



The Use of Advertisements as a Didactic Motivational Tool for Foreign Language Competence Development

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Abstract

This case study examines the challenges Albanian Upper Secondary Education (USE) students face in acquiring communicative and socio-cultural competence in Italian as a foreign language. A national survey involving 3836 students and 53 teachers highlighted significant challenges: low motivation, limited self-awareness, and anxiety during oral communication. The results reveal a clear discrepancy between the motivational strategies reported by the teachers and students' perceptions, emphasizing the need for more effective practices. To address these issues, the pedagogical potential of advertisements as authentic digital-media resources for developing communicative and sociocultural competence was considered. Based on CEFR principles and communicative approaches, the study analyses how advertisements can increase student motivation, language acquisition and cultural awareness. For this case study, a competence-based learning unit is also proposed, which integrates didacticized advertisements and interactive technology. The goal is to create engaging learning experiences that lower affective filters, increase communicative motivation, focus on the acquisition of communicative competence, and encourage intercultural reflection. These recommendations aim to inform teachers about more efficient language-learning methods, contributing to a more dynamic pedagogy oriented toward students' real needs.

Keywords: FL classroom, linguistic competences, advertisement, motivation, learning unit

Introduction

Italian language teaching in Albanian USE is widespread in three forms: as a first foreign language, a second foreign language, and as an elective. This form of instruction determines the language level expected to be achieved by the students by the end of each academic year and high school. At the end of their studies, it is expected that students should have reached the FL1 – B2, FL2 – B1, and FL3 – A2+ levels of language. In this regard, the question arises of how realistic it is to achieve the aforementioned levels, and whether all the competences mastered by a student are at the same expected development level.

At the Faculty of Foreign Languages, based on our professional and personal observations and supported by the exams and tests we administered, the findings show that for first-year university students, the level of acquired competences is often much lower than the level declared at the end of secondary school. Whilst analysing the development of communicative competence, intertwined with its cultural dimension, we observe significant shortcomings in students' knowledge of socio-cultural aspects, which we believe arise during their prior education. Based on the above and in the absence of a study with this focus in Albania, we decided to conduct deeper research to verify these issues and identify the sources and causes of these problems. In this regard, we would like to tackle the issues and factors which have led to these discrepancies.

This work is undertaken within the project "The Impact of the Curriculum: 'Competence-Based Teaching' on the Development of Communicative Competence and Expression among Foreign-Language Students in Albanian USE," funded by AKKSHI 2024. The study included 3,836 students and 53 Italian language teachers in different schools in Albania.

To carry out the study at a national level, two questionnaires were designed, one for teachers and one for students, aimed at investigating perceptions of aspects related to communicative competence in Italian as a foreign language class in Albanian USE. For this paper, some of the most significant variables were considered to explore students' demotivation to communicate in Italian and teachers' perceptions of this, among others. From the collected perceptions, a discrepancy emerged between the statements of the participating groups, which this paper used to formulate its hypotheses.

By examining teachers' and students' perceptions and proposing a Learning Unit, this study aims to offer recommendations to increase students' motivation and self-confidence to communicate in Italian, while simultaneously fostering the acquisition of cultural elements. It also seeks to encourage teachers to use engaging and motivating materials for this purpose by didactizing advertisements and leveraging students' preferred technological tools.

Literature Review

2.1 The Advantages of Using Advertisements in Foreign Language Teaching.

In contemporary foreign language education, communicative competence is widely considered a fundamental concept as glottodidactic approaches applied in the teaching process have been grounded in this principle for several decades.

The methodological orientation of the CEFR emphasizes enabling learners to act in real-life situations, express themselves effectively, and perform a variety of communicative tasks (CEFR, 2020, p. 28), as well as watching and understanding audiovisual and multimedia materials of various genres even at beginner levels (CEFR, 2020, pp. 56-57). According to Dörnyei (2001), the learning process must be stimulating and enjoyable, with motivating activities. Therefore, the use of authentic digital-media and film materials would be more appropriate across different school contexts, since they convey authenticity and are presented in a non-conventional school textbook format, making the lesson more interesting and motivating (Gjinali & Piri, 2023, p. 170). Advertising is one of the authentic multimedia genres which brings together many important and necessary factors for language acquisition. Numerous researchers suggest using advertisements in foreign language classrooms as a pedagogical tool, since they boost motivation, support memorisation, and help develop all language competences, especially communicative and socio-cultural ones.

Advertising spots are fully-fledged video texts that should be integrated into foreign language classrooms, as they positively impact learners' involvement and motivation (Diadori, 2015, 2020b; Mezzadri, 2015). Watching a video sequence as a teaching tool usually arouses high interest among learners, especially when the enjoyment of watching is combined with an engaging and well-liked topic (Diadori, 2020b, p. 203). The use of video texts supports comprehension thanks to pre-linguistic and extra-linguistic elements (Ballarin, 2012, Diadori, 2015, Mezzadri, 2015). Another very important aspect offered by video texts is memorization: memory becomes stronger when a person listens, watches, and also interacts (Ballarin, 2012; Celentin, 2007; Diadori 2020a). Through the integration of video texts, foreign language teachers can achieve a range of objectives, including linguistic, lexical, cultural, sociolinguistic, and others (Gjinali & Piri, 2023, p. 163).

Advertising spots are also authentic materials that, thanks to the development of the communicative approach, have begun to be used in foreign language teaching to incorporate real language that reflects elements of the target language culture (Piri & Gjinali, 2025, p. 145). Researcher Begotti (2018, p. 27) emphasizes that the motivation generated by authentic materials supports the memorization of linguistic structures and the acquisition of cultural and sociolinguistic aspects.

Advertisements are everywhere and are part of everyone's daily life: images and ads quickly enter interpersonal communication, influencing people's worldview. Moreover, they represent the ideals of a country's society and reflect classical canons

of lifestyle, expressing and transmitting its socio-cultural values. For this reason, they are highly suitable materials for identifying cultural elements and reflecting on them (Diadori, 2020b; Pavan, 2013; Mezzadri, 2015; Sergio, 2020).

Advertisements also enable foreign learners to experience spoken Italian (regional accents, intonation, etc.) and to understand some of the nuances of the Italian linguistic and cultural reality (Diadori, 2020b; Martari, 2019; Sergio, 2020). More than through words, advertising texts are rich in extra-linguistic elements such as facial expressions, gestures, the distance between people, the accessories used, and so on—elements that imply cultural behaviors and can be reflected upon in Italian language classes (Sergio, 2020, p. 189). Researcher Desideri (2003, p. 17) emphasises that the considerable degree of verbal and visual markedness in advertising texts helps learners identify the purposes of the message more efficiently, thus supporting comprehension also of the implicit meaning of slogans and, consequently, developing communicative competence.

Other studies also recommend using advertisements in foreign language classrooms. Arora and Kaushik (2023) suggest implementing digital-media advertisements because they are enjoyable and effective for learners: 80.45% of the respondents stated that the ads shown had a positive impact on them. The study conducted by Alenazi (2022), among other advantages, highlighted the benefits of using ads for the development of communicative competence (out of 70 students, 68 agreed that the use of ads had improved their communication skills), as it facilitated interaction with one another and helped them overcome the fear of speaking with the teacher or in front of others. In another study, Sa-ngiamwibool (2012) stresses that advertisements were effective mainly for analyzing cultural elements; they successfully promoted participation, group discussion, and communicative interaction. Meanwhile, the study by Tirnaz and Narafshan (2020) showed that the use of television ads supported the development of intercultural competence and had a positive effect on the classroom climate.

The Implementation of Ads as a Teaching Material in Foreign Language Learning.

Unlike films, ads are very short texts that can be used at any moment in the lesson and help lower the affective filter (Sergio, 2020). Advertisements are preferred because they are short—without the need to select an extract as is often the case with films—and they contain a higher density of information. To decode them, teachers can use different strategies (working on text comprehension, the type of communication, the characteristics of the interlocutors, the expressed intentions, socio-cultural elements, pre- and extra-linguistic aspects, etc.). We suggest using various techniques during the didactization process to address different learning styles.

Using recent ads can allow them to work with language indirectly, since the linguistic aspect is no longer the most important one. For example, if the objective of the lesson is to work on speech acts (greetings, introductions, etc.), ads that contain dialogues or

monologues should be chosen. If, on the other hand, the focus is on text types or intercultural comparisons, other kinds of ads should be used (Diadori 2007: 119). Nevertheless, all activities should enable the foreign learner to develop linguistic and communicative competences, to reflect and draw conclusions, or simply to learn something about the target language and culture.

Methodology

The study follows a cross-sectional research design, widely used for studies conducted in the field of education, as it is economical in collecting data in a short time (Wang & Cheng, 2020), so this research typology is considered suitable for collecting data from students from different schools at a single point in time. Also, it is a quantitative study based on primary data that employed a survey methodology for data collection.

Research Questions:

What are the issues related to communicative competence, with a focus on the socio-cultural dimension?

What are the suggestions and possible solutions through a Learning Unit addressed to the relevant stakeholders?

Subjects

The study targeted students in grades X–XII who study Italian as a first or second foreign language or as an elective, as well as the Italian language teachers at these schools. The territorial distribution was designed to enable broad inclusion of Albanian schools of different types: urban and rural schools, general USE, language-profile USE, and public and private institutions. This approach aimed to achieve a relatively balanced distribution across the Albanian territory and to enable a stratified sample. The distribution process also involved second-year Master's students in Teacher Education who were completing their professional practice in USE.

A total of 3,836 students (3,470 in person and 366 online) and 53 Italian language teachers (26 in person and 27 online) participated in the study. Although the questionnaires cover many aspects of implementing a competence-based curriculum, in this paper we present data only for a few questions closely related to the topic of this study.

Instruments

The paper in question is part of a project whose main objective was to identify the difficulties upper-secondary students faced in implementing a competence-based curriculum, with a focus on communicative competence. Therefore, in order to identify these issues in the field, it was decided to design two questionnaires, one for students and one for teachers, covering a broad range of aspects of this competence.

We will take into consideration part of the questionnaires regarding the topics of this paper.

The questionnaires were designed with several sections based on a Likert scale, one section with semi-structured questions, and a final section with open-ended questions, enabling both teachers and students to express their personal opinions regarding the needs they have to address and improve the issues they encounter in the learning process related to the development of this competence.

To ensure the reliability of the research instruments, the internal consistency of the 56 items in the student questionnaire and the 48 items in the teacher questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (George & Mallery, 2019). For the student questionnaire, the analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.954, while the teacher questionnaire yielded an alpha of 0.957. In statistical measurement, values exceeding 0.90 indicate excellent internal consistency, confirming that both survey instruments possess a high degree of reliability for data collection.

The target sample size for this study was determined using Cochran's modified sample size calculation for finite populations. For this calculation, the margin of error was set at 5% (0.05), the estimated proportion of the population possessing the attribute in question was assumed to be 0.5 to maximize sample variability, and the standard normal deviation Z-score was set at 1.96 to reflect a 95% confidence level.

Applying these parameters to the total finite population size of 3,836 individuals establishes a minimum required sample size of approximately 350 respondents. However, to enhance statistical power, mitigate potential non-response bias, and ensure a highly robust and comprehensive dataset for analysis, the actual sample size utilized in this study was expanded to 2,410 participants, successfully capturing a substantial majority of the target population.

Another tool used in this study is advertising as authentic multimedia material, which motivates and assists in the acquisition of linguistic communicative competence. The advertisements were selected in Italian, ensuring they were up to date and available in a multimedia format for ease of use. The selection was conducted following a thorough analysis of the content, prioritising those that included cultural elements.

Data Collection Procedures

The distribution and collection of the questionnaires were carried out in two ways: in person and online, with the in-person method predominating, in order to avoid non-completion, allow for prior clarification, and ensure real-time monitoring of the completion process.

Data collection was initially enabled through scanned reading with CleanScore Albania on the Remark Software platform. Subsequently, the data were processed and analyzed using SPSS.

Results

The results presented below, drawn from a much broader dataset, fully support the hypotheses formulated and to underpin the present study.

The following section presents results on students' motivation, self-confidence, perceptions of culture, teachers' motivational practices, and opinions regarding the activities included in language textbooks.

Table 1. Results regarding the item: I am a little motivated to communicate

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	903	23.5	26.0	26.0
	Agree to some extent	781	20.4	22.5	48.5
	Neutral (neither yes nor no)	780	20.3	22.5	70.9
	Agree	652	17.0	18.8	89.7
	Strongly agree	357	9.3	10.3	100.0
	Total	3473	90.5	100.0	
Missing	System	363	9.5		
Total		3836	100.0		

There are 3,473 valid responses represented in Table 1. The data shows that 23.5% strongly disagree, 20.4% somewhat disagree, and 20.3% are neutral. These results indicate that students are little or not at all motivated in Italian language classes (Mean = 2.6484, Median = 3, Mode = 1, SD = 1.319), reflecting significant uncertainty and clear motivational difficulties, which present a major challenge to the language learning process. This perception is further reinforced in the following question presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results regarding the item: I don't have much confidence in myself to speak Italian

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	903	23.5	23.9	23.9
	Agree to some extent	919	24.0	24.3	48.2
	Neutral (neither yes nor no)	852	22.2	22.5	70.7
	Agree	698	18.2	18.5	89.2
	Strongly agree	409	10.7	10.8	100.0
	Total	3781	98.6	100.0	
Missing	System	55	1.4		
Total		3836	100.0		

There are 3,781 responses presented in Table 2. The data show that 23.5% strongly agree, 24.0% somewhat agree, and 22.2% are neutral (Mean = 2.68, Median = 3, Mode = 1, SD = 1.319).

It is observed that the level of motivation is varying and is expressed in different ways, highlighting the importance of psychological factors and the learning environment in shaping motivation.

These data provide a meaningful information indicating that we are dealing with a low spectrum of self-confidence, generated by many factors largely depending on motivation, as well as the anxious management of dialogue with others and the insecurity students experience, as reflected also in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Results regarding the item: I feel anxious or insecure when communicating in Italian in front of others

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	903	23.5	24.0	24.0
	Agree to some extent	877	22.9	23.3	47.2
	Neutral (neither yes nor no)	855	22.3	22.7	69.9
	Agree	715	18.6	19.0	88.9
	Strongly agree	418	10.9	11.1	100.0
	Total	3768	98.2	100.0	
Missing	System	68	1.8		
Total		3836	100.0		

Referring to Table 3, there are 3,768 valid responses. The data show that 23.5% strongly disagree, 22.9% somewhat disagree, and 22.3% are neutral, while only 29,5% agree or strongly agree (Mean = 2.70, Median = 3, Mode = 1, SD = 1.314). The mean value of 2.70 is below 3, indicating a moderate but still present level of anxiety.

These results confirm that a considerable proportion of students experience feelings of anxiety or insecurity. The high percentage of neutral responses suggests that many students experience emotional fluctuations in response to various factors, indicating that the emotional dimension is important. The standard deviation indicates a relatively wide dispersion of responses, reflecting individual differences in the experience of anxiety.

In the following question on students' perception of the cultural dimension (Table 4), there is consensus among students on the positive end of the scale.

Table 4. Results regarding the item: I believe that communication competence is essential for understanding a culture

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	206	5.4	5.4	5.4
	Agree to some extent	499	13.0	13.2	18.6
	Neutral (neither yes nor no)	700	18.2	18.5	37.1
	Agree	1241	32.4	32.8	69.9
	Strongly agree	1140	29.7	30.1	100.0
	Total	3786	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	50	1.3		
Total		3836	100.0		

There are 3,786 valid responses shown in the Table 4. The data show that there are no “strongly disagree” responses, 13.2% somewhat disagree, and 18.2% are neutral; meanwhile, 32.4% agree and 29.7% strongly agree (Mean = 3.70, Median = 4, Mode = 4, SD = 1.186). The mean and the mode indicate that students perceive communicative competence as an essential component of cultural competence, and they view language not only as a formal tool for communication but also as a key element for understanding the values, customs, and way of thinking of a foreign culture.

The standard deviation suggests that, although there is an overall consensus, there are still individual differences in students’ personal beliefs. This consensus is an important indicator of the need to integrate the cultural dimension in the classroom, thus approaching the learning process not only from a linguistic perspective.

Referring again to the aspect of motivation, but now from the teachers’ perspective (Table 5), the results show that:

Table 5. Results regarding the item: I constantly motivate students to communicate in Italian

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree to some extent.	1	1.9	1.9	1.9
	Neutral (neither yes nor no)	1	1.9	1.9	3.8
	Agree	19	35.8	35.8	39.6
	Strongly Agree	32	60.4	60.4	100.0
	Total	53	100.0	100.0	

There are 53 valid responses shown in Table 5, confirming that there are no “strongly disagree” responses, 1.9% “somewhat agree,” 1.9% “neutral,” 35.8% “agree”, and 60.4% “strongly agree.” The values are Mean = 4.55, Median = 5, Mode = 5, and SD = 0.637. The mean and the mode indicate that teachers report motivating students at a very high level. The relatively low SD indicates a high degree of homogeneity in responses, suggesting that teachers share a similar opinion on this question.

Meanwhile, regarding Italian-language textbooks, teachers’ opinions are presented in Table 6, which show results related to their needs. Among the questions in the relevant section, the item “Foreign language textbooks should offer more activities related to the development of communication competence” highlights teachers’ strong need for more communicative activities.

Table 6. Results regarding the item: Foreign language textbooks should offer more activities related to the development of communication competence.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	3.8	3.8	3.8
	Agree to some extent.	9	17.0	17.0	20.8
	Neutral (neither yes nor no)	9	17.0	17.0	37.7
	Agree	13	24.5	24.5	62.3
	Strongly Agree	20	37.7	37.7	100.0
	Total	53	100.0	100.0	

There are 53 responses shown in Table 6, confirming that 3.8% “strongly disagree,” 17.0% “somewhat disagree,” and 17.0% are “neutral,” while 24.5% “agree” and 37.7% “strongly agree.” The values are Mean = 3.75, Median = 4, Mode = 5, and SD = 1.239. The mean and mode indicate that teachers’ responses tend toward agreement, suggesting a shared view of the need they express. The SD also shows that, although there is an overall positive consensus, there are differences in the intensity of agreement among teachers.

Discussion

The Spearman correlation results ($\rho \leq 0.5$), given the ordinal nature of the variables, indicated a weak relationship between students’ and teachers’ perceptions. In this context, we can clearly identify a discrepancy between teachers’ and students’ statements, which calls into question the effectiveness of the motivational strategies used in Italian language classes. This is because, as results show, students clearly state that they are not sufficiently motivated in language classes and that they feel insecure and experience anxiety when they need to communicate. According to Gardner’s studies (2007), motivation is an important factor because a motivated individual is goal-directed, makes effort, is persistent, attentive, has desires, shows positive affect,

is enthusiastic, has expectations, demonstrates self-confidence (self-efficacy), and has reasons (motives).

Based on the results obtained from such a large and geographically diverse student sample, teachers' responses might reflect a positive bias rather than the actual classroom reality, conveying inaccurate perceptions. These perceptions may constitute part of the source of the difficulties students face in developing communicative competence. Such difficulties may stem from low motivation, insufficient development of linguistic, communicative, and cultural skills, limited use of authentic materials and technology, lack of time devoted to communicative activities, and a lack of varied activities in language textbooks (as reported by teachers). Overall, these findings show difficulties in students' spontaneous language use, resulting from a lack of motivation, fear of making mistakes, and linguistic insecurity.

Other factors influencing this process should be taken into consideration, even though they are not part of this study. In this paper, we have focused on motivation, considering it a very important aspect for the development of communicative competence, which is undoubtedly closely intertwined with cultural competence. The lack of confidence and the anxiety students experience are indicators of individual insecurity related not only to an inadequate knowledge of the language, but—according to their reports—primarily to a lack of motivation. As Dörnyei (2001) points out, among other things, learning process needs to be stimulating and enjoyable by presenting tasks in a motivating way.

Among other factors, the lack of motivation based on different factors, is also reflected in the issue raised by teachers regarding the absence and limited variety of communicative activities in language textbooks. Skehan (1991) notes that materials and teaching influence students' motivation in the learning context.

Thus, based on the above, it was considered appropriate to propose a valid didactic suggestion that serves as a teaching example for Italian language teachers.

5.1 Possible Solutions: a Didactic Proposal

Tables 6 and 6.1, on teachers' attitudes, show that they consider the communicative activities in the Italian language textbooks currently in use insufficient. Based on these results and considering other findings from the analysis of the respondents, we propose a Learning Unit (LU) (Balboni, 2015; Mezzadri, 2015; Semplici, 2020) for use by Italian language teachers as supplementary material. This will enrich the teaching process with authentic, motivating, and useful resources for developing communicative competence, with a focus on the sociocultural dimension.

The activities suggested in this didactic proposal have been designed to motivate students through engaging exercises that use digital-media materials and new technologies they prefer and use in their everyday lives, and to support teachers with ideas for creating, engaging, and complementary activities related to language

learning and communicative competences. Using the selected methodology, this study offers concrete suggestions for adapting advertising spots for use as audiovisual tools in the Italian language classroom with pedagogical potential (Piri & Gjinali, 2025, p. 150).

Specifically, for this study, we selected several ads created for an Italian audience that we consider genuinely authentic. These ads have been didacticized or integrated into an LU, selected and adapted according to the learning needs of Albanian USE students, to expose them to motivating materials that are up to date and aligned with the reality of the Italian language and culture (Piri & Haxhillazi, 2023, p. 133).

By referring to the content of the advertisement text “Organizza il tuo Capodanno da sogno” and the message it conveys, the following language and communicative objectives have been identified, which precede the LU and on which the specific activities will be developed.

Learning Unit “Viaggiare per le feste”

The following activities have been designed for Italian language learners at A2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR).

Materials or Resources: short advertising spots, images and photographs, and printed transcripts of the spots.

Foreign language classroom technology: an interactive whiteboard and online resources/platforms such as YouTube, Edpuzzle, Copilot, Canva, etc.

Language objectives and competences:

Communicative	Expressing personal wishes regarding holiday travel.
Lexical	Vocabulary related to holiday travel terminology.
Grammatical	Revision of simple and compound prepositions.
Sociocultural / Intercultural	Becoming familiar with Italian holidays and comparing them with Albanian holidays.

In the Motivation phase, to introduce the new language input, students view the following photos (Fig. 1) on a projector or interactive whiteboard.

In the end, students discuss in plenary, formulating hypotheses about the themes of the photos above (Italian holidays, festive destinations, etc.). On the interactive board, the teacher creates a brainstorming map based on the students' answers. This activity helps learners activate expectancy grammar and bring their background knowledge to the surface. They will also motivate students to acquire additional language input later in the development of this LU.



Figure 1. Italian cities to visit for the holidays

In the pre-global phase, students watch the advertising spot without sound at the YouTube, then complete the activity below (Fig. 2) by circling the words they expect to hear in the advertisement.



Figure 2. Activity 1 – Pre-global Phase

Next, a class discussions are carried out using the plenary method. After curiosity and motivation have been increased through the activity above, the lesson continues with the global phase, for which the Edpuzzle platform was selected (Fig. 3). This platform enabled the didacticization of the advertisement “Organizza il tuo Capodanno da sogno”, selected from YouTube. In this phase, students watch the video and complete multiple-choice exercises designed to develop overall text comprehension.

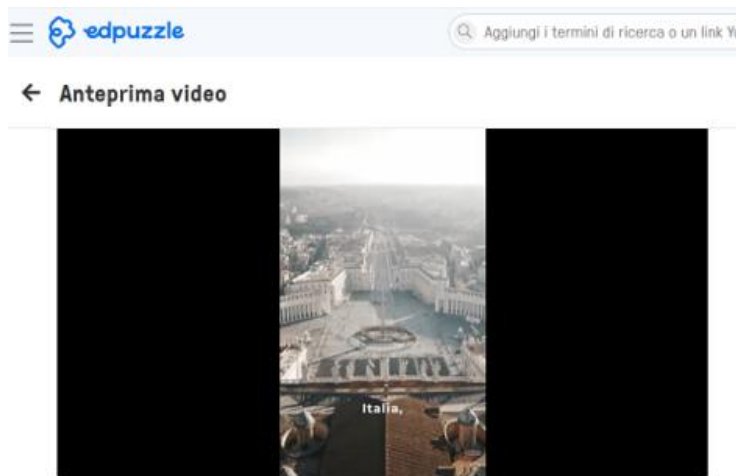


Figure 3. Didactic adaptation of the advertisement “Organizza il tuo Capodanno da sogno” through the Edpuzzle platform

The next phase is the Analysis phase, putting students into working on lexical competence, specifically through the exercise presented in Figure 4.

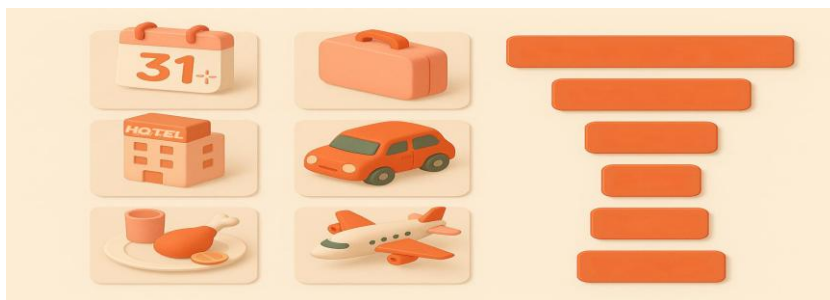


Figure 4. Activity designed with Microsoft Copilot, a generative AI assistant.

Students, working in pairs, carry out an exercise designed using the “transcoding” technique, which involves naming the pictures with appropriate vocabulary and then matching the words to the correct images.

Afterwards, the students will work on grammatical competence. They are given a printed version of the advertisement text with simple and compound prepositions missing, and they will complete the gaps. After finishing this exercise, the teacher provides feedback on the grammatical elements addressed.

To develop communicative competence and consolidate the lexical items practiced in the previous tasks, students are asked to create and perform short dialogues on the topic: “Where would you like to travel during the holidays?”

In the final phase, students engage in cultural reflection and develop intercultural competence. For this purpose, they are divided into two groups, and each group prepares a short presentation.

For the first group, the teacher selects two or three YouTube advertising spots related to a tourist destination in Italy. After watching them, students choose the one they prefer, explain why they selected it, and finally promote that destination to the other group.

The second group watches two advertising spots selected by the teacher that promote travelling to Italy during the holiday season. Inspired by the spots and with the help of the Canva platform, students create an advertising spot that promotes a domestic holiday trip in Albania, linked to the celebrations organized in the country.

Finally, a class discussion takes place about the difficulties encountered, effective working methods, the motivation created during the development of this LU, and related aspects.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Summary of Contributions

The results of this study highlight a significant issue related to students' motivation and self-confidence when communicating in Italian. Data analysis shows that a considerable proportion of students are little or not at all motivated, while they experience insecurity and anxiety when they have to speak in front of others. This phenomenon is linked to a fear of making mistakes, which negatively affects self-confidence, makes the communication process more challenging, and renders errors more visible. In the pre-global phase. The negative correlation between self-confidence and anxiety confirms that an increase in fear is associated with a decrease in self-confidence, thereby hindering the development of communicative competence.

Another important finding is the discrepancy between teachers' and students' perceptions: while teachers report that they constantly motivate their students, the latter do not perceive this support. This mismatch suggests the need to reflect on teaching practices and to improve motivational strategies.

Factors such as the limited use of authentic materials, the lack of communicative activities in school textbooks, and the limited use of technology contribute to decreased motivation and students' difficulties in using the language spontaneously.

To address these issues, integrating authentic multimedia materials (Ballarin, 2012) is recommended, as video input, especially ads, can be used very effectively to develop speaking skills (Celentin, 2007, p. 43). These can be used as pedagogical tools to increase motivation (Alenazi, 2022, p. 519) and to foster the acquisition of cultural elements (Sergio, 2020, p. 186). Furthermore, the use of interactive technologies with a variety of activities and the design and classroom implementation by teachers of learning units (Piri & Gjinali, 2025, p.150), can help lower the affective filter, reduce

anxiety, increase self-confidence, and improve communicative competence through group work (Moni & Rapacciuolo, 2007, p. 299). All these measures aim to create a more motivating and emotionally supportive environment, in which students feel safe and engaged in the process of learning Italian.

6.2 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study also had limitations, as the actual number of questionnaires distributed online did not match the number of valid responses. On the other hand, difficulties in accessing schools to administer the questionnaires in person were encountered. In some cases, students were not motivated to complete the questionnaire despite prior explanation. In other cases, the questionnaires were filled in superficially, merely for the sake of completion. The online questionnaires were far less effective than the paper-based ones, making the work more time-consuming and exhausting due to printing, distributing, collecting, and reading the scanned responses. We also found that teachers' answers may not reflect the reality of the teaching process, but rather reflect perceptions or wishful thinking.

Ads do serve as highly motivating and authentic multimedia resources, but their integration as pedagogical tools carries potential disadvantages that need to be critically considered. For example, reliance on commercial media may inadvertently foster consumerism among students or reinforce prevailing cultural and social stereotypes rather than providing a completely neutral view of the target language culture.

Also, the use of advertisements is only suggested for beginner levels as they are very short-lived materials and do not have much linguistic information needed for more advanced language levels.

Furthermore, we recommend that future research focus on collecting students' feedback and perceptions regarding the activities implemented through the proposed LU, and that the insights be systematically analysed alongside learning outcomes to provide a clearer understanding of how advertisements influence the acquisition of language competencies.

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