila, con l'emergere di tre scuole riconducibili a Milano, Bologna e Roma.

Milanesi protagonisti di tale movimento, sono il pop artist Bros e il poeta di strada **Ivan Tresoldi**, e Ozmo, **Pao** ed i suoi panettoni a pinguino, l'illustrarocker TvBoy.

Della scuola bolognese sono **Blu**, street artist e video maker ormai di fama mondiale, Ericailcane ed **Eron**, attivo dagli anni novanta tra Rimini e Bologna è stato eletto miglior street artist italiano dalla rivista specializzata AL magazine ed ha esposto le sue opere in vari musei e gallerie nel mondo.

Roma ha la sua importanza per quanto riguarda la tecnica stencil, grazie a **Sten Lex**, attivi dal 2001 e considerati tra i pionieri dello "Stencil Graffiti" in Italia.



## **Art. 639 *Deturpamento e imbrattamento di cose altrui* del codice penale italiano:**

« Chiunque, fuori dei casi preveduti dall'articolo 635, deturpa o imbratta cose mobili altrui è punito, a querela della persona offesa, con la multa fino a euro 103.

Se il fatto è commesso su beni immobili o su mezzi di trasporto pubblici o privati, si applica la pena della reclusione da uno a sei mesi o della multa da 300 a 1.000 euro. Se il fatto è commesso su cose di interesse storico o artistico, si applica la pena della reclusione da tre mesi a un anno e della multa da 1.000 a 3.000 euro.

Nei casi di recidiva per le ipotesi di cui al secondo comma si applica la pena della reclusione da tre mesi a due anni e della multa fino a 10.000 euro.

Nei casi previsti dal secondo comma si procede d'ufficio. »



## Word definition matching

### **Abbina ogni termine alla definizione corretta:**

*Crew*

*Vernice*

*Pezzo*

*Bombolette*

*Bombardare*

*Firma o tag*

*Tappini*

*Graffiti iconografici*

*Tecnica stencil*

*Marker*

*Graffiti jams*

\_\_\_\_\_ : la forma più basilare di graffiti, solitamente è la firma del writer realizzata con spray o marker.

\_\_\_\_\_ : opera, ciò che viene definito erroneamente graffito.

\_\_\_\_\_ : coprire numerose superfici con pezzi semplici e veloci da realizzare.

\_\_\_\_\_ : tecnica che fa uso di una maschera normografica che consente di riprodurre forme, caratteri e simboli, in serie e su qualsiasi tipo di superficie.

\_\_\_\_\_ : pezzi figurativi, che rappresentano un'immagine realistica.

\_\_\_\_\_ : gruppo organizzato di writer, il cui nome è di solito formato da 3 lettere.

\_\_\_\_\_ : recipiente in alluminio di forma cilindrica, munito di un propellente sotto pressione e di una valvola che permettono di proiettare il contenuto nebulizzato all'esterno.

\_\_\_\_\_ : bocchette da cui fuoriesce lo spray, si dividono in spessi e sottili.

\_\_\_\_\_ : manifestazioni legali in cui qualsiasi writer può esprimere il suo talento.

\_\_\_\_\_ : adesivi stampati dal computer che possono contenere solo la firma o il logo del writer o essere più elaborati, con piccoli caratteri e decorazioni.

\_\_\_\_\_ : soluzione a base di resine naturali o sintetiche, che, stesa su una superficie, lascia una patina lucida, protettiva o decorativa.

\_\_\_\_\_ : pennarello indelebile utilizzato per realizzare tag.

\_\_\_\_\_ : foglio illustrato di notevoli dimensioni.

## ABSTRACT

This work describes my action research in teaching Italian to teenage and adult foreigners in a L2 environment by means of pictures of words and textes taken by the students themselves.

My research questions were: 1) Is it possible to set teenage and adult students of a school to collect materials during their daily life in Venice by mean of the technology tools they have in their pockets (i.e. smartphones and cameras) so as to make the Italian language courses they are following more motivating, personalized and so as to help learners to become more autonomous? 2) How can the teacher make a good use of the pictures the students bring into the class from outside by mean of their smartphones and cameras, taking into account the syllabus and the organization of the school? 3) Do the students like teacher's didactic proposals, what do they like and what don't they like?

In order to find answers to these questions I devised a questionnaire that investigated students' participation, feelings and suggestions.

In response to question number 2, I started proposing one hour activity to students from all levels, then I implemented students' suggestions by proposing a day by day activity to three different classes and by creating five didactic units, one for each language level.

Most of the students participated to the project and they liked it. However, most of the subjects under 20 and over 60 didn't like my proposals; the former because they didn't want extra work and the latter because they didn't feel comfortable using pocket technologies.