Transforming Italian FL Education

AI-Driven Personalisation and Teacher Digital Literacy in the DAI Project

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The gap is pedagogical, not technical

Traditional language learning tools have tended to be one-size-fits-all. AI promises adaptivity, but only if teachers can steer it.

Functional skills

Teachers can operate the tool.
Many already can.

Pedagogical digital competence

Teachers select, adapt and deploy a tool to serve a specific language learning outcome.

What this asks of teachers: writing structured prompts for level-appropriate texts and roleplays; judging bias, hallucination and privacy (EU AI Act); reading learner data to target interventions.

Teacher digital competence is well mapped

DigCompEdu 2017

Competence areas for educators: resources, assessment, empowering learners

DigComp 3.0 2025

AI, digital rights and wellbeing woven through every area

UNESCO AI CFT 2024

A human-centred relationship between teacher, AI and student

TESOL Standards 2011

Performance indicators for technology in language classrooms

DC4LT 2022

Digital competence tied to CALL and second language acquisition

TPACK 2006

Technology never separated from pedagogy and content



Still underexplored: how AI is used, pedagogically, in foreign language classrooms

Why AI for Italian as a foreign language

Structural constraints outside Italy

- Limited classroom contact hours
- Variable access to authentic Italian input
- Individual writing and speaking practice is hard to scale

What recent studies suggest

Cinganotto & Montanucci (2024)
AI dialogue aligned with the Profilo della lingua italiana: gains in writing, reception and confidence

Yan et al. (2025)
Adaptive feedback raises enjoyment and self-efficacy, lowers anxiety

The condition: AI must improve outcomes without adding to teacher workload or displacing the social and cultural side of language learning.

DAI: two target groups, four outcomes

Teachers of Italian FL
From transmitters of knowledge to designers of learning

International academic students
Personalised, lower-anxiety routes to proficiency

7-module online teacher course

AI across learning, teaching and assessment

Interactive learning platform

Self-paced modules matched to level and pace

Resource repository and chatbot

Personalised content retrieval and dialogue practice

Learner corpus

Data from student interactions for future research

A seven-module course shared across the consortium

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
AI Foundations in Language Education	**Designing AI-Enhanced Learning**	**Integrating Digital Resources**	**Inclusive and Adaptive Teaching**	**Data-Driven Teaching Strategies**	**Ethical and Critical AI Use**	**Practical Applications**
UniStraPG	UniSkopje	UniMalta	GUFrankfurt	UniHamburg	UniValencia	UniStraPG

Module 3: the pivot from principles to classroom decisions

Asynchronous on Moodle | self-paced | certificate on completion

Module 3: who it is for and how it opens

Audience

Academic teachers of Italian FL: strong subject knowledge, uneven confidence with emerging tools

Delivery

Asynchronous, with no tutor present. Every explanation, demonstration and feedback message has to be written into the materials.

The pre-knowledge test

1. Scaffolding
2. Why delayed written feedback loses value
3. What a basic spell-checker does
4. Assessing 30 learners' speaking in a 45-minute lesson
5. The purpose of formative assessment

Each concept returns later in an AI-mediated form: diagnostic and advance organiser at once.

Working inside a fixed container

4

videos per module

15 min

per video, agreed by the consortium

6 min

where engagement typically drops (Guo et al., 2014)

Our response: segment inside the container (Mayer, 2021)



One video, about 15 minutes

5 to 6 timed parts per video, each 2 to 4 minutes

One claim, one demonstration or one strategy per part

Modality shifts every 2 to 3 minutes; materials keyed to parts

Designed backwards from what teachers should be able to do

Objectives → **Tools** → **Activities** → **Assessment**

- Select and apply AI assessment tools, distinguishing auto-marking from AI evaluation
- Design an activity that uses real-time feedback
- Create a back-translation or critical editing task
- Plan a lesson using immersive technologies to lower learner anxiety

Avoiding the tool tour: a run of demos with no organising pedagogical claim.

ADDIE with backward design | internal review > partner peer review > sign-off > pilot (now)

The governing claim

Augmented intelligence, not automation

Il docente potenziato
The augmented teacher uses technology to amplify empathy, motivation and creativity, and delegates mechanical, repetitive correction.

Not handing a task over, but redistributing it.

Three pillars, ordered by when they act

Pillar 1

After production

Intelligent assessment

Work has been submitted and must be evaluated

Pillar 2

During production

Real-time correction

The moment of writing or speaking

Pillar 3

Before and around production

Mediation and translation

Deciding what to say and reaching for a tool

Assessment > correction > improvement

Every tool enters through a language-teaching problem (TPACK). Videos 1 to 3 (English): one pillar each. Video 4 (Italian): synthesis.

Pillar 1: the Hybrid Correction Workflow

Auto-marking: a binary verdict on a closed response

AI evaluation: analyses syntax, tone, complexity and style



Step 1

Teacher

Screen recording: read the text aloud, name one issue of meaning or argument



Step 2

AI

Detection as a voice check. Fully machine-written? Ask for a rewrite and stop



Step 3

AI

Supplied prompt returns a structured analysis of the text



Step 4

Teacher

Personal closing comment on the text

Human first and last, machine in the middle. Richer feedback in under a minute; a class-wide diagnosis replaces scattered impressions.

Pillar 2: closing the feedback loop

The feedback lag

Feedback a week late has lost the learner's intention; uncorrected errors can fossilise.

A spotter in the gym

The tool stands behind the learner at the moment of difficulty; it doesn't lift the weight for them.



Writing: toggle simple, business, academic to teach register



Speaking: reading coach flags errors privately, not in front of peers



Immersive practice: lower affective filter, offered as a hypothesis

The "Accept All" problem

Accepting every suggestion means no cognitive work and no learning.

The Error Log Strategy

Original	Correction	Why, in my own words
Se avrei tempo, verrei	Se avessi tempo, verrei	A hypothetical "se" clause takes the congiuntivo, not the condizionale

Illustrative entry. One or two substantive corrections per piece of work.

The third column turns acceptance into noticing and builds a record of the learner's own error patterns.

Pillar 3: from passive consumer to active editor

The Compare Strategy

Four Italian expressions of rising difficulty. The tool gets three right, and builds trust.

arrampicarsi sugli specchi

- ✗ Engine 1: a literal, nonsensical rendering
- ✓ Engine 2: "grasping at straws"; a contextual tool then shows real usage

The failure comes fourth, after trust is built: just as learners meet it.

The Back-Translation Challenge

30 minutes | A2 to C1 | freely available tools

1. Draft a short L1 text with a constraint, e.g. include an idiom
2. Translate into Italian with Tool A
3. Blind swap: partner sees only the Italian
4. Partner translates back with Tool B
5. Compare with the original: did the idiom survive? did register shift?

Extensions: AR translation of realia; AI dubbing of learners' own presentations

The interactive layer: the tutor's voice, built in

Pre-knowledge test

True or false, with misconceptions

Matching quiz: 8 key terms

Fill in the gaps

10-item end-of-module test

Feedback for both outcomes
Every item explains right and wrong answers; true or false items name the misconception that makes the wrong answer tempting.

Anchored to the demonstrations
"Which Italian phrase exposed the translation failure?"
"What is step two of the workflow for?"

Back to practice: apply the workflow to a sample paragraph, complete an error log, run the back-translation challenge with a partner.

Ethics as three red lines



No personal data in public tools

Use placeholders instead of names and identifiers



No personal disclosures uploaded

Texts revealing personal matters are marked by hand



Assume free tools train on input

So nothing confidential, such as unreleased exam papers

Bright-line rules attached to concrete teacher actions, operable at the point of use (European Commission, 2022)

Terminal goal: AI literacy, using these systems aware of their limits, biases and ethical implications (Long & Magerko; Ng et al.; UNESCO)

What the design argues



Competence is constitutive

The value of AI lies in teachers' capacity to select, configure and critically mediate tools, not in the tools alone.



AI inside established SLA principles

Noticing, formative feedback loops and affective scaffolding, not a disruption to them.



From prohibition to literacy

Institutions can shift from reactive bans to proactive frameworks for integrity, ethics and learner agency.

Limitations, and what the pilot will test

Limitations

- Commits to specific commercial tools, some with paid tiers, all liable to change
- The strategies are portable; the demonstrations are not
- Sustainability depends on maintaining the resource repository, not the videos

Questions for the pilot

- Does the workflow reduce correction time?
- Does immersive practice lower anxiety?
- Do teachers' confidence, practice and perceived efficiency change?

Not automated classrooms, but digitally competent teachers

Grazie. Thank you.

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