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The Role of Technology

in Language Teaching & Learning

Web 2.0 as a Present Necessity becoming a

School System Priority for Future Change

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at analysing the role of technology in language education in Italian secondary schools over the last few years. It is divided into two main parts: the first one focuses on the development of web 2.0 and on the various uses of technological tools in language teaching and learning; the second one focuses on the study, which is designed to investigate the current increasing use of ICTs (Information and Communications Technologies) in Italian secondary schools during the Covid-19 emergency times.

The research section presents a quantitative study, since a questionnaire is the instrument chosen in order to collect data. In order to investigate on the teachers' perceptions, the questionnaire has been administrated to a sample of 50 teachers from different regions of Italy and also other foreign countries. Because of the current emergency period, an online survey has been designed. Likewise, the questionnaire has been spread and shared through the use of current web 2.0, in respect of the contemporary modes of working and of the topic of the study. The research questions are three, which are: *1) How has the Covid-19 emergency affected language teachers' use of ICT tools and strategies?; 2) What are the main advantages and issues that teachers are encountering? How can they be solved?; 3) Which are the main future implications concerning the relationship between technology and language education?*

Three main aspects characterise this research work: firstly, the introduction of technology in schools' curriculums has entered gradually in language education by functioning as an integration to traditional methods; secondly, during Covid-19 emergency, web 2.0 has obtained a central role in teachers' and students' lives by being transformed from an integration to a necessity; thirdly, benefits and issues related to the use of technology in classrooms showed a struggling but also

constructive conflict along the school system. The main findings are the increasing use of technological tools during the Covid-19 emergency, the presence of some issues related to digital lessons, and teachers' inclination to adopt technology in future teaching.

Keywords: *language education, technological tools, language teaching, language learning, ICTs.*

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous technological tools exist in the current society. Some of them are more used in certain fields rather than in others, even so, they play a common and large role in nowadays world: they define manners of communication.

The aim of this study is to observe, analyse, and explore the application of technology in secondary schools, during Covid-19 emergency. Particular attention will be directed to language education techniques and modalities of giving lectures. Communication between individuals is the key of all the dissertation, since it has changed enormously from person-to-person lessons to online lessons. Specially, the focus will be on student-student relationships and student-teacher relationships.

Moreover, future perspectives will be brought to light thanks to the opinions of a sample of teachers involved in a survey research that I realised within my university.

Many digital resources can be used in language education, which will be listed, and described, item by item. Beyond gradually discovering ICTs through teachers' answers contained in the questionnaire, other research concerning this topic will be analysed so as to clarify better both the traditional and contemporary academic panorama.

In addition, in this research, the main differences between teaching in the classroom and teaching online will be pointed out. The management of relationships, the arrangement of school everyday life, and the development of language skills will be cleared out through the comparison between teachers' viewpoints and linguistic discoveries.

Lastly, my whole research aims at analysing future perspectives in language education, along with formal, informal, non-formal learning environment increasingly characterised by an online world influence. Web 2.0 is now affecting something called "traditional education". However, the modalities whereby it is actualising this process of transformation and, specially, of improvement is what is going to be explored.

1. ICTs & INTERNET IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

1.1 What is ICT?

“The term ICT covers all aspects of computers, networks (including the Internet) and certain other devices with information storage and processing capacity such as calculators, mobile phones and automatic control devices” (Kennewell, 2013, p. 4).

This is Steve Kennewell’s definition of ICTs contained in his volume called *Meeting the Standards in Using ICT for Secondary Teaching – A Guide to the ITT NC*. These kind of devices are aimed at storing or communicating information in a digital modality. Therefore, they manage to process information by representing it in terms of discrete symbols. The realisation of the procedure of transferring digital information is based on the relationship between power, size and energy employed to do so. It is very different from the older analogue tools, such as radio and TV, audio and video recording, and traditional telephones. Several general concepts concerning the use of digital technology in subject teaching are involved and need to be clarified. ICT resources can be classified into four main categories, which are:

- **hardware:** the equipment (like a PC or a whiteboard);
- **media:** the stored instructions enabling the hardware to operate automatically, with the stored information and processes (like a word processing programme and the documents produced afterwards with it);
- **services:** combination of hardware, software and human resources enabling users to achieve more than just with hardware and software separately (like the Internet).

These resources can be used in three different manners both in teaching and learning:

- teacher use in preparation, assessment or professional development;
- teacher use with a class;
- student use in the classroom, to find information or represent their ideas or personal notes.

Certainly, each resource will be relevant differently according to the subject and to the teachers involved.

1.2 WWW – World Wide Web

The main process peoples usually activate is searching information (or “browsing”) on the Internet. First, specifying the keywords which represent one’s subject of interest would be the initial step of web research. Keywords generate a large number of new connections, therefore the more precise the definitions of keywords is the more precise the research will be. Then, the most suitable page will be chosen by the researcher. After this general intro within the huge world of Internet, the principle browser techniques are going to be entered:

- *Hyperlinking*: means that a particular area of the screen can be clicked and, then, a linked page is immediately shown;
- *URL*: whereby it is allowed to type in the web address for a specific page, when the page is known yet;
- *Search*: can be defined as a particular search engine built into a web browser, which is displayed as a browser option;
- *Change text size*: maybe the simpler option, whereby the dimension of the text can be set larger or smaller in the browser;
- *Bookmark*: when people need to revisit a particular page quickly, the address of this page can be stored in a list for quick address (also with the presence of folders where the pages can be organised);
- *History*: a list of pages recently accessed by the user, which are automatically stored;
- *Homepage*: the main page of an organisation, website, or person which contains other links to other sections of the same website;

- *Cookies*: are techniques adopted by websites in order to help speed access or to provide them with information about the user;
- *Security options*: whereby users can decide to allow only to particular sites, or to exclude other sites or contents, so as to control the type of cookies received.

However, what is a “browser” actually?

It can be described as a “*software application that allows people to search the Internet*” (Kennewell, 2013, p. 43). Microsoft Internet Explorer, Netscape, Chrome and Mozilla are some of the most common and used browser applications.

- Why is WWW effective in education?

First of all, the amount of applications, information and personal contacts is the most important aspect of *World Wide Web*. Quick access to these up-to-date sources results to be more easier and authentic rather than text book interpretations. As stated by Dodge (1995), “*a web quest is an enquiry-oriented activity in which some or all of the information that learners interact with comes from resources on the Internet [...]*”. It seems to be so relevant in education because it involves a specific process that learners should respect. This enquiry-oriented activity arranges the interaction between learners and resources following the following steps:

1. an *introduction* making students entering new information;
2. a *task* to be solved;
3. a set of information sources;
4. a *description* of the process or of the activity;
5. some *guidance* on how to organise the incoming information;
6. a *conclusion* reminding learners about what they have acquired;

7. some *encouragement* in order to promote future learning and to the extend learners' enquiry.

As far as hypertext structure regards, interactivity plays a bigger role in the online world rather than in books, even though some disadvantages are involved. For instance, seeing more than one page at a time appears to be quite difficult and, sometimes, recognising relevant information among the large quantity of unsuitable material available online is not as easy as it could seem. Thus, these downsides could become tricky for learners, because they should start an interpreting process than just study or reproduce the contents which they find. Many websites are specially created for pupils, nevertheless. These specific websites show appropriate curriculum content and, based on the purposes, can “guide” the students that are searching information through a specialised search facility. Sometimes subscription is needed or, occasionally, they can also be freely available (e.g. BBC service).

1.3 What does web creation allow to do?

Creating a web follows a process which is comparable to a multimedia presentation by using hyperlinks rather than slide transition. After that, it can be shared on the WWW through its publication in a web server, with respective URLs.

Some techniques are used in order to carry out this process:

1. *hyperlink*, whereby pieces of text and graphic objects on a page can be set to make the user click on them; then a new specified web page will be shown (feature usually available in word processing, DTP, multimedia presentation and spreadsheet programs);
2. *frame*, it enables certain content from a page to remain on the screen (e.g. titles or menus) in one or more frames, and the content from another page is displayed in another frame;

3. *table*, it has a wider application in controlling layout within a web page;
4. *form*, it can be created for web users to complete, so as to send a response with informal dialogues box features.

- Why is web creation effective in education?

Firstly, for *learners* two main aspects should be underlined: 1. the value of producing web pages, often requiring students to analyse and understand the conceptual structure of the material; 2. the ability to publish material on the WWW by reaching a wider audience of other pupils, parents and teachers.

Secondly, for *teachers*, web creation can be useful because of its power to combine different types of material, such as texts, images, videos and audio even in a non-hierarchical manner under control of their students, or rather because of its multimodal use (interactively with the class group or with a single pupil, or making groups working independently far from school, like directly at home).

1.4 What does graphic organiser software allow to do?

Numerous processes can be carried out by using a graphic organiser, including strategies which arrange information, for instance, mind mapping, concept mapping, brainstorming and storyboarding. The principle objective is producing a concept map setting systematically all the information needed. The main functions available in a graphic organiser are: boxes creation (to name concepts), linking related concepts through arrows (to make clear the connections), and adding text to the same arrows (to represent graphically the relationships between concepts). Not only can be created a map showing its connections, but also all the elements can be edited, and the boxes containing the information moved along the map. Moreover, optional notes can be

attached to the concept boxes in order to provide further details and explanations to learners. A remarkable peculiarity concerns the graphic representation on the whole: the map can be easily converted into outline format for producing a word processed report, or into a web page for a wider publication.

- Why is graphic organiser software effective in education?

Three main reasons define this kind of software a valuable tool in the classroom: planning, producing reflection, and assessment. Teachers can use it with a display showing the class the contents of the lessons, whereas students can use it individually for planning and managing their projects, or also for representing and developing their understanding of the various school subjects. This kind of arrangement of information allows also the construction of exercises. For example, firstly, teachers could provide students with a starting map containing the main concepts of the lesson, secondly pupils fill it with more details, notes, or linking key words. In this manner, ideas will be remembered rapidly and concepts will be memorised both visually and schematically, also underlying the connections between them. This type of exercise helps learners to build their own understanding and improve their independence. Also teachers are helped in identifying the difficulties which more spread in the class, and pupils' individual difficulties so as to find alternative modalities of explanations. Graphic organiser software allows to build new learning education by promoting a deductive method, making the students the subject of the lesson.

1.5 What do virtual learning environments (VLE) allow to do?

A virtual learning environment is defined as a web-based system that provides tools both for teachers and students as a way of promoting the management of learning. Several activities can be helped being realised by adopting *VLE*, such as planning the whole curriculum over a given period of time, communicating objectives, provide multimedia resources, and allow students to access the material previously established. Virtual learning helps also setting some technical aspects, like organising online tasks and scheduling subject programmes; students' tracking submission and receipt of completed work; the record and analysis of assessments. E-mail tools are also provided with bulletin boards and conferences allowing the pupils to direct their work by being guided both individually and in groups. Certainly, groups of students are facilitated in realising communication between themselves and also the interface with teachers is greatly fostered.

- Why are virtual learning environments effective in education?

In order to recap what *VLE* is, it can be described as a mode whereby online interaction is used and promoted. Communication is the key component managing and supporting interactions within students, teachers and tutors in the school system. Pupils' learning process is facilitated thanks to direct access to contents, beyond maintaining online contacts with school mates, teaches and tutors. Virtual learning environments make student participation increase and students inclination to discussion improve. Doing homework is favoured by tutors' support and by the presence of a wider range of courses available online.

1.6 What do direct teaching packages allow to do?

Direct teaching packages are not just standard software. They seem to be better defined as programmes pushing pupils to develop knowledge, and to train understanding capacities and skills. These kind of programmes used by teachers, may show practical demonstrations of skills, explanations of ideas or opinions, questioning of the learner, checking of responses, feedbacks about the quality of the responses, possible remediation material, and introduction to the following topics. The main feature is that the teacher can directly set the level of difficulty, or the topic to deal with.

- Why are direct teaching packages effective in education?

They can be defined as “black boxes” whereby the teacher cannot modify the material itself or the sequences of contents presented. Usually, professional programming languages are used, and teachers are provided with “authoring packages” in order to specify content, questions and various criteria. Another type of option are *Integrated Learning Systems* (ILS), commonly used in schools, allow to combine a direct teaching element with a more technological work. Students, then, are enabled to work independently, to receive feedback and to set tasks with respect to the level that they have reached. In this manner, transferring knowledge through a computer appears to be more attractive for students and to make information more immediate, fluid and flexible. Moreover, some groups of learners can conduct their own work coupled with other students, while other groups can work with the teacher without the support of the computer. This strategy maintains a high level of concentration because of its double nature and because of the alternation of typologies of activities. Teachers, by working in different modalities with the whole class, can also identify pupil’s hidden abilities and try to train them with different

learning strategies. Certainly, teachers should control the entire realisation of the learning process, trying to preserve a balance between interpersonal relationships and technological communications. For example, by avoiding a total computer dependence by students could be an adequate method to be adopted and interaction should always be a central point during classes.

1.7 What does an interactive whiteboard allow to do?

A teacher adopting an interactive whiteboard in front of the whole class, usually, works in favour of interaction again. This can be realised thanks to a standard or a specially designed software used in a large touch display screen driven by a special stylus, a “boardpen”, or teachers’ finger. On one hand, a standard software allows to add extra handwritten notes or marks, like circling, highlighting, underlining words or sentences. Also connecting concepts or parts of text with arrows is permitted. Teachers could prefer just writing on the whiteboard, which is possible through a handwriting recognition software so as to convert personal writing into standard ICT text. Teachers’ (or students’) annotations can be stored and directly shared with the class. On the other hand, the special software (called also “notebook” or “flipchart”) is slightly more sophisticated because of the presence of extra features which make it a presentation programme. These features are the existence of libraries of symbols and shapes to be displayed on the screen, an on-screen keyboard letting teachers choose whether typing words in a standard modality, or using handwriting with conversation.

- Why is an interactive whiteboard effective in education?

In order to convey information and make advances with learning, some understanding of the technology is required. The board and a data projector are both connected to a PC, which serve to implement two main functions:

1. to control the display of the screen image on the board through the projector;
2. to receive signals from the board and pen employed by the user (usually the teacher), for example to point, write, select, indicate, etc.

First, a process of calibration of the pen is necessary to be done. It can be realised by touching the board in a set of standard position presented on the screen, so as to make the PC calculate the relationship between the board positioning and the projector showing the image. This kind of connections between tools allows the whole class to be involved in teaching, especially thanks to the large image shown on the screen. The class can interact with the same ICT resource chosen by the teacher, promoting either individual activities or group discussion, according to the type of exercise. This is usually preferred by teachers because pupils work in favour of interaction, rather than merely working on different PCs with no screen confirmations. This mode of teaching underlines the importance of expressing personal ideas, of comparing opinions and of receiving responses. Teachers, at the time, can decide to make the students focus their attention on certain elements of the lessons by emphasising some elements of the screen.

2. ICT APPLICATIONS IN THE TEACHING PROCESS

2.1 ICT integration in foreign language teaching

Students attending English language courses at schools are used to practicing various skills, which can be listed as follows: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Communication and proficiency are continuously trained and, often, thanks to facilitation strategies adopted by instructors (Ahmadi, 2017). First of all, over the last few years, computers and technology have enormously changed the application of these teaching methods (Becker, 2000). Nowadays, instructors consider computers as a significant part of the lecture in order to provide students with the most developed technologies and to promote high-quality education. According to the studies realised by Bull and Ma in 2001, technology offers unlimited resources aimed at language learners. For this reason, Harmer (2007) and Genç İter (2015) support the idea whereby instructors should encourage to conduct language activities with a computer, because it brings to success in a highly motivating mode. The most important aspect is that students should use suitable technological materials, as Clements and Sarama (2003) deduce. Especially, computer-based experiences can support language learning better rather than traditional exercises, because they enable learners to communicate and cooperate with each other (Harmer, 2007). Consequently, students result to be more motivated during “technological lessons” or “interactive lessons”, and the Internet makes students’ improvement be more pragmatic. Using teaching resources correctly allows pupils being more focussed on the subject they are learning (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011).

As observed before, in a learning environment, technology occupies a fundamental role both for communication and for develop of skills (e.g. language skills). “Integration” is a word that usually coexists with “education” when dealing with a 2.0 learning environment. This is the reason why the current instructors’ aim is to

“integrate” technology in the most useful manner across the curriculum. Hence, teachers should maintain themselves informed about new teaching tools, in order to promote an effective the learning process. Lessons are transformed into online guided experiences, which could also become an issue for teachers (Eady & Lockyer, 2013). As far as Solanki and Shyamlee¹ affirmed in 2012, language teaching methods has been changed due to technology. The two researchers continue supporting the idea whereby by using computers, motivation appear to be more developed because the Internet allow pupils to base the learning process on their interests. Lawrence (2002) and Gilakjani (2017) agree in stating that not only would visual and auditory learning strategies be trained more easily, but also learners would be able to experiment new learning methods or to refine their own existing method.

Language learning is not the only element which is changing. The language teaching process is also changing its main characteristics. As a matter of fact, the scholars Pourhosein Gilakjani and Sabouri (2014) assert that a slightly negative aspect is changing very fast: teachers’ control on students online research is lacking. On account of this issue, it is really important that teachers promote activities only after being totally aware of the teaching methods application and of the functioning of tools adopted in the learning process. Despite of some issues like this, at least, risks would be partially reduced and instructors would be able to help pupils in online problem solving (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2017; Solanki & Shyamlee¹, 2012).

A big point in favour of developing learners’ skills and knowledge with a computer is that it permits being equal. Teachers, then, promote equality of opportunity whatever their learners’ background. Another issue seems to be that sometimes pupils may not be skilful users of computers, despite of growing up in a 2.0 world (Bennett, Maton & Kervin, 2008). Then, just providing young boys and girls with technological tools is not enough to create formed users ready to apply technology in their education. This issue could be solved by instructors who, gradually, should produce meaningful development of technology-based knowledge transmission so as to amplify learning (OECD, 2010).

2.2 Technology application in English language classes

First of all, all students should understand that technology is an effective tool making their learning process challenging and significant. The increase of use of technology in language learning education bring numerous advantages, like teachers' adaptation of tools along the curriculum, language skills have more possibilities of being trained (Costley, 2014; Murphy, DePasquale, & McNamara, 2003), learners cooperation would become more effective and productive, cooperation itself allow students to have an overall idea about peers' opinions and works, and to create or complete new tasks (Keser, Huseyin, & Ozdamli, 2011).

A really interesting assertion concerning improvement with technology comes from a group of scholars, Bennett, Culp, Honey, Tally, and Spielvogel (2000), who state that: *“he use of computer technology lead to the improvement of teachers' teaching and learners' learning in the classes”*. Similarly, Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) declare that the application of technology in language classes not only merely helps content learning, but also to make local and global societies connecting with each other in order to share opportunities for learning. A key concept concluding the researchers' statement is: *“the positive effect of computer technology does not come automatically; it depends on how teachers use it in their language classrooms”*.

“A well-planned classroom setting, learners learn how to learn efficiently” (Raihan and Lock, 2012), this statement shows that a technology-enhanced teaching environment is more effective rather than more traditional lecture-based classes. Instructors should find the right methods to transfer both language and cultural contents by applying technology to their classes, although a part of them have not learnt with technological instruments in their past and are not able to use them as actual experts.

The use of technology has considerably changed English teaching methodologies. Now, the most remarkable aim for an instructor is making lessons interesting and productive, at a time (Patel, 2013). Traditionally, teachers express subject contents in

front of their students. More precisely, they give lecture with the support of just one instrument, which is a blackboard or a whiteboard. Throughout the long process of dealing with the incoming technology, this kind of “basic” instrument no longer is enough. This traditional methodology should be changed considering the massive development of technology. One of the main advantages of adopting technological tools during language lessons is the usage of multimedia texts. This kind of text make the students embrace vocabulary and language structures, by becoming immediately familiar with English functioning. Starting with a computer, dealing with a foreign language opens to different possibilities, such as directly working on a text a *Word* page, printing materials, watching films or brief videos, collect data or information, and working on the analysis and interpretation both of the language and contexts (Arifah, 2014).

Creating a suitable learning atmosphere is a central element for the experts Dawson, Cavanaugh, and Ritzhaupt (2008) and Pourhosein Gilakjani (2014). They sustain the idea of this “positive atmosphere” during lessons can be created precisely by technology, which permits maintaining a student-centred lesson rather than considering the teacher presenting passively information. They state that “*by using computer technology, language class becomes an active place full of meaningful tasks where the learners are responsible for their learning*”. Another fundamental point of you comes from a group of researchers, named Drayton, Falk, Stroud, Hobbs, and Hammerman (2010), which is: “*using computer technology indicates a true learning experience that enhances learners’ responsibilities*”. It means that students are pushed to increase their learning experience and, in parallel, to exercise their responsible behaviours in front of institutions and of peers. Moreover, an independent use of computers enables learners to obtain self-direction. Motivation can improve enormously thanks to the diversification of activities which could be adopted in class and, consequently, enthusiasm represents the driving force of acquiring knowledge (Arifah, 2014). Enjoying the learning process through the use of technological tools immediately transforms it in meaningful learning for students, by

also involving both their creative and thinking skills. In conclusion, it can be affirmed that language learning should be arranged in a balance between multimedia and teaching methodologies, so as to interest and motivate pupils in mastering their English language.

2.3 Benefits of Technology in Improving English Language Skills

Various studies have been realised on how technology affects language learning. In particular, the analysis of the positive effects produced on English language teaching and learning has arisen great interest in scholars. For instance, Hennessy (2005) declares that technology represents the main catalyst both for teachers' and learners' motivation in trying new manners of working. The expert exposes two perceptions: the students becomes more autonomous, and the teacher feels to be actually "useful" for his pupils by being a supporter and a guide giving advices about thinking and acting independently. The application of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) functions in changing learners' attitude and in increasing self-confidence (Lee, 2001).

ICTs (Information and communication technologies) have the characteristic of producing numerous benefits in studying. First, as explained in the preceding paragraphs, the student is the subject of the lesson. He plays an active role and, as a consequence, is stimulated in memorising a larger amount of information and working actively in class. Secondly and directly connected to the first point, the student starts working in an independent mode and employing his skills completely. Thirdly, language learning can increase because of new learner-based educational materials available online (Costley, 2014; Tutkun, 2011).

Therefore, the main change concerning technology is the repositioning of the roles in class: from teacher-centered to learner-centered methodologies. Once, teachers were just "content-tellers", while now are "subject guides" for the pupils. Similarly,

learners once were “passive listeners”, while now “active players” (Riasati, Allahyar, & Tan, 2012). Also the researcher Gillespie (2006) agrees in affirming that the execution of lessons has drastically changed, especially because cooperation has increased and the interaction with resources has totally changed direction.

Two different modalities of integrating ICTs in the curriculum have been analysed by Warschauer (2000a). The first one involves the “cognitive approach”, whereby pupils have the opportunity to increase their exposure to language personally and to make it meaningful. The second one involves the “social approach” and is totally different since students should be given the opportunity to practice language in authentic and social interactions. Real life skills should be trained and seen as the main purpose to reach also through activities including learners’ collaboration and cooperation.

2.4 Technology application in Spanish language classes

Teaching a culture-based lesson results to be even more essential, rather than just grammar classes based on “boring” technical factual knowledge. Culture is sometimes seen as intimidating for students approaching to a new language, even though they do not know that it enables them to enter every aspect of the language. For instance, in case of teaching a language in the native country or in a foreign country, a good manner to captivate pupils attention concerning the culture should be arranging a *brainstorming* task organised into three phases:

1. asking students what does the word “*culture*” means in general for them. This first phase of the activity should be adequate to break the ice and start a reflection on a new topic;
2. next, the teacher could make students think deeply by asking what does “*belonging to a national culture*” means for them. Thus, students should be motivated to elaborate further questions and answers;

3. lastly, the teacher's question should be modified into "*what does belonging to your national country means for you?*" joined with "*what does your native country is for you?*" and with "*do you feel that you belong to it actually?*". Pupils, during this phase, should be involved in a more detailed discussion by using the foreign language.

In order to clarify some features of teaching a language through its culture, the writer Lynn Ramsson underlines again the importance of applying technology in classrooms. Then, why using technological tools to obtain a more complete linguistic overview? The author, in particular, focused his work on the use of technology as a foundation for Spanish projects. In this case, two main aspects need to be underlined:

1. Motivation increases enormously thanks to the use of non-traditional teaching tools which students employ in their everyday life, therefore lessons would be transformed in something challenging and stimulating. The application of these ICTs during hours passed in classroom allows instructors to make pupils use the instruments that they love and to complete activities, exercises and assignments in an effective modality. Especially, technological tools seem to interest students in the thinking process and to engage their creativity;
2. "*Technology basically emphasises the relevance of the whole lesson*" (Lynn Ramsson. L., 2020). For the author, by incorporating technology into a Spanish culture project makes contents relevant and accessible to learners.

This study describes projects suitable for middle school and high school students, with some useful elements also for younger pupils. Furthermore, the researcher lists six prototype activities which could applied in a Spanish class, so as to promote both the Spanish language and the Hispanic culture, which are:

1. Use "*Prezi Presentations*" to explore Mexican myth and folklore – students would have the opportunity to discover Central American culture through the

study of Mexican myths and folklore, beyond traditional legends and ancient stories covering universal themes. A cultural topic like this, makes students broaden their Hispanic cultural overview and, it is specially aimed at beginners Spanish learners. Also, historical elements and natural phenomena belonging to a specific region and population would be discovered. Thanks to digital presentations such as “Prezi Presentations”, a teacher can easily bring something cultural, historical, or artistic into the 21st-century classroom by subscribing for free. User-friendly and shareable with learners are the main characteristics of a digital presentation, beyond being dynamic and adaptable to the kind of lessons.

The lesson could be implemented by assigning the students different topics concerning Central American culture (e.g. legends, geographic features, historical events, painters, etc.), in order to make them search information individually or in groups. In this manner, learners would be motivated in cooperating and complete a self-directed task, especially because of following their personal interest. At a time, their language skills would be practised together with their thinking competences, both global and analytical.

The most important aspect which should not be forgotten is the full observance of students’ language level. For this reason, both written exercises and oral expositions have to be structured according to the class.

Students would be guided to choose appropriate contents by means of some specific rules. They would be provided with an established number of slides to be used for a presentation, precise guidelines about how to cite sources and how to organise the references section, and lastly, reflecting on the process whereby they have chosen a particular topic (e.g. *Why did you choose this myth?*, or *which features caught your eye about this legend?*).

2. Create *Vimeo* skits to master slang and idioms – Spanish language, like all the languages, is a “*lenguaje con miles de matices*”, that is a language full of

thousands shades and characteristics. Consequently, learning Spanish could be slightly tricky and challenging for an English learner. It is not the case of “*No andes buscándole los tres pies al gato*”, Spanish idiom meaning that people should not overcomplicate or try to prove the impossible, or don not look for trouble or complications where there are not any. In the case of studying a foreign language, it means that even if speakers (e.g. English speakers learning Spanish) have distant points of view, learning that language is not something impossible. Actually, with this idiom, the author want to say that by the use of the correct strategies, passion and technologies, every language can be learnt very well.

Intonation and facial expressions play a big role in the use of a language, because are constituents of communication itself. So as to promote the practice of these types of communication during a lesson, the teacher firstly should show students some video representing conversations in Spanish. Secondly, he or she can capture an interaction between couple of students on *Vimeo*. Thirdly, after uploading the videos of the conversations online (with privacy options controlled and supervised), teachers share them with the class. Lastly, pupils can watch them and revise the context-specific use of expressions.

Another modality of employing videos to activate the learning process, students can be asked to use their social network profiles, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok, etc. Lessons, in this mode, could result more up-to-date and funny.

Realising a skit well-organised, the instructors should set a specific number of idioms per dialogue, a specific length for each of them and a specific number of participants (student playing the roles). Spanish idioms and Spanish accents (slang) can be adopted, practised and revised through this interactive modality. Pronunciation is a central element in a conversation which should also be adapted properly to the context.

A strategic mode to involve students and to make them use creativity is introducing the activity by presenting a list of topics, from which will be originated the dialogue. Another mode would be presenting the same list of elements through images. For example, students could read the word “*paella*” or directly see the image of a *paella* in the case of food topic concerning the Spanish culture.

Therefore, the key is to entertain the class by arranging a conversation including the topics they are going to study. The realisation of dialogues allow pupils to put themselves in the game, to imitate native speakers, and to train their language skills (verbal and non-verbal). Technological tools can be used to revise easily and to share information between peers and teachers. In the case of *Vimeo*, it offers basic privacy provisions, which can be adapted to the school account (e.g. with more advanced settings). Certainly, the use of programmes like this, schools have to agree on uploading materials online, and students’ families should be assured about the only didactic use of videos.

3. Critique authentic Spanish videos on *FluentU* – one of the main purposes of language educators is showing students how a foreign language sounds. Watching films or TV shows in classrooms is not the only opportunity to make pupils hear how native speakers play with intonation and body language. Using programmes such as *FluentU* allow students to interact with videos, films, trailers, clips, music videos, YouTube videos, and much more. All this stuff is arranged so as to discover contemporary Spanish culture. Students would be provided with interactive captions providing in-context definitions for each word present in the video, beyond flashcards and activities whereby students test their learning step-by-step. Only authentic materials are used in this programme, for example, original native films, politics TV shows, scientific presentations, etc. In this manner, pupils would acquire knowledge actively and fix the incoming vocabulary.

Activities are organised by numerous levels, therefore learning would be gradual and adaptable to the class. Three examples of lecture using this method can be choosing a video for the whole class, choosing different videos for groups (group work), or choosing videos for each student or couple of students (individual work).

Then, students can aim at writing or explaining the summary of the video they have watched, answer some questions the teacher assigned them, a funny activity like getting a one-to-five-star rating to the video and expressing a personal opinion, a more creative activity could be imagining to be a film director who express different ideas about the choices make on the same film, and, eventually, students can list all the Spanish cultural contents they have noticed while watching the video or film followed by their personal interpretation.

These kind of programmes show students' progress to the teacher, beyond showing other contents they have watched. Moreover, exercises and activities can be assigned as homework which can be corrected or marked by the teacher from home. Again, communication and cooperation are largely promoted.

4. Taking students on adventures through Argentina via *Google Earth* – this activity can be called “adventure through Argentinian roads” taking students to explore Spanish-speaking areas with no need of plane ticket. The activity should be seen as a parallel way presenting the places where the Spanish language is spoken. It functions as a motivator actualising the contents acquired through a traditional textbook and pushing students imagining how a typical Argentinian life could be. An exercise like this can be programmed as a teacher wishes, even by choosing the country and the area of study.

Students would learn to practice their sales pitch in everyday communication and to plan itineraries through the Spanish territory. Teachers can assign different areas of Argentina in order to research information or to choose new

features to explore (e.g. the *Andes*, glacial lakes, landscapes, ancient monuments, etc.). 3D images showed by *Google Earth* would make the exploration as real as possible and an “online holiday” captivating.

5. Explore Pablo Neruda’s poetry with *VoiceThread* – the writer suggests Neruda as a Latin American poet because his main characteristic is having an original but also simple literature. Therefore, even students starting to approach foreign literature will be encouraged. The analysis of Neruda’s poems would include interesting imagery figures easy to spot. Certainly, a first introduction on the main metaphors, specific figures, symbolism and meaning of words would be useful for the class before starting the analysis.

VoiceThread is a particular network combining original written texts (in this case Neruda’s poems) and students’ voice-overs, beyond the opportunity to add text comments. Moreover, a tool like this allow more anxious students to record, save or delete their oral exposition.

Teachers, firstly, should show how the tool works in front of the class. After this demonstrations, students could try the tool and ask questions to be solved about its functioning. Secondly, after familiarising, pupils can start working with this network also at home by recording some simple voice notes. Lastly, one the class feels comfortable with the tool, the teacher can start with the didactic programme concerning Neruda’s poetry. A good start should be letting students familiarise with pronunciation and poetic prosody by individually recording their voices while reciting a poem. Afterwards, their work can proceed by becoming more specific with the formal analysis of the text. A teacher can add some questions in order to guide the students, who may follow them to arrange their analysis. In this manner, they would be more focussed on specific aspect which the teacher want to work towards. The main features of this tool are that engaging students with literature would become highly

motivating and, especially, adapted to class proficiency levels and to different study methods.

6. Complete a Federico García Lorca play using *Edmodo* – this activity is more indicated to advanced students. It involves creativity in Spanish writing. In particular, using *El Sueño de la Vida*, an incomplete García Lorca’s poem would be challenging. Learners have the opportunity to “play” with their creativity and imagination, always maintaining the attention to the Spanish language through a digital modality.

Edmodo can be compared to the most famous social networks, then, students would not encounter difficulty by approaching it. By being a “learning social network”, it promotes cooperation and communication both with students and with teachers. Teacher would be in charge of the platform and, consequently, he or she can decide how to create an assignment, when post materials online, when make contents available to the whole class through online classroom resources, and communicate individually to students or to the class.

Three examples of guiding questions to follow:

- *Who would you cast as the character of Autor (= Author)? Find a photograph online, cite your source and explain your decision in 50 words or less;*
- *Title the play. Make sure you use one symbol in your title that you feel represents Lorca’s vision and explain your choice;*
- *In 2016, Spanish playwright and poet Alberto Conejero finished the play and titled it “El sueño de la vida” (The Dream of Life). What do you make of his title?*

To conclude the exercise, students can post their answers (separately or in a whole text) only visible for the teacher or for all the classmates. A little expansion can be added by opening a virtual space under the exercises, where students can write a comment or a personal reflection.

3. SECOND LANGUAGE (SL) AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE (FL) TEACHING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Formal and informal use of social media as teaching methodologies have been analysed by Jonathon Reinhardt, researcher from the University of Arizona. CALL (Computer-assisted language learning) is a field which is changing its feature continuously because of its constantly updating nature. Other fields are included in this process in development, which are: language pedagogy and assessment, second language acquisition (SLA), discourse analysis, literacy studies, computer-mediated communication (CMC), and sociolinguistics. All of them are related with each other and reciprocally affecting their characteristics. Both advantages and issues are currently playing their part in language learning, and are going to be analysed in detail. A large number of platforms using Web 2.0 started to spread in the mid 2000s and, for the first time, were called “social media”. On the one hand, in this period, *Friendster*, *MySpace*, *Facebook*, and *LikedIn*, entered gradually in the world of social networking. These are all sites which allow users to create personal profiles and to connect with one another, and to show or share information and contents. On the other hand, Flickr and YouTube appear for the first time by focussing on media creation, curation, and sharing. Lately, in 2010 even sites like these started to be considered “social media” too. From this moment, a massive increase of population started to subscribe to these new services, until 2018 counting 2.6 billion people (a third of our planet population). Basically, social media concerns any application or technology in which individuals can create, interconnect, share contents, and communicate. Even though social media regard connections by means of Web 2.0, the researchers Zourou & Lamy (2013) affirm that *“the lack of clarity leads to confusion of all Internet-mediated social interaction as social media practice”*. At the same time, Zhu & Chen (2015) argue that *“typologize social media as either profile-based or content-based on one axis, and either personalized message or broadcast message on the other, resulting in four types or purposes: to connect to*

others and build relationships, to collaborate with others, to present or broadcast an identity, or to express creative activity". Lately, another definition is given by Nations (2015): "*social media as typified by features such as user accounts, profile pages, network articulation, news feeds and notifications, personalization features, review systems, and feedback systems like 'upvote' or 'like' buttons*". However, some confusion arises because of numerous and different points of view. Social media applications, beyond structured learning applications, create general misunderstanding as a consequence of integration into SNS interfaces (Social Networking Service), or enhanced with SNS features. Sometimes, marketing purposes were pursued by sites and labels by calling themselves "social media" just so as not to be confused with other competitors.

3.1 Social media for CALL (Computer-assisted language learning)

At a certain point, school language educators decide to include social media in the *curriculum*. The main reason is considering the opportunity to generate meaningful social interactions by means of the Internet. Communications is the key for teachers in order to maintain a social contact also online, beyond the traditional lessons in classroom. Some of the first Internet applications for synchronous learning (chat) and asynchronous learning (email and bulletin board system) are characterised by a communicative exchange which is powerful in education. While teachers apply these new techniques to language education, researchers started to be interested in the topic and decide to investigate on it. Early empirical research discovers that "*the various features of CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) led to increased output production, access to a wider range of discourses, equalized participation, and increased fluency*" (e.g. Beauvois 1992; Chun 1994; Kern 1995; see Ortega 1997 for a summary).

“Sociocognitive approaches to CALL shift the dynamic from learners’ interaction with computers to interaction with other humans via the computer. The basis for this new approach to CALL lies in both theoretical and technological developments. Theoretically, there has been the broader emphasis on meaningful interaction in authentic discourse communities. Technologically, there has been the development of computer networking, which allows the computer to be used as a vehicle for interactive human communication” (Kern & Warschauer, 2000, p. 11). Namely, social-interactive affordances through social media and Web 2.0 are favoured in language teaching especially because of the promotion of personal expression and participation in a “community”. The scholars Warschauer & Grimes (2007) agree by saying that a slightly different feature between social media. For them, *blogs* appear to underline authorship as appropriation, *wikis* work on collaboration in text production and socialisation through discourse communities, and social networking reduce authorship by reflecting post-structuralist notions (e.g. polyvocality and deconstruction). Researchers had the opportunity to start a serious investigation on social media by 2009, with the complete affirmation of rigorous theoretical bases and methodological instances related to this new mode of communication.

3.2 Blogs

A “*blog*” is a diminutive of “*weblog*” and defines a journal-like website composed of posts and their related comments. Blogs present ‘*a mixture in unique proportions of links, commentary, and personal thoughts and essays*’ (Blood 2000) and, consequently, seem to be suitable for the expression of expertise. Authors of blogs can be connected with other blogs and networked communities composed of numerous readers and writers whose denomination on the whole is “*blogosphere*”. Blogs comprehend various genres which have been invented with the passing of time, among which personal blogs (diaries), filter blogs (news journals), and knowledge

blogs (topical guides). The genre are based on the objective that they pursue, on the audience they are aimed at, on the author role, on blogging foregrounds the act of individual, and nonymous authorship (Herring et al. 2005, in Warschauer & Grimes 2007).

The author continues “*Blogs were arguably the first social media because they were designed to support interactive readership and multimedia embedding from their inception in the late 1990s*”. Blogs, during their evolution, allowed persons to publish even with no knowledge of coding, until reaching over 18 millions blogs publication in 2014 through WordPress (Crum 2015). On the contrary, in the most recent history of blogs, this manner of creating web-based writing connected with the world of social networking. For example, Twitter is defined also “microblogging”, whereby the fusion of traditional and single-authored blogging can emerge into general use and questionable popularity.

Returning on the topic of language learning, researchers discovered that L2 educators and investigators blogging can continue to be considered a potential for language education, especially for writing and social practice. The scholar Godwin-Jones (2003) highlights the potential for blogs to create personal journals or portfolios by favouring reflective learning and the development of a sense of ownership or authority. Campbell (2003) agrees by explaining different educational applications of blogs: “*tutor blogs as instructor-maintained collections of class references and resources, learner blogs as online journals or portfolios for individual students, and class blogs as spaces for collaboration and interaction*”. Ward (2004) focuses on the positive aspects of language teaching through blogs. According to him, the most important one is the possibility of encountering authentic language material which can be used to promote reading practice strategies, such as skimming, scanning, and critical reading. The researcher gives an example of blog application in language education, he says that ESL students (English as a Second Language) can practice the writing of different types of texts, like inventing new stories, reports, film or book reviews, recipes, and comment critically on a large variety of topics. Another

example is presented by Ducate & Lomicka (2005) who introduce a project including French learners using a “*blogosphere*” to communicate with their families and friends when studying abroad; similarly, other students used a German blog in order to obtain new inputs and to find new writing and reading activities.

In conclusion, blogs greatly help the acquisition of the language of study and promote effectively “telecollaborative” exchange. Therefore, blogs are divided into two parallel sides: 1. educational purposes, such as being useful for culture learning, intercultural exchange, spaces for literacy, task designs; 2. pupils individual development, for instance improving learner autonomy, motivation and self-confidence, audience and skill awareness, identity development, increase of communicative skills, and management of relationships both with professors and classmates.

3.3 Wikis

A wiki is defined as “*a collaborative website which can be directly edited merely by using a web browser, often by anyone with access to it*” by the ‘*Wiktionary*’. The inventor of the term ‘*wiki*’ is Ward Cunningham, who derived it from the Hawaiian word ‘*wiki-wiki*’ meaning ‘*quick*’ in English. Not surprisingly, this word refers to the facilitation of collaboration and interaction thanks to the record of revision histories, to the simplification contribution and to the de-emphasis of of author identities. Moreover, a wiki is suitable media to create multi-authored texts and to edit references in documents. *Wikipedia* is one of the most famous examples of wikis worldwide. It were launched in 1998 and, year after year, has been obtaining over 7 million entries in nearly 300 languages, receiving more than 3 million visit a day, and being updated 10 times per second. In general, wikis can be closed or open. The closed ones can be used by closed communities or private organisations, whereas the open ones can be consulted by the population and can comprehend online

encyclopedias, almanacs, and music score repositories, or even sections of libraries. However, “*Unlike traditional reference works, wikis usually have no centralized editors, and instead rely on contributors for both authoring and editing*”, this is how the writer defines the main feature belonging to wikis. The experts Warschauer & Grimes (2007) remark that blogs, in comparison to wikis “*highlight self-presentation, voice, and individual authorship, wikis seem to promote collaborative, distributed authorship*”. Their argumentation clarifies blogs are used to promoting something, but with no need of dialogic interaction or collaboration. Wikis, in contrast to blogs, specially focus on sharing and networking. Blogs and wikis, nevertheless, show certain similarities: work as resource production and generation of ideas. This common characteristic oppose them to SNSs are more concentrated on sharing across networks as an original production. All in all, blogs and SNSs appear to underline individual authorship, while wikis appear to be remarkable for the opposite reason, for “*de-emphasizing the identities of individual contributors*”. Similar to wikis, another hypertext publication collaboratively edited is *Google Docs*. It enters more recently as an object of CALL research (e.g. Kessler, Bikowski & Boggs 2012; Bikowski & Vithanage 2016). It is slightly different because does not function like a social media, therefore does not provide the opportunity to work on public documents or resources.

As a means to return to L2 learning, by adopting a wiki-enhance instruction, likewise with blogs, helps students increase their audience awareness, since they publish their work in an open modality. First uses of wikis through a language education curriculum aim at observing learning potential of computer-mediated peer review (e.g. Ho & Savignon 2007). Initially, commercially available tools available to a closed group of persons who could use locally their private network. Jonathon Reinhardt, the author of this paper, specifies that “*the Daedalus Integrated Writing Environment, for example, has been available since the early 1990s*”, while another researcher clarifies that “*Research on classroom-based collaborative writing was focused on the social potential of writing in synchronous (chat) and asynchronous*

(email and discussion boards) CMC contexts” (Kern 1995). Research on these new manners of L2TL lessons expands in 2008 by analysing CMC and collaborative writing until wiki affordances. Different strategic uses of wikis emerge, according to their purpose. For example, focussing on the meaning of form, of collective activity, of collaboration, and cooperation as VLEs (Virtual Learning Environments). Also, wikis promote pupils’ awareness development of audience (genuine or imagined), when, as usual, task design parameters and learners’ subjectivity are two fundamental elements.

3.4 SNSs (Social Network Sites)

“SNSs can be defined as social media that foreground personal profile curation, network traversing, and network articulation” (boyd & Ellison 2007; Ellison & boyd 2013). While technology continuo to expand its development, researchers’ attention starts to focus on *social network sites*. One of the main characteristics is presenting user status updates (showed in reverse chronological order), and operating like short blogs with threaded discussions, beyond giving the opportunity to share photos, to share multimedia contents (e.g. videos, audio, etc.), and to chat with other users. SNSs can be activated through a computer or a smartphone also in the form of applications, by involving the use of cameras (to take photos and post them), the photo gallery (to upload pictures or videos taken previously), the location-based services (e.g. Foursquare). *Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat* are one of the main examples of SNSs used in smartphones. Another example of ‘*microblog*’ is Twitter, whose creation focusses on functioning as *“a quick dissemination of news headlines or gossip, by allowing the users to ‘subscribe’, or to ‘follow’ they did not know personally and to track and browse information using ‘hashtags’”*, as the author explains. Twitter posts, just now described as a sort of personal ‘*headlines*’ publications, are limited to 140 characters for each post. Contents, in this manner, are

both sharable and superficial at a time, contrarily to blogs and wikis which attach importance to authorship and cooperation between users. More recently, however, Twitter posts gave users the opportunity to write longer posts and to attach photos, videos, etc. This SNS resembles to *Facebook*, which also added hashtags, the concept of 'follower'. *Compuserve* and *America OnLine* are first examples of early Internet-based SNSs. They allow users to create profiles and to network with people. In the 1990s, these social networks are designed for specific aims, such as dating, class reunions (e.g. *Classmates.com*), and business networking services (e.g. *LiknedIn*). This first generation of SNSs, together with *Sixdegrees.com*, *Friendster*, *MySpace*, and, lately, *Facebook* adopt a certain “‘degree of separation’ concept” (Shah 2016) between users’ personal profiles. Social connections start to be called ‘friendships’, which can be organised by the user according to personal interests, purposes, or affiliations. In March 2018, *Facebook* becomes the SNS *par excellence* counting 1.45 billion individuals using it every day.

Scholastic language education start to consider even SNSs to share contents with students. Social networking becomes an actual global phenomenon more and more share worldwide, until academia begins to be interested in it. An education scholar, Selwyn, in 2008 affirms that “*SNSs can facilitate the development of collaborative and participatory learning communities, as well as opportunities for informal and unstructured learning*”. A group of researchers, Wilson et al., discovers five main areas to be investigated:

1. descriptive analysis of users;
2. motivations for using Facebook;
3. identity presentation;
4. the role of Facebook in social interactions;
5. privacy and information disclosure.

Therefore, according to education, communications, and social science research with focus on L2TL, informal L2 use and learning through SNSs (like *Facebook* or *Twitter*) is effective both for teachers and for pupils. This use of formal pedagogical applications allow educators to join informal to intentional use of social networks for scholar purposes, beyond SNECSs (social network-enhanced commercial CALL sites and services). Investigations of informal SNS-enhanced L2 use and learning compare it to formal instructional contexts, and, eventually, seem to explain that: “*SNSs are used for the learning, practicing, and maintenance of home, heritage, and new languages, and strategic self-directed learning [...], beyond showing considerable theoretical and methodological innovation, informed by trends in related fields like Internet sociolinguistics, communication, and new media studies*”.

4. IMPACT OF COVID-19 EMERGENCY & CURRENT APPLICATION OF ICTs IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

4.1 Advantages and Issues of ICTs application in emergency times

- Advantages & Disadvantages

ICTs application during Covid-19 emergency time can be considered a sort of “forced experimentation”. A quote is needed:

“il rapporto tra innovazioni tecnologiche ed il loro utilizzo nei contesti scolastici, fino ad ora, non aveva mai trovato un’apertura totale per una radicata volontà di non discostarsi troppo dalle tecniche e dagli strumenti della didattica tradizionale. Nel marzo 2020 però la Pandemia Sanitaria scatenata dal cosiddetto “Corona Virus” ha totalmente ed improvvisamente rivoluzionato il sistema scolastico costringendolo ad affidarsi, suo malgrado, esclusivamente alle tecnologie digitali e alla didattica a distanza per garantirne la sostenibilità nell’immediato e nel prossimo futuro”.

(Di Palma, D., Belfiore, P., 2020)

The authors, realising a research at University of Naples, firstly explained what does the relationship between technological innovations and schools means. Especially, nowadays, they affirm that the school system has never had to apply technology in a forced way. Therefore, the emergency time pushed teaching strategies to expand and to experiment new methodologies, which brought to modify the basic scholastic nature, actually.

They continue by telling that:

“Con riferimento ad uno dei sistemi socio-relazionali per eccellenza, quello scolastico, emerge, infatti, una crescente necessità di fornire a tutti gli studenti metodi, strumenti e abilità che li mettano in grado di rapportarsi efficacemente con una società sempre più accelerata e complessa a cui le tecnologie digitali ma anche lo sviluppo scientifico, i processi di internazionalizzazione e globalizzazione dei contesti e delle relazioni, le trasformazioni delle strutture familiari e dei comportamenti sociali, manifestano l’insorgere di nuovi bisogni e sfide formative, pedagogiche e didattiche”.

However, it seems to be clear that a big change is due to Covid-19, beyond sanitary emergency. Schools represent the most socio-relational environments where communication is always the key point, both traditionally among school desks, and also technologically among computer connections. For this reason, schools are required to maintain high educational quality, mainly despite of the presence of struggles. By adapting the system to new modalities should be the first step to improve instruction, and to expand it thanks to technology (Baroni & Lazzari, 2015; Ferrari, 2018; Moricca, 2016). Youngsters are used to be multitasking human beings, then technology could constitute a highly-motivational element for them during the learning process.

“[...] fare, cioè, molte cose in parallelo, di apprendere sotto numerose e diverse sollecitazioni; il loro approccio comunicativo e relazionale si compone di messaggi virtuali, acronimi, mp3, iPod, videogiochi fatti di sempre meno testo, più immagini, animazioni, video, audio, etc.”

(Brooks & Pomerantz, 2017; Laurillard, 2015; Pitzalis et al, 2016)

Somehow, students are favoured when dealing with ICTs, because they usually promote a communicative approach of different natures (such as texting, voice

messages, social medias, social networks, videos, numerous platforms, etc.). The key, both for teachers and for students, is transferring this great motivational habit to school education.

The researchers continue by saying:

“Ma a ben vedere, per didattica innovativa si potrebbe intendere, in senso lato, l'utilizzo di strumenti tradizionali in modalità nuova e creativa”.

(Panciroli, 2016; Panciroli et al, 2018; Rugelj & Zapušek, 2018).

Two main acceprions appear to be referred to “technology and education”, and are visible in the chart as follows:

TECNOLOGIE PER LA DIDATTICA	TECNOLOGIE DIDATTICHE
<p>Si fa riferimento all'utilizzo della tecnologia nella didattica considerando l'adozione degli strumenti tecnologici più appropriati per favorire e stimolare l'apprendimento degli studenti.</p>	<p>Si fa riferimento all'applicazione delle scienze comportamentali alla didattica, considerando la progettazione e la valutazione di modelli di apprendimenti attraverso l'utilizzo delle conoscenze derivanti dalle teorie psicologiche, evolutive, e comportamentali.</p>

Table 1

(Lazzari, 2018)

Through this distinction, it is clear that a big differentiation stands out:

“technology aimed at education” vs. *“didactic technologies”*. These are two elements that, at a time, could appear similar, but which are totally different, actually. The set of the technologies aimed at scholastic education (hopefully the most recent) constitute all hardware or software instruments used so as to facilitate students’ learning, beyond to improve the application of instructors’ teaching processes. Nowadays, every didactic process adopts some kind of technological tool, which functions as a didactic instrument. Even though, traditional tools, such as printed books, notebooks, pens, etc., are still present in the current school system. Technology currently plays the role of integration to the didactic courses, which is becoming more and more predominant. For example, one of the first technological appearances in class were CDs. One of the most useful aspect of ICTs in schools is to guide gradually learners’ cognitive development, and to avoid separation between learning in class and learning at home. Then, *“formal”*, *“informal”*, and *“non-formal”* learning environments are three concepts appearing in the didactic panorama, especially now with the use of technologies. The borders between *“in-class”* and *“out-of-class”* teaching are disappearing thanks to the application of digital resources, or rather are successfully joining together as learning techniques.

The researchers continue by affirming:

“La matrice del cambiamento è rappresentata da un approccio costruttivistico secondo il quale lo studente, mediante la elaborazione del proprio sapere smette di essere mero destinatario di nozioni e informazioni, per diventare un protagonista attento e attivo”.

The student becomes the protagonist of his learning process, and stops being a passive individual receiving information. The class of students would not just learn notions by heart (e.g. contained in textbooks). On the contrary, students would

continuously stimulated immersed in a cooperative relationship both between peers and teachers.

As follows, the key point explained by the scholars:

“Gli studenti di oggi si ritrovano, così, non ad “avere” le informazioni, ma a doverle recuperare, rendere attive, strutturare, riflettere su di esse in modo critico”.

It means that pupils would start to convert information in a dynamic modality, both digitally and cognitively. It is due to finding, activating, structuring the incoming contents, beyond reflecting on them critically.

As a consequence, teacher’s role is also changing notably. The instructor should enter and adapt himself within this new changing educational process. He has to replace himself from being a leader, “contents teller” or a “figure of knowledge owner”, to being a “guide” and a “facilitator” managing the whole information transfer proceeding. Giving a lecture, consequently, is being changing remarkably by removing characteristics belonging to frontal and traditional lesson, and by favouring collaboration and cooperation between individuals, e.g. through group of work, research to do, cooperative activities, etc. Although activities like these can be realised even with traditional strategies, ICTs allow to add worth to the educational process, and spacial and temporal barriers would almost totally disappear by avoiding the loss of work and time.

The two expert conclude their reflection with a quote:

“Grazie all’innovazione tecnologica, lo studente avvalendosi della sua naturale capacità di critica e di giudizio può testare le proprie conoscenze trasformando il suo sapere teorico in casi concreti”.

(Laurillard, 2015; Tafuri et al., 2020).

In sum, the researchers make a clarification: their investigation aimed at secondary school students' surround with the purpose of discovering the benefits and the complexities derived from the application of ICTs. In particular, in a period in which the school system had to apply digital solution to the didactic curriculum. The main aspect carried out by the authors is that from an "obligation", a great future innovation can be inferred.

"D'altronde comprendere il punto di vista dello studente è la chiave di volta per la creazione di un ambiente scolastico efficace nella sua accezione student-centred volta a performare i processi di apprendimento a qualsiasi livello".

(Gover, Loukkola & Peterbauer, 2019; Sursock & Smidt, 2010)

"A ragion di ciò non si può considerare che un elemento di rilievo fondamentale, che ha sicuramente condizionato i risultati dell'analisi condotta, è stato la stessa natura "forzata" e non "spontanea" con cui le tecnologie sono diventate lo strumento indispensabile per la diffusione dei saperi e la totale assenza di preparazione a tale circostanza sia dal lato dei docenti che da quello dei discenti".

Moreover, Di Palma nad Belfiore affirm that beyond the technical issues regarding the tools, an aspect suffered more than others: social relationships.

For this reason they continue by saying:

"Non va dimenticato, infatti, anche in un'ottica prospettica e di trasformazione didattica futura, che la scuola è, e dovrebbe sempre restare, un ambiente sociale chiamato ad assolvere il primario ruolo di formare gli studenti nell'accezione pedagogica del termine che tiene, quindi, sì conto dell'istruzione, ma anche dell'aspetto cardine dell'educazione alla vita".

Thanks to their research, three elements were underlined by learners: modalities of attending classes, maintaining the attention and motivation. These three words are the principle components for the constitution of a school system guaranteeing the combination of traditional elements (aimed at the preservation of “student-student” relationships and “student-teacher” relationships), and of technological aspects for enhancing digital competences, for optimising digital resources, and for managing effectively spacial and temporal conditions. A brand-new didactic model needs time to be carried out and implemented, especially because all the scholastic staff should develop new strategies and research oriented to an educational progress within the school system. The focus is on taking advantage of this unexpected didactic revolution so as to reach innovation.

The author conclude by listing the individuals involved in this change:

“[...] le famiglie, le istituzioni politiche, i decision makers scolastici, i docenti, gli stessi studenti hanno l’obbligo morale di impegnarsi affinché le novità introdotte siano perfezionate e diventino risorse innovative al servizio della tradizione”.

Numerous persons are involved and affected by Covid-19 emergency, particularly those working in or attending schools and universities. Hence, a common effort pointed towards the promotion of a change is fundamental.

5. THE STUDY

5.1 Context – Research Questions & Hypothesis

This research work was realised at Ca' Foscari university in Venice in Italy, by focussing on two main purposes: the first one consists in the analysis of the evolution, diffusion and application of technology in language education in secondary schools over the last few years; while the second one describes an investigation based on a survey questionnaire aimed at secondary school teachers aimed at collecting their perceptions about language education during the Covid-19 emergency in Italy. In particular, the questionnaire unveil the different points of view of a sample of teachers “forced” to use technological tools in their lessons. Certainly, at the beginning, the emergency time did not help individuals communicate with each other. On the contrary, it has gradually permitted adapting the transmission of information by making it more and more effective.

- Research questions:

1) How has the Covid-19 emergency affected language teachers' use of ICT tools and strategies?

2) What are the main advantages and issues that teachers are encountering? How can they be solved?

3) Which are the main future implications concerning the relationship between technology and language education?

5.2 Methods – Research Instrument & Participants

- The research instrument

First of all, this research work is a 'case study'. This methodology is defined as “*an intensive study about a person, a group of people or a unit, which is aimed to generalize over several units*”, or also “*an intensive, systematic investigation of a single individual, group, community or some other unit in which the researcher examines in-depth data relating to several variables*” (Gustafsson J., 2017).

For my study, I decided to adopt a mixed methods research. This methodology is described as follows:

“Mixed methods research (also called mixed research in this article) is becoming increasingly articulated, attached to research practice, and recognized as the third major research approach or research paradigm, 1 along with qualitative research and quantitative research [...] Mixed research, in its recent history in the social and behavioral or human sciences, started with researchers and methodologists who believed qualitative and quantitative viewpoints and methods were useful as they addressed their research questions. [...] Mixed research is a synthesis that includes ideas from qualitative and quantitative research.

(R. Burke Johnson, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie and Lisa A. Turner, 2007)

The instrument that I adopted to realise my research is a survey questionnaire (*Appendix* available for consultation on p.). The 28 questions are all in Italian, of which five opening questions concerning the privacy and data protection.

The study is titled “*L'utilizzo di dispositivi tecnologici nella didattica per l'insegnamento delle lingue straniere nelle scuole secondarie di secondo grado*” (= “*The application of technological tools in language education in secondary*

schools”). As introduced in the first part of the analyses, the objective of the research is observing the development of language education during Covid-19 emergency, especially through various regions of Italy. The investigation started in July 2020 with the creation and diffusion of the survey questionnaire, and finished in September 2020, when the survey was closed. The research originated in Veneto, and spread along numerous Italian regions. The questionnaire is totally anonymous.

Now, a deeper analysis of the research instrument and of the collected data will be presented. It is organised in 28 questions exploring different aspects of language education in an emergency period.

More precisely, five sections can be distinguished within it:

1. *DIDATTICA PRIMA DEL COVID-19* (= Instruction before Covid-19)
2. *DIDATTICA DURANTE IL COVID-19* (=Instruction during Covid-19)
3. *DIDATTICA DOPO IL COVID-19: integrazioni o modifiche nella didattica futura?* (= Intruction after Covid-19: integrations or modifications for the future instruction?)
4. *GESTIONE DELLE RELAZIONI INSEGNANTI-STUDENTI* (= Managment of teacher-student realtionships)
5. *PROFILO GENERALE DELL'INSEGNANTE* (= General teacher's outlines).

By means of these five sections, teachers expressed their opinions by answering closed and open questions. In this manner, both qualitative and quantitative results were collected.

Following there is a description of the different sections:

- SECTION 1: questions 1 is a Likert scale with six degrees of answer; question 2 is a multiple choice in which the respondents could choose *more* than one answer; questions 3, 4, 5, and 6 are Likert scales with six degrees of answer;

- SECTION 2: question 7 is a multiple choice in which the respondents could choose more than one answer; question 8, 9, 10, 11 are Likert scales with six degrees of answer; 12, 13, 14, and 15 are multiple choice in which the respondents could choose *only* than one answer;

- SECTION 3: question 16 is a Likert scale with six degrees of answer; 17 is a multiple-choice grid with six degrees of answer for each statement; 18 and 19 are short open questions_

- SECTION 4: question 20 is a multiple-choice grid with two possible alternatives of answers;

- SECTION 5: questions 21 and 22 are a multiple choices in which the respondents could choose more than one answer; 23 is a short open question; questions 23 and 24; questions 25 is a multiple choice in which the respondents could choose *more* than one answer; question 26 and 27 are a multiple choices in which respondents could choose *only* one answer; and 28 is an optional short open question concluding the questionnaire.

The secondary schools involves are *liceo classico* (4 teachers; 8,5%), *liceo scientifico* (9 teachers, 19,1%), *liceo linguistico* (17 teachers, 36,2%), *istituto tecnico* (7 teachers, 14,9%), *istituto tecnico with Turismo curriculum* (1 teacher, 1,2%), *istituto professionale* (2 teachers, 4,3%), *liceo europeo* (2 teachers, 4,3%), *liceo delle scienze umane/socio-economico* (1 teacher, 2,1%), *liceo classico europeo* (1 teacher, 2,1%), *private English school* (1 teacher, 2,1%), German and Italian tutor as a L2 in Italy and abroad (1 teacher, 1,2%), secondary school of 1st degree/middle school (4 teachers, 8,4%).

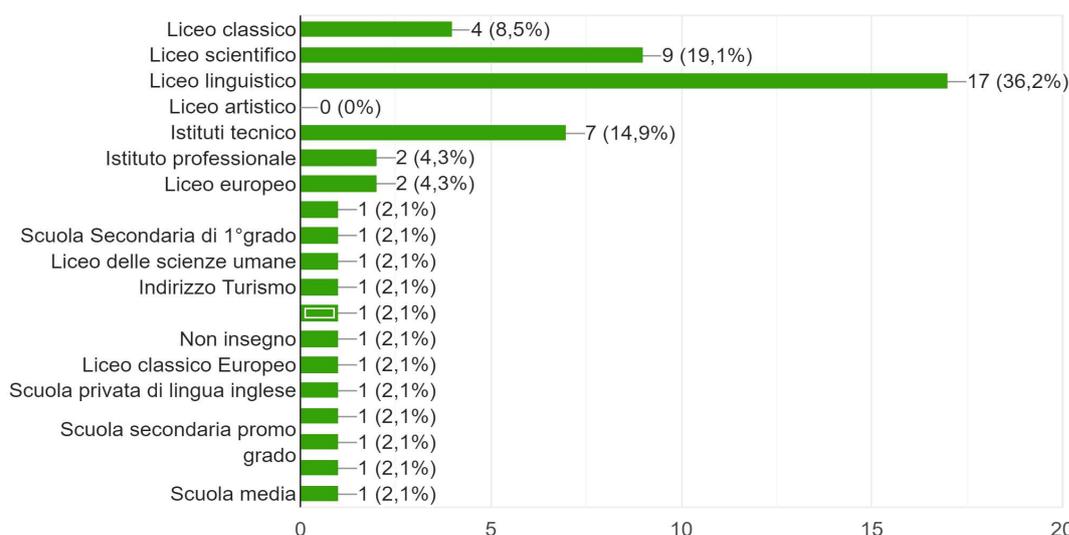


Figure 1.2

Participants' professional figures are tenured teacher (28 teachers), substitute teacher (11 teachers), tutor (1 teacher), ITP/Insegnante Tecnico Pratico in secondary schools (2 teachers), independent teacher (1 teacher), Italian as an L2 teaching assistant (1 teacher), special needs teaching assistant (1 teacher), ITP in foreign language teaching and CLIL teaching (1 teacher).

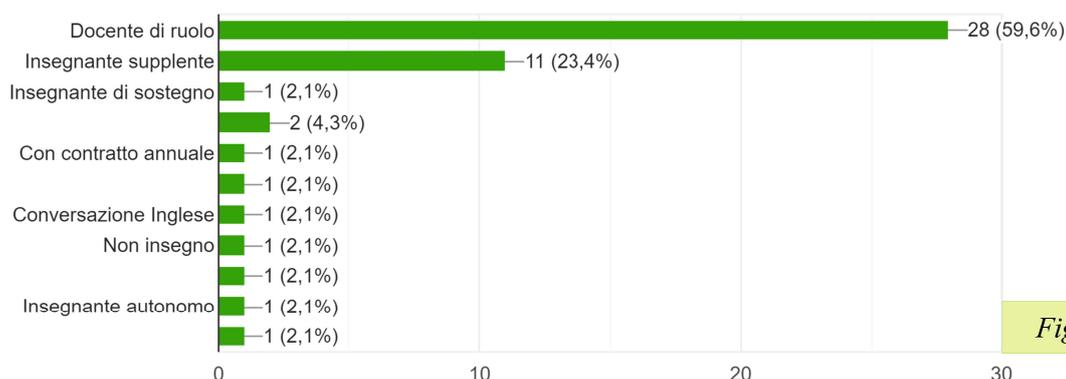


Figure 1.3

The subjects composing this sample of teachers come from different parts of Italy, and, even, one from a foreign country:

- 11 from Venice (Veneto, Italy);
- 5 from Vicenza (Veneto Italy);
- 1 from Milan (Lombardia, Italy);
- 1 from Badia Polesine (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Castelfranco Veneto (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Rovigo, (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Friuli-Venezia-Giulia (Italy);
- 2 from Padova (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from San Donà di Piave (Veneto, Italy);
- 2 from Mestre (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Fermo (Marche, Italy);
- 2 from Mirano (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Emilia-Romgna (Italy);
- 1 from a foreign country (not specified);
- 1 from Termoli (Molise, Italy);
- 1 from Montebelluna (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Le Mans (Pays de la Loire, France);
- 2 from Arzignano (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Napoli (Campania, Italy);
- 1 from Barrafranca (Sicily, Italy);
- 1 from Piazza Armerina (Sicily, Italy);
- 1 from Treviso (Veneto, Italy);
- 1 from Pescara (Abruzzo, Italy);
- 1 from Pesaro (Marche, Italy);
- 6 from Veneto (Italy).

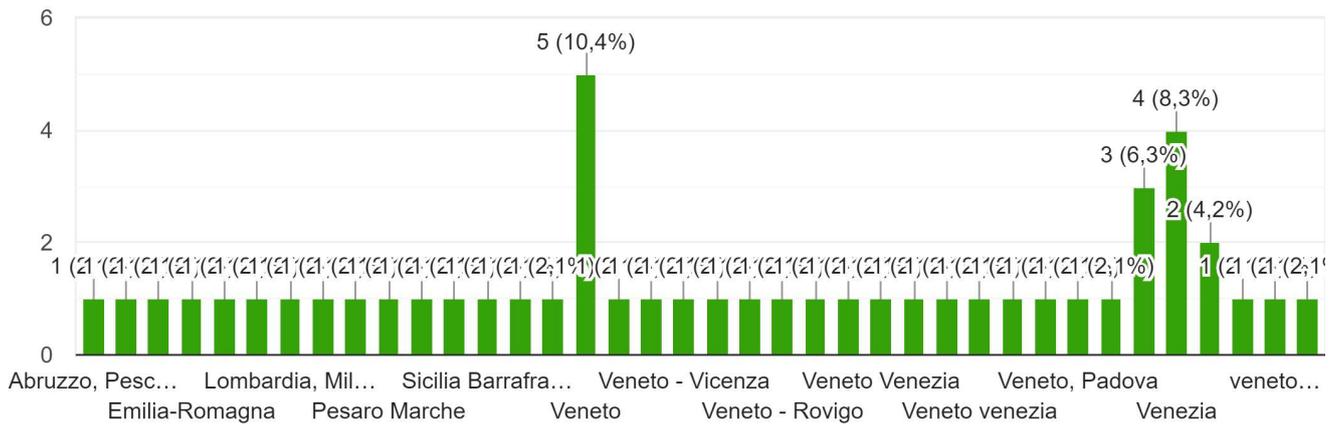


Figure 1.4

Participants' teaching experience shows a range between 1 year to 35 years of career. The languages that participants are teaching are: English with an amount of 35 teachers (74,5%), Spanish with an amount of 6 teachers (12,8%), French with an amount of 7 teachers (14,9%), German with an amount of 4 teachers (8,5%), Italian LS with an amount of 1 teacher (2,1%), and Italian L2 with an amount of 1 teacher (2,1%).

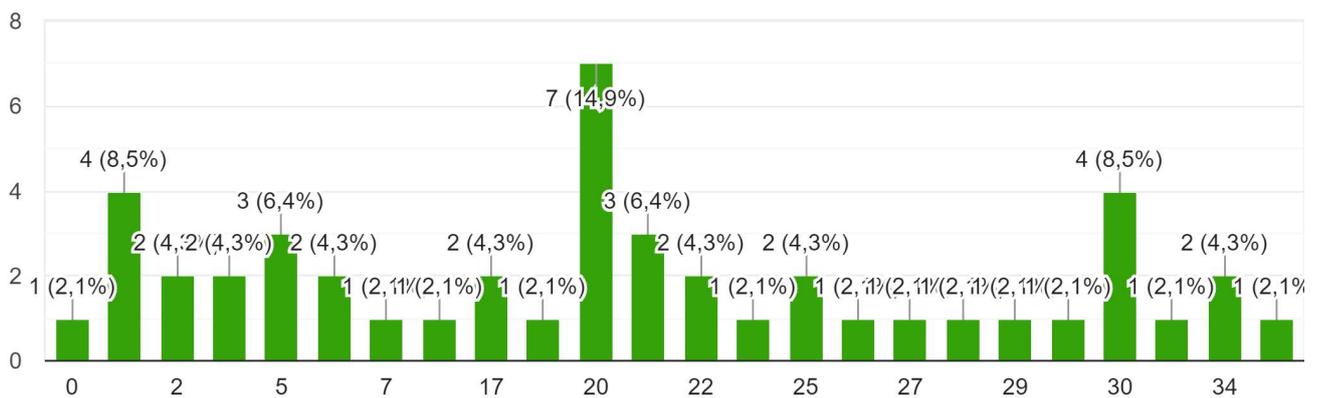


Figure 1.5

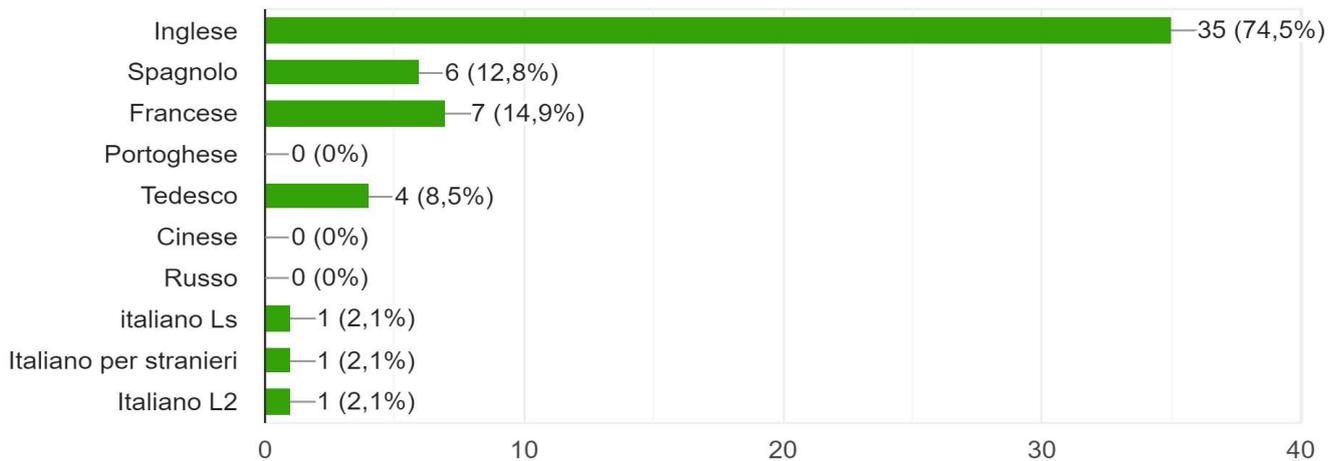


Figure 1.6

5.3 Results – Analysis & Findings

The illustration of research findings will be arranged as a question-by-question exploration, in chronological order from question 1 until question 28 (available, again, in the *Appendix* on p.).

By reproposing question number 1, the analysis of *SECTION 2* –

“*DIDATTICA PRIMA DEL COVID-19*” is going to start (*section 1* is dedicated to privacy and data treatment):

*1. Quanto era importante l'utilizzo di supporti tecnologici nell'insegnamento della lingua straniera prima dell'emergenza Covid-19? **

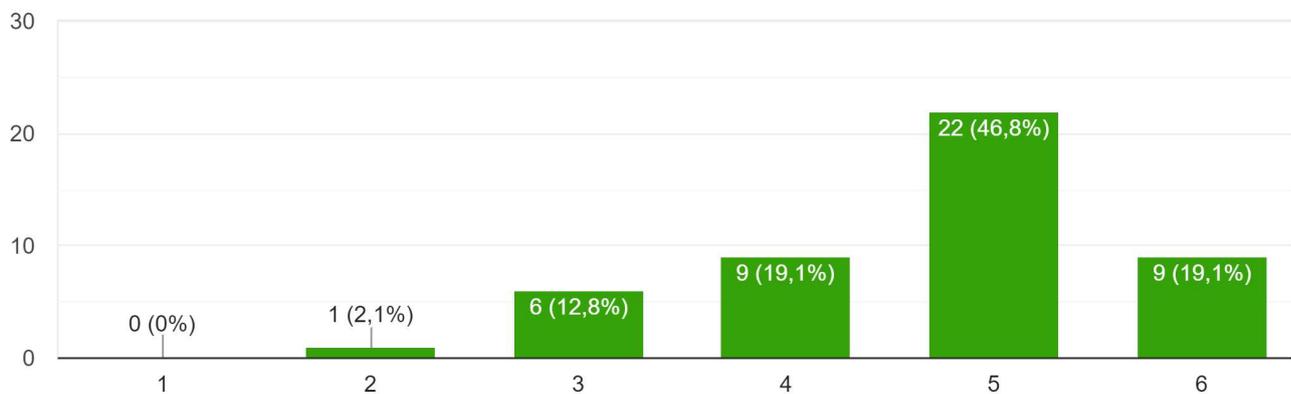


Figure 1.7

This is a Likert scale question which presents a six-point scale, whose results are the following: By observing the bar chart, the general application of technological tools in language teaching during the Covid-19 emergency appears to be highly relevant. The score is 5 out of 6, with a percentage of 46,8%. In decreasing order, 4 and 6 are the following scores equally with 9 voters and 46,8%; score 3 with 6 voters and a percentage of 12,8%. In the end, score 2 presents 1 voter with a percentage of 2,1%.

Question 2 is as follows:

*2. Prima dell'emergenza Covid-19 quali dei seguenti supporti tecnologici ha utilizzato nell'insegnamento della lingua? (Più di una risposta è possibile) **

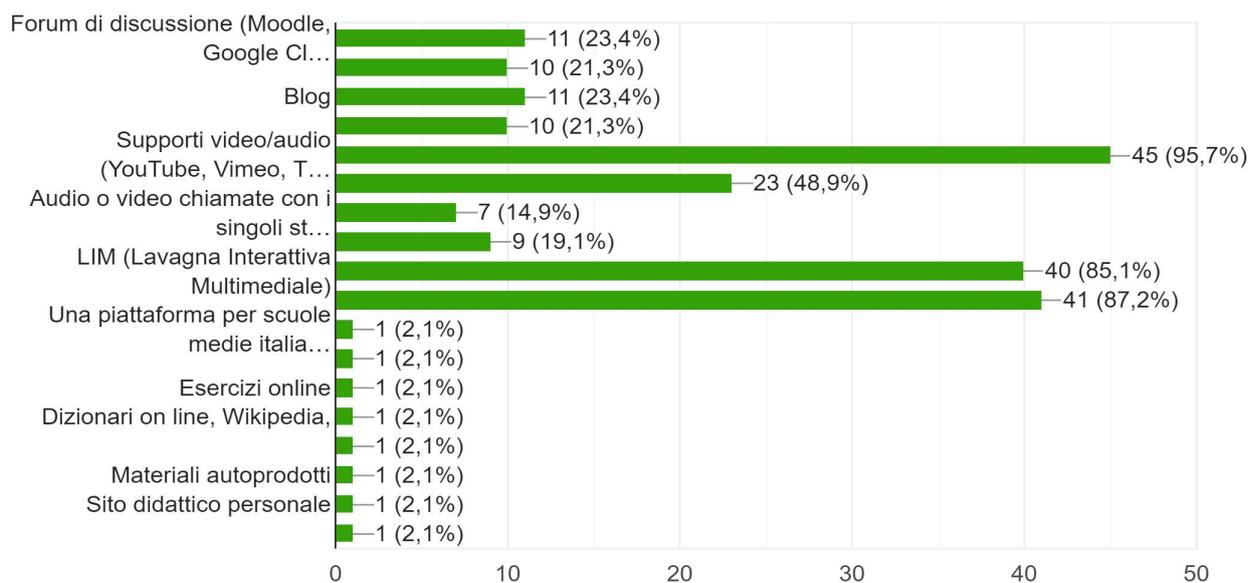


Figure 1.8

This is a multiple choice question in which the respondents could choose *more* than one answer, showing the following results:

It seems to be clear that *before* Covid-19 emergency, teachers were already used to adopting technological tools for their lessons.

Then, the analysis of the various tools in detail is to be presented, following the score order from the most used to the less used tool:

1. the major percentage is concentrated especially in the answer “*Supporti video/audio (YouTube, Video, TEDTalks, etc.)*” showing 45 out of 47 voters with a 95,7%;
2. “*Registro online*” is the second answer most voted, with 41 voters and a percentage of 87,2%;
3. “*LIM (Lavagna Interattiva Multimediale)*” in the third answers presenting 40 voters and 85,1% of score.
4. Lately, “*Forum di discussione (Moodle, Google Classroom, altri siti adottati dalla scuola, etc.)*” and “*Blog*” can be found in the chart with equal scores, with 11 voters each and a percentage of 24,3%;
5. “*Google Classroom*” and “*Wiki o altre piattaforme per la cooperazione*”, again, with equal score, both present 10 voters with a percentage of 21,3%;
6. “*Webinar*” were voted by 9 participant with a 19,1%;
7. “*Audio o video chiamate con i singoli studenti o con il gruppo classe (Whatsapp, Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, social network come Instagram, Messenger di Facebook, etc.)*” has 7 voters with a percentage of 14,9%;
8. Ultimately and equally, “*Sito didattico personale*”, “*Dizionari on-line, Wikipedia, etc.*”, “*Una piattaforma per scuole medie italiane*”, “*Esercizi online*”, “*Video-making, materiali digitali forniti dai libri di testo (quando adatto/ben fatto), Google Drive per forms & Docs per writing feedback*”, “*Materiali didattici online e portali soprattutto per la lingua tedesca. Video didattici = Lernvideos, realizzati dagli alunni*”, and “*Google Mail, Google Document*” are all teaching techniques added by the participants in the answer “*Altro*”.

Therefore, it is remarkable that this group of teachers were used to adopting audio-video materials, the online register log, and the LIM board. Also, communication seemed to be important with the use of group discussion, forums, wikis, or blogs.

Question number 3 is as follows:

3. Per praticare la SCRITTURA nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici?

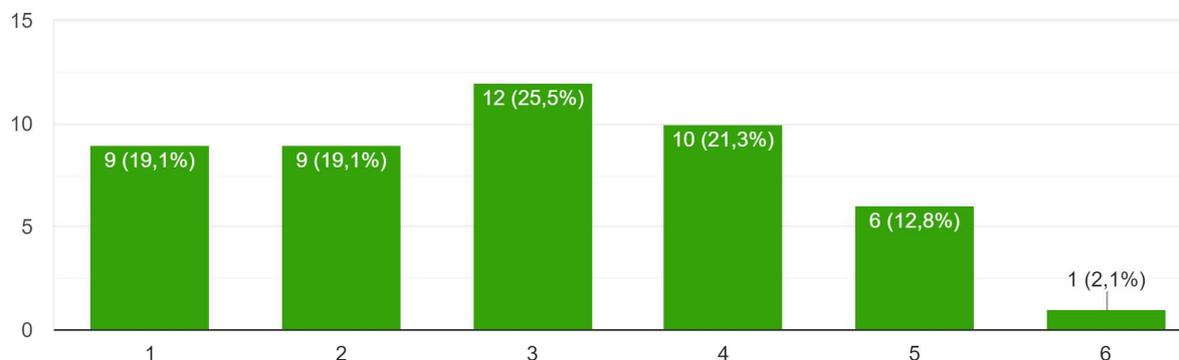


Figure 1.9

Again, this third question refers to the normal manner of giving a lecture *before* the emergency. This time, one aspect of language practice is observed: the amount of technology usage to promote the practice of *writing* in the foreign language.

Then, as follows, the answers are being analysed in order from the higher score to the lower one:

- The higher score of use is expressed by 12 participants, meaning that they were quietly used to adopting technology in order to make students practice this peculiar skill, showing a percentage of 25,5% (3 out of 6 points, in the middle of the chart);
- 10 respondents affirmed that they used technology with 21,3% (5 out of 6 point in the scale chart),
- 9 respondents voted equally 1 and 2 with a percentage of 19,1%;
- 6 respondents voted 6 showing a percentage of 12,8%;
- 1 participant voted 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 2,1%.

On the whole, the group of teachers in object adopted technology quite enough (12 participants voted 3, almost in the middle of the chart) so as to practice students' *writing* skills in the foreign language *before* the Covid-19 emergency. However, it is clearly visible that the majority of voters expressed that they did not use technology remarkably, actually (9 voted 1 and 9 voted 2). On the other hand, 10 people voted 4, 6 voted 5, and 1 voted 6, the ones who were used to technology more.

Then, the participants who are positioned in the right part of the chart are 17 voters with a total percentage of 36,2% (teachers using more technology for writing skills); whereas, those who are positioned in the left part of the chart are 30 with a total percentage of 63,7% (teachers using less technology for writing skills).

Question number 4 is as follows:

4. Per praticare la LETTURA nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici?

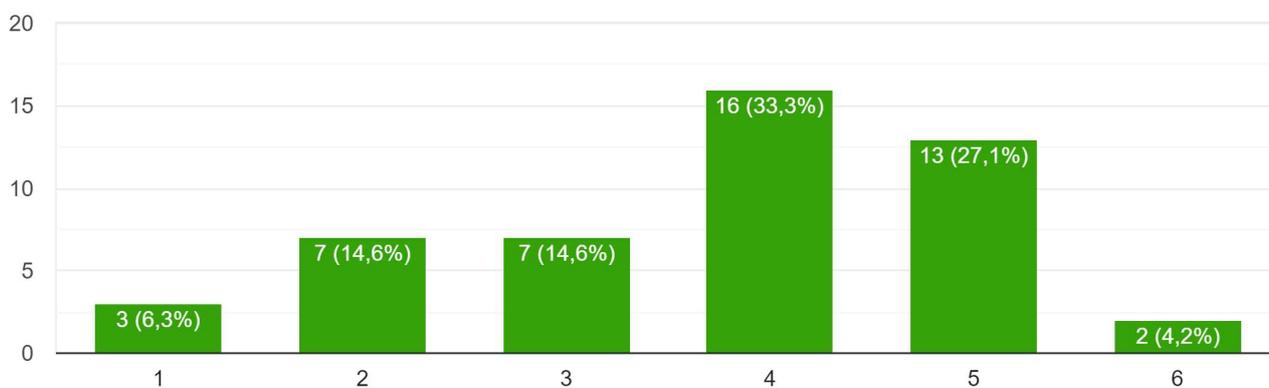


Figure 2

This fourth question refers again to the usual modality of giving a lecture *before* the emergency. This time, the amount of technology usage to promote the practice of the *reading* skills in the foreign language is going to be observed.

The answers are going to be analysed in order, from the highest score to the lowest:

- the highest score of use is expressed by 16 participants voting 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 33,3%;
- after, 13 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 27,1%;
- equally, 7 participants voted 2 and 3 out of 6 with a percentage of 14,6%;
- 3 participants voted 1 out of 6 with a percentage of 6,3%;
- 2 participants, ultimately, voted 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 4,2%.

This time, the teachers seemed to have increased their use of technology for *reading* skills in language education (the higher score is 4 out of 6, with 16 voters with 33,3%). Moreover, it can be said that 31 one participants maintained their position in the right half of the chart (those who used enough or totally technology for reading skills); whereas, the other 17 participants are located in the left half of the chart (those who less or totally did not used technology for reading skills).

Question 5 is as follows:

5. *Per praticare il PARLATO nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici?*

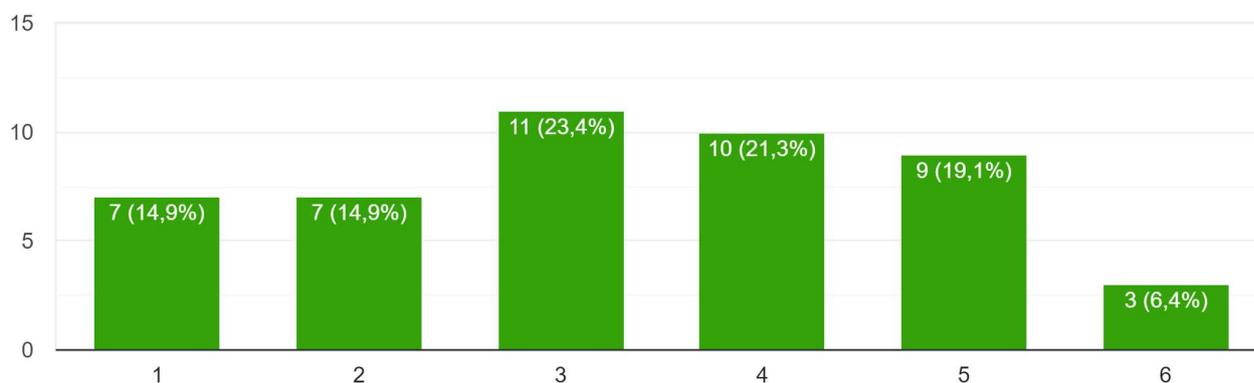


Figure 2.1

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score of use is expressed by 11 participants voting 3 out of 6 with a percentage of 23,4%;
- 10 participants voted 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 21,3%;
- 9 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 19,1%;
- 7 participants, equally, voted 1 and 2 out of 6 both with a percentage of 14,9%;
- lastly, 3 participants voted 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 6,4%.

Hence, 22 participants belong to the right half of the chart with a total percentage of 46,8%, by representing the ones who used in part or completely technological tools in their lesson to promote the *speaking* skill. On the contrary, 25 participants belong to the left half of the chart with a total percentage of 53,2%, by representing the ones who partially used technology or even did not used it at all. It is remarkable that the majority of teachers voted 3, therefore they made certain use of technology for *speaking* activities, but it was not an essential and predominant element in oral instruction.

Question 6 is as follows:

6. *Per praticare l'ASCOLTO nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici?*

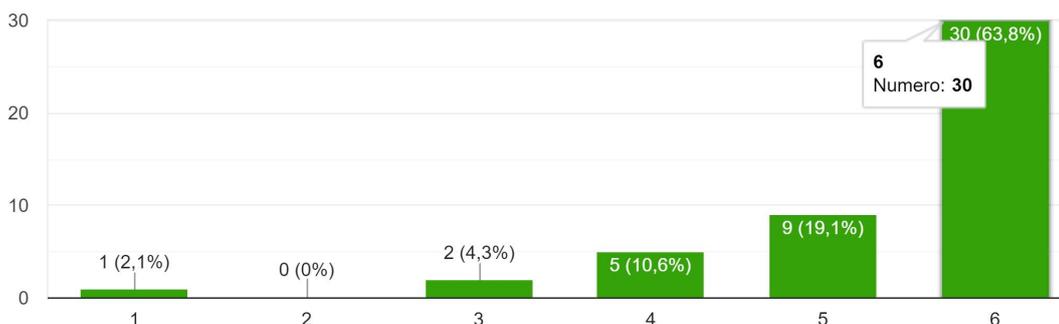


Figure 2.2

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score of use is expressed by 30 participants voting 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 63,8%;
- 9 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 19,1%;
- 5 participants voted 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 10,6%;
- 2 participants voted 3 out of 6 with a percentage of 4,3%;
- 1 participant voted 1 out of 6 with a percentage of 2,1%;
- 2 was not voted at all.

44 participants belong to the right part of the chart, by expressing certain use of technology (in particular, for a group of 14 individuals) and total use of technology (30 individuals) during *listening* practice. Contrarily, 4 participants belong to the left part of the chart, representing the minority of teachers adopting technological tools for *listening* activities *before* the emergency.

In sum, the majority of teachers embraced the use of technology so as to train students' *listening* skills.

- By introducing question number 7, the analysis will switch to *SECTION 3* –

“DIDATTICA DURANTE IL COVID-19”:

7. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19 quali dei seguenti supporti tecnologici ha utilizzato nell'insegnamento della lingua? (Più di una risposta è possibile)

This bar chart shows which technological tools teachers have been using *during* Covid-19 emergency.

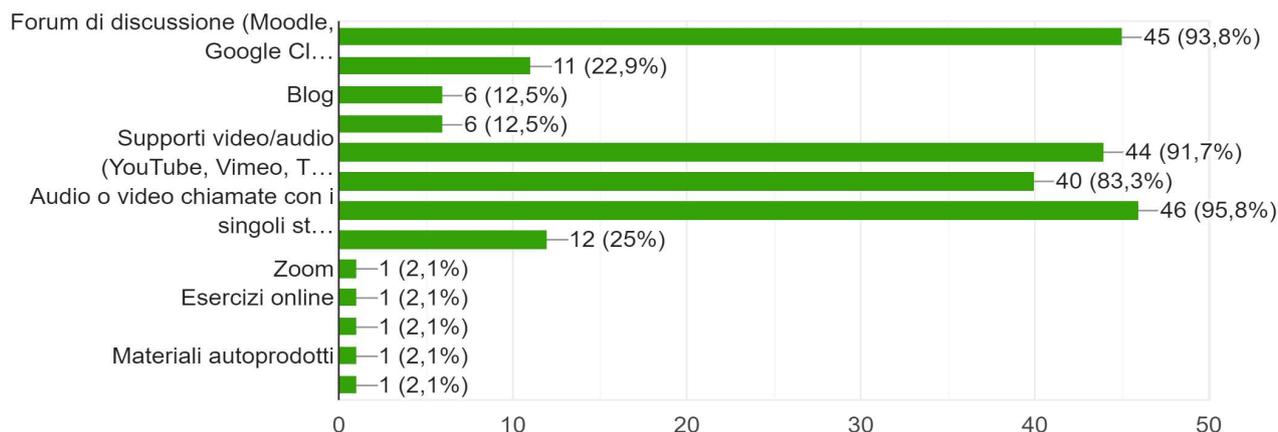


Figure 2.3

Now, the analysis of the answers according to decreasing numerical order is to be presented, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score is concentrated in “*Audio o video chiamate con i singoli studenti o con il gruppo classe (Whatsapp, Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, social network come Instagram, Messenger di Facebook, etc.)*” presenting 46 voters and a percentage of 95,8%;
- next, “*Forum di discussione (Moodle, Google Classroom, altri siti adottati dalla scuola, etc.)*” presenting 45 voters with a percentage of 93,8%;
- “*Supporti video/audio (YouTube, Video, TEDTalks, etc.)*” presenting 44 voters with a percentage of 91,7%;
- “*Chat di discussione di gruppo (Whatsapp, e-mail, etc.)*” presenting 40 voters with a percentage of 83,3%;
- “*Webinar*” presenting 12 voters with a percentage of 25%;
- “*Social network (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)*” presenting 11 voters with a percentage of 22,9%;
- “*Blog*” and “*Wiki o altre piattaforme per cooperazione*” presenting equally 6 voters each with a percentage of 12,5%;
- in the end, “*Zoom*”, “*Esercizi online*”, “*Materiali didattici online e portali soprattutto per la lingua tedesca. Video didattici = Lernvideos, realizzati dagli*

alunni”, and “*Materiali autoprodotti*” presenting 1 voter each with a percentage of 2,1%.

Question 8 is as follows:

8. *Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare la SCRITTURA nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici?*

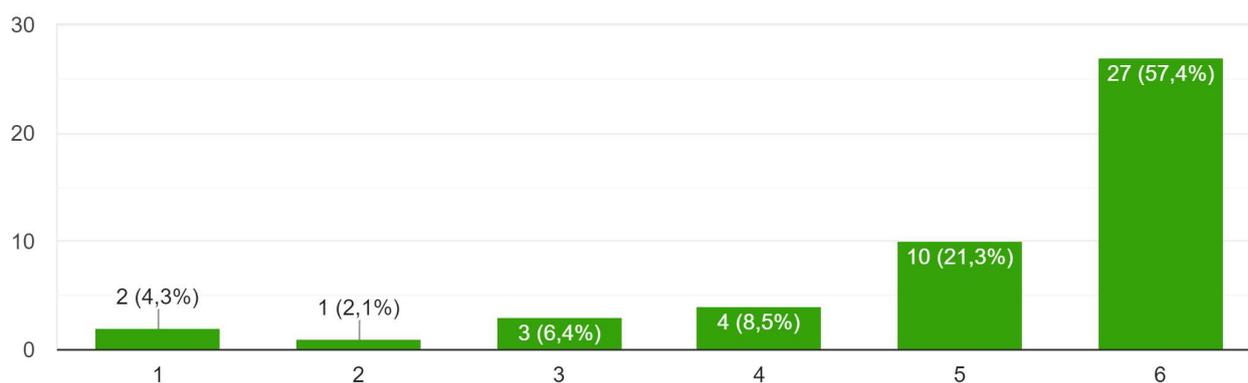


Figure 2.4

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score of use is expressed by 27 participants voting 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 57,4%;
- 10 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 21,3%;
- 4 participants voted 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 8,5%;
- 3 participants voted 3 out of 6 with a percentage of 6,4%;
- 2 participant voted 1 out of 6 with a percentage of 4,3%;
- 1 participant voted 2 out of 6 with a percentage of 2,1%.

41 participants belong to the right part of the chart, by expressing an elevated use of technology (in particular, for a group of 14 individuals voting 4 and 5), and a massive use of technology (27 individuals, voting 6) during *writing* practice. Contrarily, just 6

participants belong to the left part of the chart, representing the minority of teachers adopting technological tools for *writing* activities *during* the emergency.

The majority of teachers embraced the use of technology in order to practice students' *writing* skills when not giving lectures in class.

Question 9 is as follows:

9. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare la LETTURA nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici?

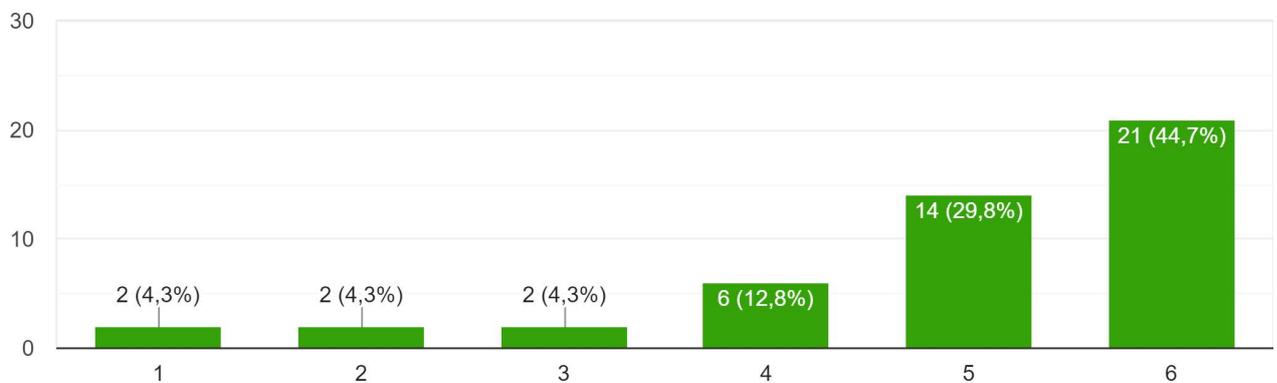


Figure 2.5

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score of use is expressed by 21 participants voting 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 44,7%;
- 14 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 29,8%;
- 6 participants voted 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 12,8%;
- 2 participants voted, equally, 3 out of 6, 2 out of 6, and 1 out of 6, with a percentage of 4,3%.

41 participants belong to the right half of the chart, by expressing a remarkable use of technology (in particular, for a group of 20 individuals voting 4 and 5), and a massive use of technology (21 individuals, voting 6) during *reading* practice. On the contrary, just 6 participants belong to the left half of the chart, representing the minority of teachers using technological tools for *reading* activities *during* the emergency.

The majority of teachers embraced the use of technology in order to make students practice their *writing* skills when giving lectures online.

Question 10 is as follows:

10. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare il PARLATO nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici?

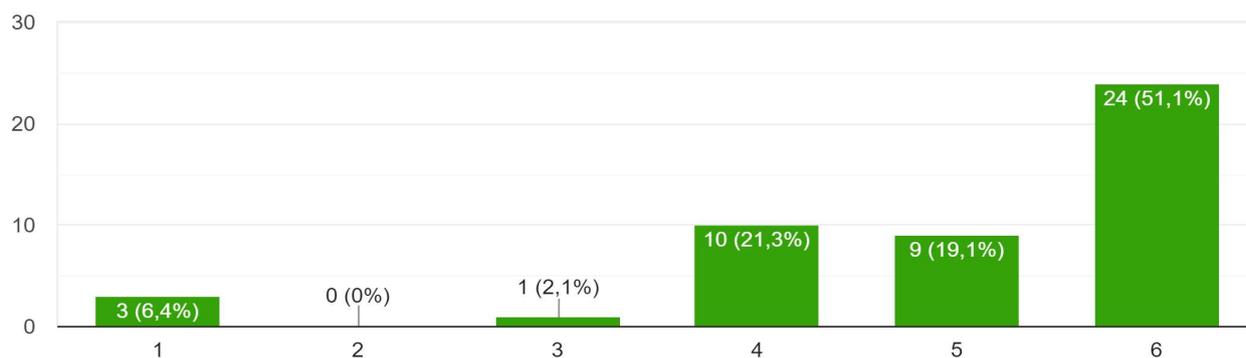


Figure 2.6

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score of use is expressed by 24 participants voting 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 51,1%;
- 10 participants voted 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 21,3%;
- 9 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 19,1%;
- 3 participants voted 1 out of 6, with a percentage of 6,3%;
- 1 participant voted 3 out of 6, with a percentage of 2,1%;
- 2 out of 6 was not voted at all.

43 participants belong to the right part of the chart, by expressing a notable use of technology (in particular, for a group of 19 individuals voting 4 and 5), and a massive use of technology (24 individuals, voting 6) during *speaking* practice. Diversely, just 4 participants belong to the left part of the chart, by representing the minority of teachers applying technological tools for *speaking* activities *during* the emergency. The majority of teachers embraced the use of technology so as to make students practice their *speaking* skills when giving lectures online.

Question 11 is as follows:

11. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare l'ASCOLTO nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici?

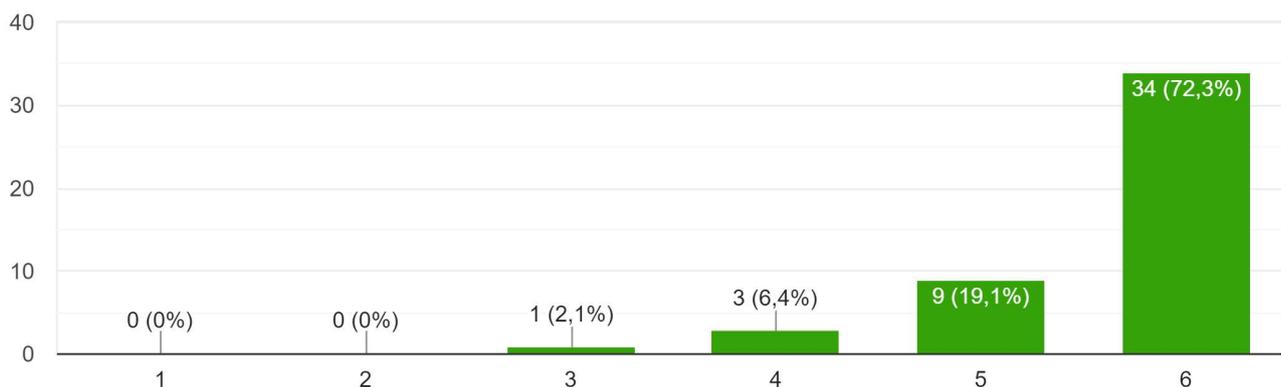


Figure 2.7

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score of use is expressed by 34 participants voting 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 72,3%;
- 9 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 19,1%;
- 3 participants voted 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 6,4%;
- 1 participant voted 3 out of 6, with a percentage of 2,1%;

- 1 participant voted 3 out of 6, with a percentage of 2,1%;
- 1 out of 6 and 2 out of 6 were not voted at all.

46 participants belong to the right part of the chart, by expressing a remarkable use of technology (in particular, for a group of 12 individuals voting 4 and 5), and a massive use of technology (34 individuals, voting 6) during *listening* practice. On the other hand, just 1 participant belongs to the left part of the chart, by representing the minority of teachers adopting technological tools for *listening* activities *during* the emergency.

The majority of teachers made use of technology in order to train students' *listening* skills when giving lectures online.

- By introducing question number 12, the analysis will enter a sub-section of *SECTION 3* –

“VERIFICA DEI CONTENUTI -DIDATTICA DURANTE IL COVID-19”

Question 12 is as follows:

12. La modalità di verifica dei contenuti ha subito dei cambiamenti durante l'emergenza Covid-19?

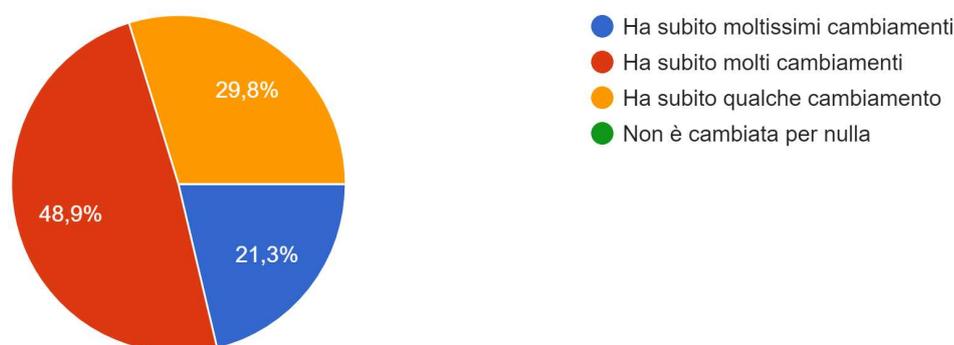


Figure 2.8

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- It is clearly visible in the pie chart presented above, that the red segment represents the majority of voters. It includes 23 voters by showing a percentage of 48,9, and answering *“Ha subito molti cambiamenti”*;
- Secondly, the yellow segment represents 14 voters by presenting a percentage of 29,8%, and answering *“Ha subito qualche cambiamento”*;
- Thirdly, the blue segment shows 10 voters by showing a percentage of 21,3%, and answering *“Ha subito moltissimi cambiamenti”*.

Question 13 is as follows:

13. La modalità di correzione e valutazione delle “verifiche scritte” degli studenti ha subito dei cambiamenti in questa fase di emergenza?

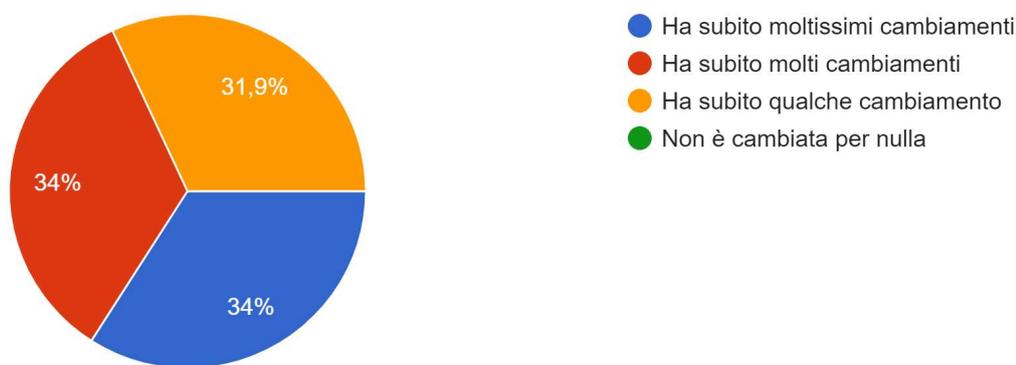


Figure 2.9

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- now, the blue and the red segment represent, equally, the majority of voters. They include 16 voters each, both by showing a percentage of 34%, and answering “*Ha subito molti cambiamenti*”, and “*Ha subito moltissimi cambiamenti*”;
- then, the yellow segment represents 15 voters, by presenting a percentage of 31,9%, and answering “*Ha subito qualche cambiamento*”.

Question 14 is as follows:

14. La modalità di correzione e valutazione delle “verifiche orali” degli studenti ha subito dei cambiamenti in questa fase di emergenza?

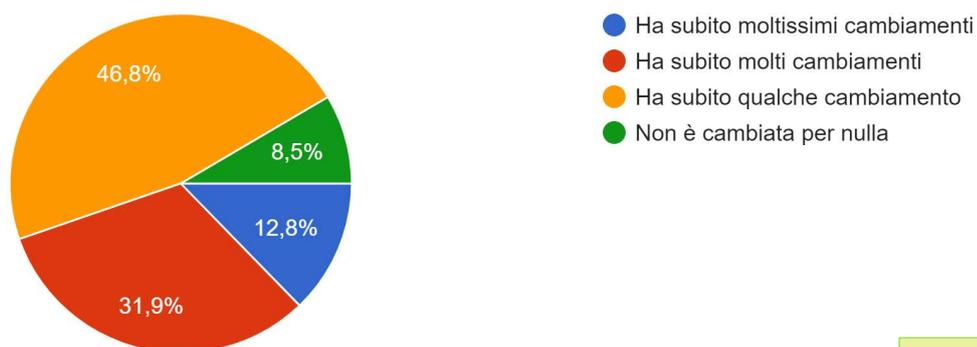


Figure 3

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- this time, the yellow segment represents, the majority of voters. It includes 21 voters, by presenting a percentage of 46,8%, and answering “*Ha subito qualche cambiamento*”;
- secondly, the red segment represents 16 voters, by presenting a percentage of 31,9%, and answering “*Ha subito molti cambiamenti*”;

- thirdly, the blue segment represents 6 voters, by presenting a percentage of 12,8%;
- at the end, the green segment represents 4 voters, by presenting a percentage of 8,5%.

Question 15 is as follows:

15. *Quale modalità di verifica ha presentato le maggiori difficoltà di attuazione?*

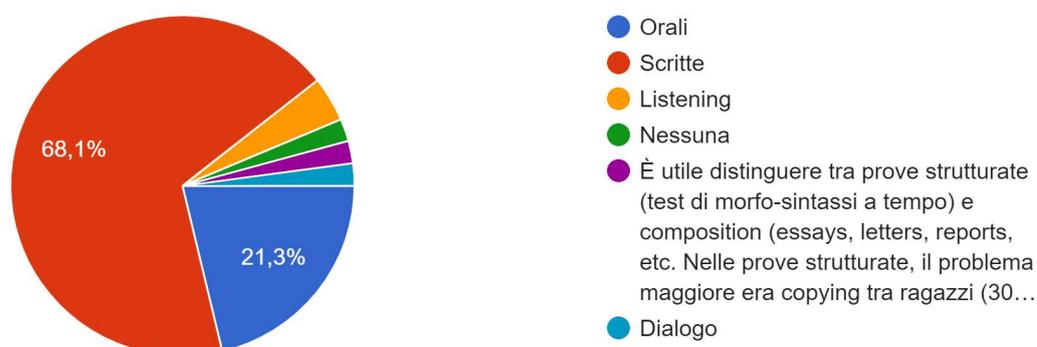


Figure 3.1

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the red segment stands out by representing the majority of voters. It includes 33 voters, and shows a percentage of 68,1%, with the answer “*Scritte*”;
- the blue segment represents 10 voters, by presenting a percentage of 21,3%, and answering “*Orali*”;
- the yellow segment represents 2 voters, by showing a percentage of 4,2%;
- the green segment represents 4 voters, by presenting a percentage of 8,5%;
- the green, purple, and light blue segments equally represent 1 voter each, by showing a percentage of 2,1%, and respectively answering “*Dialogo*”, “*È utile*

distinguere tra prove strutturate (test di morfo-sintassi a tempo) e composition (essays, letters, reports, etc.)”, “Nelle prove strutturate, il problema maggiore era copying tra ragazzi (30%) mentre per writing tasks il problema era plagio (5%) - ho usato Duplichecker”, and “Nessuna” (all these three answers were added by the participants).

- By introducing question number 16, the analysis will switch to *SECTION 4* –

***“DIDATTICA DOPO IL COVID-19:
integrazioni o modifiche nella didattica futura?”***

Question 16 is as follows:

16. Secondo lei, quanto sarà importante l'utilizzo di supporti tecnologici nell'insegnamento della lingua straniera?

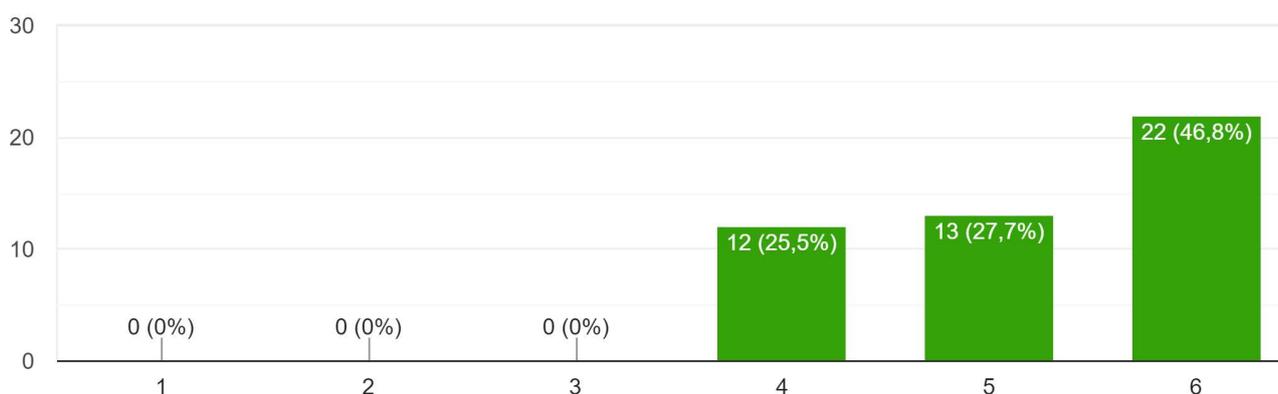


Figure 3.2

The answers are going to be analysed according to decreasing numerical order, from the higher score to the lower one:

- the higher score of use is expressed by 22 participants voting 6 out of 6 with a percentage of 46,8%;
- 13 participants voted 5 out of 6 with a percentage of 27,7%;

- 12 participants voted 4 out of 6 with a percentage of 25,5%;
- 1 out of 6, 2 out of 6, and 3 out of six were not voted at all.

All the 47 participants belong to the right part of the chart, by expressing that adopting technology in future language education will be highly important (in particular, for a group of 25 individuals voting 4 and 5), and that will even be fundamental (22 individuals, voting 6).

Nobody voted less than 4, therefore, technology will play a big role in future language teaching and learning for this sample of teachers.

Question 17 is as follows:

17. Dopo questa esperienza di insegnamento online, a suo parere, quanto l'utilizzo della tecnologia 2.0 condiziona i seguenti aspetti della vita scolastica?

Figure 3.3

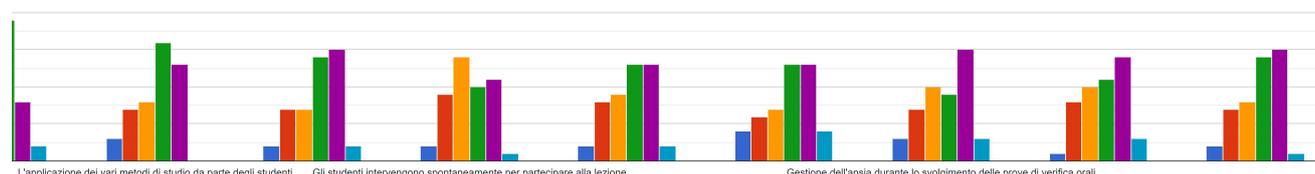
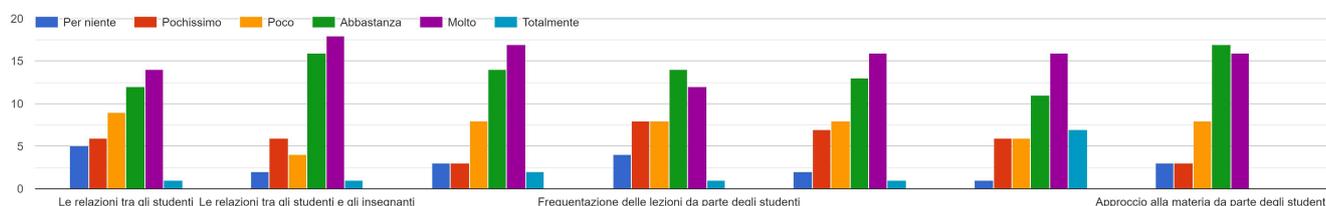


Figure 3.4

This question appears to be more peculiar because of the investigation concerning teachers' personal opinions on future influences affecting everyday scholastic life. Answers are organised in a bar chart, which allows to arrange the following teachers' perceptions, whose range to be voted is:

“Per niente” – “Pochissimo” – “Poco” – “Abbastanza” – “Molto” - “Moltissimo”

The main investigated aspects are the following:

- the first aspect in object is *“Le relazioni tra gli studenti”*, showing 14 voters (violet) expressing *“Molto”*, and representing the pick; 12 voters expressing *“Abbastanza”* (green); 9 voters expressing *“Poco”* (yellow); 7 voters expressing *“Pochissimo”* (red); 5 voters expressing *“Per niente”* (blue); 1 voter expressing *“Totalmente”* (light blue);
- the second aspect is *“Le relazioni tra gli studenti e gli insegnanti”*, showing 18 voters expressing *“Molto”* (violet), and representing the pick; 16 voters expressing *“Abbastanza”* (green); 7 voters expressing *“Pochissimo”* (red); 4 voters expressing *“Poco”* (yellow); 2 voters expressing *“Per niente”* (blue); 1 voter expressing *“Totalmente”* (light blue);
- the third aspect is *“La coordinazione tra il corpo docente”*, showing 17 voters expressing *“Molto”* (violet), and representing the pick; 14 voters expressing *“Abbastanza”* (green); 8 voters expressing *“Poco”* (yellow); 4 voters expressing *“Pochissimo”* (red); 3 voters expressing *“Per niente”* (blue); 2 voters expressing *“Totalmente”* (light blue);
- the fourth aspect is *“Frequentazione delle lezioni da parte degli studenti”*, showing a pick of 14 voters expressing *“Abbastanza”* (green); 12 voters expressing *“Molto”* (violet); 9 voters expressing *“Pochissimo”* (red); 8 voters

expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 4 voters expressing “*Per niente*” (blue); 1 voter expressing “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the fifth aspect is “*Lo svolgimento delle prove di verifica*”, showing a pick of 16 voters expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 13 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 8 voters equally expressing both “*Poco*” (yellow) and “*Pochissimo*” (red); 2 voters expressing “*Per niente*” (blue), 1 voter expressing “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the sixth aspect is “*La comunicazione tra insegnanti e studenti (assegnazione compiti per casa, avvisi, etc.)*”, showing a pick of 16 voters expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 11 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 7 voters equally expressing both “*Pochissimo*” (red) and “*Totalmente*” (light blue); 6 voters expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 1 voter expressing “*Per niente*” (blue);

- the seventh aspect is “*Approccio alla materia da parte degli studenti*”, showing a pick of 17 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 16 voters expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 8 voters expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 4 voters expressing “*Pochissimo*” (red); 3 voters expressing “*Per niente*” (blue);

- the eighth aspect is “*Motivazione degli studenti*”, showing a pick of 19 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 10 voters expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 8 voters expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 5 voters expressing “*Pochissimo*” (red); 4 voters expressing “*Per niente*” (blue); 2 voters expressing “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the ninth aspect is “*L’applicazione dei vari metodi di studio da parte degli studenti*”, showing a pick of 16 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 13

voters expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 8 voters expressed equally both “*Poco*” (yellow) and “*Pochissimo*” (red); 3 voters expressed “*Per niente*” (blue);

- the tenth aspect is “*L’auto-gestione dello studio da parte degli studenti*”, showing a pick of 15 voters expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 14 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 8 expressing “*Pochissimo*” (red); 7 expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 2 voters equally expressing both “*Per niente*” (blue) and “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the eleventh aspect is “*Gli studenti intervengono spontaneamente per partecipare alla lezione*”, showing a pick of 14 voters expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 11 expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 10 voters equally expressing both “*Abbastanza*” (green) and “*Pochissimo*” (red); 2 voters expressing “*Per niente*” (blue); 1 voter expressing “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the twelfth aspect is “*L’apertura al confronto e all’espressione personale*”, showing an equal double pick of both 13 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green) and “*Molto*” (violet); 9 voters equally expressing both “*Poco*” (yellow) and “*Pochissimo*” (red); 2 voters equally expressing both “*Per niente*” (blue) and “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the thirteenth aspect is “*Gestione dell’ansia durante lo svolgimento delle prove di verifica scritte*”, showing an equal double pick of 13 voters expressing both “*Molto*” (violet) and “*Abbastanza*” (green); 7 voters equally expressing both “*Poco*” (yellow) and “*Pochissimo*” (red); 4 voters equally expressing both “*Per niente*” (blue) and “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the fourteenth aspect is “*Gestione dell’ansia durante lo svolgimento delle prove di verifica orali*”, showing a pick of 15 voters expressing “*Molto*”

(violet); 10 people expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 9 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 8 voters expressing “*Pochissimo*” (red); 3 voters equally expressing both “*Per niente*” (blue) and “*Totalmente*” (light blue);

- the fifteenth aspect is “*Gestione dell’ansia durante la partecipazione ad attività di gruppo*”, showing a pick of 14 voters expressing “*Molto*” (violet); 11 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 10 voters expressing “*Poco*” (yellow); 9 voters expressing “*Pochissimo*” (red); 3 voters expressing “*Totalmente*” (light blue); and 1 voter expressing “*Per niente*” (blue);

- the sixteenth and last aspect is “*Sviluppo ed applicazione dei personali metodi di studio da parte degli studenti*”, showing a pick of 15 voters expressing “*Molto*”; 14 voters expressing “*Abbastanza*” (green); 8 voters equally expressed both “*Poco*” (yellow) and “*Pochissimo*” (red); 2 voters expressing “*Per niente*” (blue); and 1 voter expressing “*Totalmente*” (light blue).

Question 18 is as follows:

18. Indicare una o più metodologie che riutilizzerebbe nella didattica futura post-Covid-19 nel campo delle lingue straniere, motivando la risposta

First of all, the answers given by the teachers containing all the technological tools they would use again in the future instruction are going to be listed and proposed through brief answers:

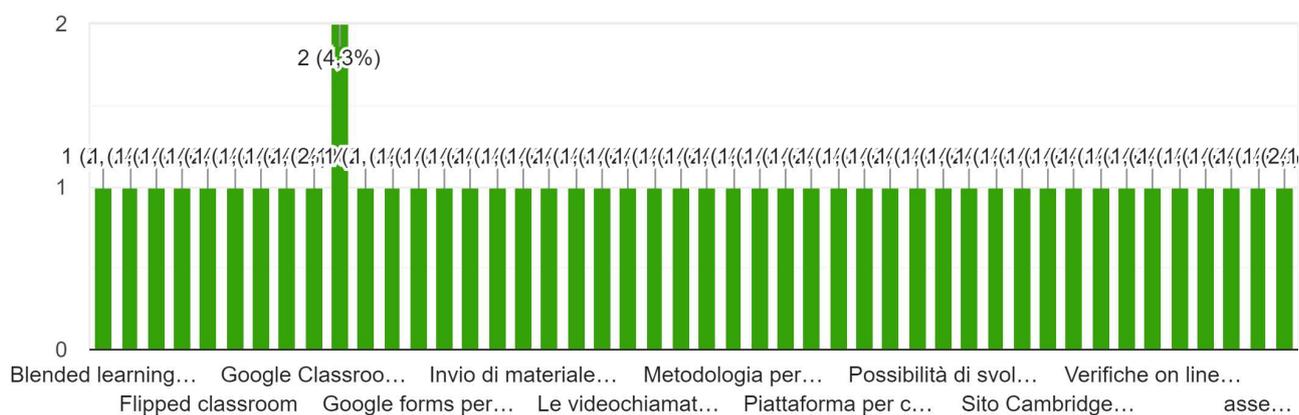


Figure 3.5

- “Google Meet and Classroom for reasons that assist the management of the lessons and class”;
- “Google Forum, per la praticità”;
- “Peer education, per rendere gli studenti maggiormente consapevoli del loro percorso di apprendimento”;
- “Le videochiamate di gruppo o con singoli studenti, specie negli ultimi anni delle scuole superiori, ha avuto per me buoni risultati. Gli studenti hanno saputo sfruttare una modalità nuova, forse meno formale, ma ugualmente efficace quanto i seminari o le lezioni in presenza”;
- “Piattaforme per somministrare verifiche scritte (Exam.net); forum di classe (Google Forum), Google classroom”;
- “Verifiche on-line con Google Moduli, perché consentono una maggiore immediatezza e puntualità nella verifica degli apprendimenti”;
- “La visione di video in lingua perché permette una migliore gestione di questo materiale”;
- “Lezione Meet”;
- “Metodologia per compito di realtà perché motiva, stimola e rende visibile il prodotto dell'apprendimento”;

- “Registrazione di lettura ed esposizione di lavori personali perchè abbassano la tensione nel parlato”;
- “Possibilità di svolgimento di lavori di gruppo con estrema facilità con l’utilizzo di supporti mediatici digitali”;
- “Vimeo”;
- “Piattaforma per confrontarsi più rapidamente”;
- “Zoom per la praticità di poter lavorare da casa e condividere in tempo reale il materiale con gli studenti senza dover fare fotocopie”;
- “Nessuna”;
- “Flipped classroom più frequente: lavorare a volte in modo autonomo per cercare risposte e soluzioni , cercare di capire e risolvere, cercare di produrre la propria risposta, senza la guida e il sostegno ininterrotto dell'insegnante ha sviluppato consapevolezza degli obiettivi e strategie di apprendimento, capacità di affrontare uno sforzo del tutto personale e motivazione derivante dal proprio personale risultato, maggiore consapevolezza dei propri mezzi e delle capacità, atteggiamento più attivo ed efficace nell'apprendimento della lingua straniera, che è frutto di pratica personale e costante”;
- “Riutilizzerei tutte le metodologie utilizzate perché si sono dimostrate efficaci”;
- “Assegnazione dei compiti in piattaforma Google Classroom, perchè consente un controllo immediato dello svolgimento e permette agli studenti di avere un feedback mirato”;
- “Sito Cambridge Write and Improve poiché è in autoformazione”;
- “Utilizzo di mappe concettuali tramite applicazione Mind Map”;
- “Piattaforme tipo Google Classroom e Moodle, utili per pianificare la consegna del materiale”;
- “Classroom per condividere materiali perché è più facile e posso dirigere un flipped classroom più facilmente”;
- “Flipped classroom”;

- *“Invio di materiali multimediali per approfondimenti”*;
- *“Test-teach-test per implementare apprendimento consapevole”*;
- *“Google Classroom mi è stata utile per lezioni registrate e per rimanere in contatto con i miei allievi, oltre che per somministrare e valutare verifiche di vario tipo”*;
- *“Lezioni videoregistrate che lo studente può riascoltare a piacimento”*;
- *“Group comprehension tasks - quindi un lavoro di comprensione orale, riassunto scritto (slides) e restituzione orale. Pur lavorando in gruppo hanno gestito molto bene il tempo a disposizione ne (classe 5a); più cooperative & task-based learning”*;
- *“Invio di materiale e correzione compiti, flipped classroom- visione/ ascolto di materiali da parte degli studenti e condivisione poi in classe/ verifica del lavoro svolto in classe. Registrazioni video dei ragazzi che espongono lavori svolti o argomenti di studio”*;
- *“Tutte e nessuna, nel senso che amo adottare varie tecniche ma la grossa differenza a mio avviso è la presenza fisica, specie per l'apprendimento delle lingue”*;
- *“Google meet e invio di ricerche personalizzate”*;
- *“Google classroom”*;
- *“Zoom, Teams”*;
- *“Google Classroom, buono strumento di condivisione materiale”*;
- *“Piattaforme per attività cooperative”*;
- *“Flipped Classroom, cooperative learning, challenge”*;
- *“Google Moduli perchè posso personalizzare ulteriormente le attività assegnate”*;
- *“La ricerca autonoma di materiale con una consegna assegnata. Aumenta la motivazione e rinforza l'autonomia”*;
- *“Consegna essays online per evitare contagio”*;

- “Google Forms per verifiche di grammatica perché è più veloce la correzione”;
- “Blog punto di riferimento costante”;
- “Lezioni registrate”;
- “Blended learning al fine di integrare la didattica tradizionale con quella digitale in modo da sfruttare i punti di forza di entrambe”;
- “Potenzierei l'aspetto progettuale della flipped classroom ed i compiti di realtà. I ragazzi sono ormai quasi tutti nativi digitali, quindi studiare nello stesso ambiente del gaming e della socializzazione su piattaforme virtuali rappresentano una notevole leva motivazionale”;
- “Utilizzo delle risorse online per rendere l'apprendimento più motivante”.

Question 19 is as follows:

19. Indicare una opiu metodologie didattiche che NON riutilizzerebbe nella didattica futura post-Covid-19, motivando la risposta

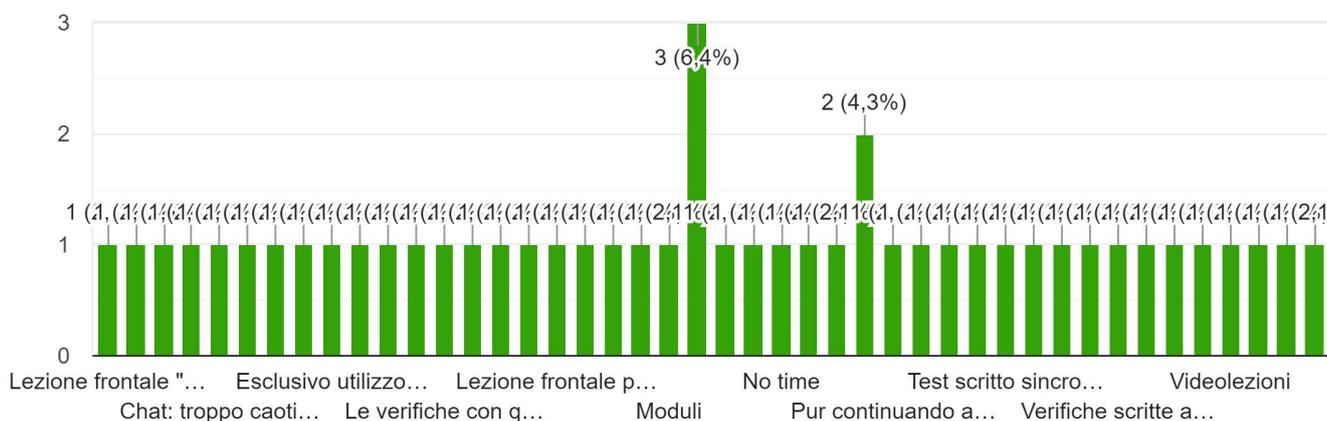


Figure 3.6

Then, the answers given by the teachers containing all the technological tools they would NOT use again in the future instruction are going to be listed and proposed through brief answers:

- “Nessuna” (3 answers);
- “None” (2 answers);
- “Google Meet per la poca partecipazione di tanti ragazzi, difficoltà di verificare le presenze durante la lezione intera, problemi di connessione, di videocamere disattivate e di microfoni disattivati” (1 answer);
- “Videoconferenze, le userò solo se chiuderanno le scuole”;
- “Lo svolgimento delle prove scritte grammaticali poiché manca la sorveglianza ed un controllo ravvicinato durante l’esecuzione”;
- “Verifiche scritte a tempo (creano molta ansia negli studenti, e non si può verificare se copiano, hanno suggeritori o altro)” ;
- “Le videolezioni "prefabbricate”, perché escludono l’interazione e sono frontali”;
- “Il classico strumento del dare compiti e attività da fare autonomamente, specie per quelle classi piuttosto problematiche. L’autonomia a volte manca di disciplina, e ciò può portare alla perdita di studenti nel conto finale delle attività svolte e terminate”;
- “Pur continuando a seguire una metodologia comunicativa e ponendomi come guida in tutti i lavori didattici, stimolando la progressione delle riflessioni sui contenuti, l’utilizzo delle strutture linguistiche, la pratica della lingua, sfrutterei maggiormente altre fonti (con l’ausilio della tecnologia) e mi porrei meno come ripetitore instancabile di contenuti, aiuto troppo presente e costante: gli studenti hanno dimostrato capacità di autonomia e di iniziativa che sono efficaci e motivanti e la tecnologia può essere molto utile. Resta comunque indispensabile il confronto tra pari e con l’insegnante in presenza: lo scambio tramite canali tecnologici è limitato ad alcuni prodotti e non può sostituire la discussione e la comunicazione in presenza”;
- “Quelle che ho utilizzato sono state utili”;
- “Lezione frontale tradizionale”;
- “Verifiche scritte”;

- *“Non vorrei utilizzare le lezioni in piattaforma perchè, se pur utili, sono comunque un approccio virtuale che spersonalizza la didattica”;*
- *“Comunicazione via mail, verifiche scritte su piattaforme online”;*
- *“Interrogazioni classiche online”;*
- *“Conferenze”;*
- *“Nessuna”;*
- *“Lezione frontale può durare max 15 minuti, online la concentrazione è molto ridotta (è evidente che tutti stanno facendo altre cose contemporaneamente; la connessione non è stabile per tutti)”;*
- *“Zoom”;*
- *“Test scritto sincrono online per difficoltà di controllo”;*
- *“Nessuna, le metodologie, se ben dosate possono essere tutte utili”;*
- *“Le verifiche scritte perché NON garantiscono un alto grado di attendibilità”;*
- *“Lezioni e verifiche on-line”;*
- *“Le verifiche con quesiti con risposta a scelta multipla”;*
- *“Domanda a risposta aperta”;*
- *“Verifiche scritte tradizionali perché troppo complesse da gestire nella correzione”;*
- *“Nessuna”;*
- *“Riutilizzerei tutte le metodologie utilizzate”;*
- *“Verifica scritta in dad, assolutamente non affidabile”;*
- *“Nessuna”;*
- *“Whatsapp perché crea troppo confusione”;*
- *“Moduli”;*
- *“Videolezioni”;*
- *“Lezione frontale "pura" applicata all'insegnamento della letteratura online (Gmeet): gli alunni riscontrano difficoltà nel seguire e difficile seguire e prendere appunti. Meglio pianificare una lezione più partecipata”;*

- “*Userei meno il libro di testo digitale poiché è poco motivante*”;
- “*Svolgere verifiche online perché ho trovato molto difficile garantire che la verifica venga svolta in modo corretto senza possibili imbrogli*”;
- “*Chat: troppo caotica*”;
- “*Nessuna, tutte mi sono state utili*”;
- “*Esclusivo utilizzo della dad*”;
- “*Non ce ne sono*”;
- “*Lezione frontale*”;
- “*Verifiche scritte: impossibili senza la responsabilizzazione all'apprendimento degli studenti*”.

By introducing question number 20, the analysis will introduce *SECTION 5 – “GESTIONE DELLE RELAZIONI INSEGNANTI-STUDENTI”*

Question 20 is as follows:

20. Durante lo svolgimento delle lezioni, ho avuto le seguenti percezioni:

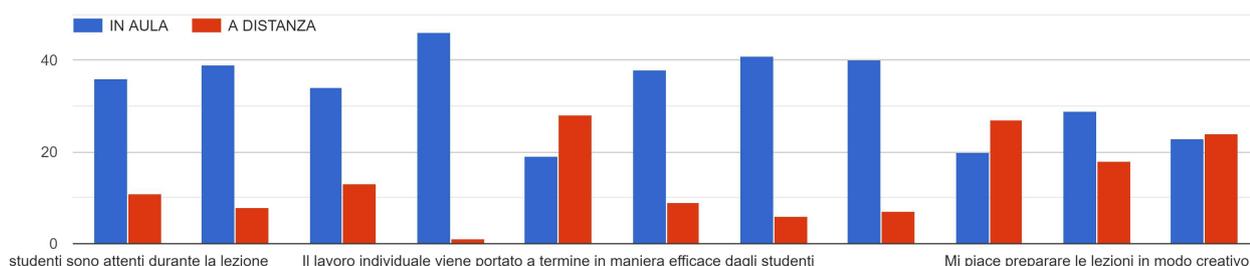


Figure 3.7

This questions, particularly, investigates teachers perceptions by dividing them into two sides, which are “*teaching IN CLASS*” vs. “*teaching ONLINE*”. For each question, teachers were asked to choose whether they had a certain perception *in class* or *online*.

Here, the answers are going to be organised more visually into a chart:

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS	IN CLASS	ONLINE
Gli studenti sono attenti durante la lezione	37 voters	11 voters
Gli studenti lavorano bene in gruppo	40 voters	8 voters
Gli studenti intervengono spontaneamente per partecipare alla lezione	35 voters	13 voters
Gli studenti sono portati a socializzare nei momenti di pausa	47 voters	1 voter
Il lavoro individuale viene portato a termine in maniera efficace dagli studenti	20 voters	28 voters
Il lavoro di gruppo viene portato a termine in maniera efficace dagli studenti	39 voters	9 voters
Mi sento a mio agio quando insengo	42 voters	6 voters
La comunicazione insegnanti-studenti avviene in maniera efficace	41 voters	7 voters
Il tempo viene utilizzato in maniera ottimale e senza perdite di tempo	21 voters	27 voters
Mi piace preparare le lezioni in modo creativo	30 voters	18 voters
Usufuisco di un supporto tutor	24 voters	24 voters

Table 1.1

Then, here is the final brief open question to be analysed:

28. Secondo le sue esperienze personali di insegnamento, ha suggerimenti e considerazioni ulteriori da aggiungere?

In particular, it suggests that the sample of 47 teachers will express themselves on the topic of technology with reference to the future perspective of language education. 18 teachers decided make some considerations.

Teachers' suggestions are the following:

1. "La tecnologia dovrebbe essere integrata di più particolarmente per a gestione dei compiti e materia perche il lavoro degli studenti è tracciabile è accessibile in modo più idoneo al resoconto";

= technology should be more integrated to promote homework and subject management, since students' work is accessible and controlled;

2. "La didattica a distanza è un fallimento";

= language education online is a failure;

3. "DaD é stato più efficace con certi studenti che hanno problemi di concentrazione normalmente in aula. Ho trovato diversi studenti più attivi durante le lezioni online. In certe situazioni gli studenti rispondevano meglio su Classroom";

= DaD was more effective with some students who can't concentrate in class. I seen that students were more active during online lessons. In some situations, students reacted better using Classroom;

4. *“Rendere il contenuto disciplinare non un obiettivo, ma un ambiente nel quale sviluppare competenze e svolgere un progetto educativo. Ciò con la finalità di avvicinare la scuola alla vita”*;

= Subject contents should not be seen as an objective, but as an environment in which developing competences and carry out an educational project;

5. *“Il lavoro di preparazione per le certificazioni linguistiche è stato stravolto dall'emergenza COVID. Durante DaD, ho avuto la percezione che 20-30% degli utenti non avessero mezzi adeguati (connessione instabile e/o device inadeguato) = efficacia della didattica molto ridotta (-50%)”*;

= Preparations aimed at obtaining language certifications was totally altered by Covid-19 emergency. During DaD, I had the perception that 20-30% of users didn't have adequate instruments (unstable connection and/or inadequate devices): teaching efficacy remarkably reduced (-50%);

6. *“La didattica è valida se è student-oriented. Il docente competente è quello che sa riutilizzare le varie strategie didattiche ed adattarle al contesto”*;

= teaching is valid when is student-oriented. A teacher is an expert when knows how to re-use the existing teaching strategies and make them compliant to the context;

7. *“La didattica a distanza deve essere parallela all'insegnamento in aula”*;

= Online language teaching have to be carried out in parallel to language teaching in class;

8. *“La didattica a distanza può essere complemento efficace alla didattica tradizionale ma non può sostituirla in toto”*;

= Online teaching can be an effective extension of traditional teaching, but can't substitute it at all;

9. *“Ritengo che l'insegnamento della lingua abbia bisogno di una interazione diretta, che spesso il lavoro a casa, senza visione e ascolto diretto del prof, può essere dispersivo”*;

= I think that during language teaching, a direct interaction is fundamental. Often, when teaching online, this is not possible because of the lack of direct vision and listening to the teacher. It can be desultory;

10. *“La lingua ha bisogno della relazione umana per essere appresa poiché è un mezzo di comunicazione”*;

= a language needs human interrelations so as to be learnt, since it is a means of communication;

11. *“Non c'è stato supporto tutor, nè in aula, nè a distanza”*;

= There was a lack of tutor support;

12. *“Gli studenti non sono pronti alla Didattica a Distanza. Non sentono la responsabilità dell'apprendimento, sono passivi”*;

= Students are not ready for online teaching. They don't feel the responsibility of carrying out their learning process. They are passive”;

13. *“Io utilizzavo la metodologia della flipped classroom e sono sempre più convinta che sia efficace”*;

= I used the flipped classroom methodology and I am more and more convinced of its efficacy”;

14. *“Insegnare con passione”*;

= Just teaching with passion;

15. *“La didattica a distanza è possibile se le seguenti variabili sono soddisfatte: 1) l'insegnante sa usare le risorse tecnologiche disponibili e 2) lo*

studente possiede gli strumenti necessari. Tutto il resto è una scusa. I miei studenti non hanno accusato particolari perdite (fatto salvo nella comunicazione) durante la DAD, ma la lezione in presenza resta, considerato l'apporto emotivo/relazionale, la modalità di insegnamento migliore”;

= Online teaching if the following variables are fulfilled: 1) the teachers knows how to manage with available technological tools; 2) students are provided with the devices/instruments required. Other explications are just an excuse. For my students language teaching didn't change a lot (except of communication) during DaD. Traditional lessons in classroom have to continue, specially considering the emotional/relational interactions which need it.

16. *Nella domanda 20, in più di una risposta andavano bene entrambe le opzioni” (20. Durante lo svolgimento delle lezioni, ho avuto le seguenti percezioni: IN AULA vs. A DISTANZA);*

= In question 20, more that one answer both the options were suitable for me;

17. *“Ho messo in aula nella serie precedente come preferenziale. In realtà mi son trovata molto bene a lavorare online. Meglio in aula però”;*

= in the last question I ticked “in aula – traditional teaching” as favourite. I felt comfortable with online teaching, actually. However, better in real a classroom”;

18. *“Una considerazione sull'importanza della relazione tra insegnante e studenti, base imprescindibile per un proficuo lavoro didattico, in cui passano e si sviluppano passione, interesse, motivazione nell'approccio alla disciplina e nell'apprendimento, in cui lo studente è sollecitato a sfruttare le proprie potenzialità e che in conclusione favorisce la crescita personale. Questa relazione e questo processo si realizzano solo nella didattica in presenza. La*

tecnologia si rivela una risorsa utile, ma solo se inserita in questo contesto. Aggiungo che la crescita richiede anche il contesto sociale della classe per le relazioni tra gli studenti”;

= a consideration concerning the importance of the relationship between teacher and students. It constitutes the essential bases towards a productive educational work, where develop passion, interest, motivation to the subject and to learning. The student is pushed to take advantage of his skills and to promote personal growth. This kind of interaction and this process are possible only with teaching in a real classroom. Technology is resulting to be a useful resource, but only when integrated to a real and pragmatic context. I feel to add, also, that this growth requires class social context to keep relationships between the students.

5.4 Discussion – Conclusion & Future Implications

In this concluding part of the research, the primary aspects that have emerged across the whole study will be evaluated.

The purpose of this research was to examine secondary school teachers' perspectives concerning the use of ICTs during the Covid-19 emergency, developed in winter 2020. The current study also wanted to determine how teachers and students re-arranged the whole school arrangements in order to maintain a continuation in the learning process. The major part of teachers belonging to the sample composed of 50 participants, more precisely of 47, agreed on integrating ICTs in the curriculum.

Specifically, after having analysed the data and reading teachers opinions, each section of the survey questionnaire suggested that:

- **Section 1 – DIDATTICA PRIMA DEL COVID-19**: before the emergency, during a normal scholastic development, teachers already used technology in language education. The most used digital resources were videos and audio supports (e.g. *YouTube*, *Vimeo*, etc.), an electronic record, and the LIM (*Lavagna Interattiva Multimediale*), and *WhatsApp* chats. The less used were blogs, forums, wikis, and social networks.

In order to train students' language skills (*writing, listening, reading, speaking*) before the emergency, teachers use partially ICTs. The most practiced skill with technology was the *listening*.

- **Section 2 – DIDATTICA DURANTE IL COVID-19**: during the emergency, ICTs aimed at promoting communication were favoured both by teachers and students. For this reason, forums (e.g. *Moodle*, *Google Classroom*, *Google Meet*, etc.) were the most adopted digital resources. Moreover, video calls were used enormously, together with audio/video supports, and *WhatsApp* discussions.

So as to practice students' language skills, for each of them the use of ICTs was elevated.

Tests created to verify both written and oral contents changed dramatically during the emergency. The oral ones (*speaking* and *listening*) changed slightly less than before. The most difficult tests to be assigned were the written (*writing* and *reading*) ones, because of the distancing.

- **Section 3 – DIDATTICA DOPO IL COVID-19**: this section is the one whereby teachers' points of view are exactly connected with the ending part of my research. Teachers were also pushed to hypothesise how would be the future of the school system. The majority of the participants expressed that ICTs will be highly important in future teaching and learning, more precisely for most it will be fundamental. Moreover, they affirmed that this threatening emergency experience will influence some aspects of school everyday life (e.g. the most selected are *relationships between teachers and learners, relationships between peers, teachers coordination, tests assignments, general communications, students' self-management in the study process, anxiety management during tests and activity groups, the discovery and development of individual learning methodologies*).

Additionally, the group of teachers in object stated that they would re-use the majority of technological tools they have used during the emergency, except those ones which provoked any incidental difficulty;

- **Section 4 – GESTIONE DELLE RELAZIONI INSEGNANTI-STUDENTI**: this is a section concentrated in one focussed question, which is going to be repeated:

“Durante lo svolgimento delle lezioni, ho avuto le seguenti percezioni:”

The answers to be given were organised into two alternatives:

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

= in class | online

All the perceptions appeared to be included more in the group *IN AULA*.

The first three answers which obtained the highest score for *IN AULA* are the following:

1. *“Gli studenti sono portati a socializzare nei momenti di pausa”* (47 voters);
2. *“Mi sento a mio agio quando insegno”* (42 voters);
3. *“La comunicazione insegnanti-studenti avviene in maniera efficace”* (41 voters).

On the contrary, the three answers showing the highest score concerning the group *A DISTANZA* are:

1. *“Il lavoro individuale viene portato a termine in maniera efficace”* (28 voters);
2. *“Il tempo viene utilizzato in maniera ottimale e senza perdite di tempo”* (27 voters);
3. *“Usufuisco di un supporto tutor”* (24 voters).

On the whole, it can be asserted that the sample of 47 teachers participants represents a partial vision of a larger population of language educators in Italy and worldwide, but it can help understand quite accurately nowadays visions on the school system. Technology, from being only an integration, was transformed into a necessity, actually.

Although opinions may differ sometimes, especially referring to some strategic uses of ICTs, teachers agree on the effective effects due to technology. These positive or negative effects allowed language education to be continued.

In sum, ICTs and digital resources played a big role during Covid-19 emergency. Future scholastic environments will probably implement technologies in the curriculum, beyond make digital methodologies influence the traditional sphere, and the other way round. Hopefully, both teachers and students will feel more and more comfortable with ICTs adoption. In particular, because they directly lived a dramatic situation in which maintaining the objective of building a communicative bridge between individuals. This aspect is one of the most important carried out in the research, and which can hopefully represent the main future educational perspective combining communication, sharing, cooperation, and technology.

In the end, I would like to add three quotes that I think to be appropriate in order to accompany the conclusion:

Quote 1.1

>

“I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn”

— Albert Einstein

“Teaching is the essential profession, the one that makes all professions possible”

<

Quote 1.2

— David Haselkorn

&

Quote 1.3

>

*“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.
Involve me and I learn”*

— Benjamin Franklin

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* * *

APPENDIX – The Questionnaire

TITLE:

L'utilizzo di dispositivi tecnologici nella didattica per l'insegnamento delle lingue straniere nelle scuole secondarie di secondo grado

SEZIONE 1:

DIDATTICA PRIMA DEL COVID-19

1. Quanto era importante l'utilizzo di supporti tecnologici nell'insegnamento della lingua straniera prima dell'emergenza Covid-19 *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (“a moltissimo”)

2. Prima dell'emergenza Covid-19 quali dei seguenti supporti tecnologici ha utilizzato nell'insegnamento della lingua? (Più di una risposta è possibile) *

- Risposte:

- Forum di discussione (Moodle, Google Classroom, altri siti adottati dalla scuola, etc.)
- Social network (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
- Blog
- Wiki o altre piattaforme per la cooperazione
- Supporti video/audio (YouTube, Vimeo, TEDTalks, etc.)
- Chat di discussione di gruppo (Whatsapp, e-mail, etc.)
- Audio o video chiamate con i singoli studenti o con il gruppo classe (Whatsapp, Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, social network come Intagram, Messenger di Facebook, etc.)
- Webinar

- LIM (Lavagna Interattiva Multimediale)
- Registro online
- Altro: _____

3. Per praticare la SCRITTURA nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

4. Per praticare la LETTURA nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

5. Per praticare il PARLATO nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

6. Per praticare l'ASCOLTO nella lingua straniera quanto utilizzava supporti tecnologici? *

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

SEZIONE 2:
DIDATTICA DURANTE IL COVID-19

7. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19 quali dei seguenti supporti tecnologici ha utilizzato nell'insegnamento della lingua? (Più di una risposta è possibile) *

- Risposte:

- Forum di discussione (Moodle, Google Classroom, altri siti adottati dalla scuola, etc.)
- Social network (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)
- Blog
- Wiki o altre piattaforme per la cooperazione
- Supporti video/audio (YouTube, Vimeo, TEDTalks, etc.)
- Chat di discussione di gruppo (Whatsapp, e-mail, etc.)
- Audio o video chiamate con i singoli studenti o con il gruppo classe (Whatsapp, Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, social network come Intagram, Messenger di Facebook, etc.)
- Webinar

8. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare la SCRITTURA nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

9. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare la LETTURA nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

10. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare il PARLATO nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

11. Durante l'emergenza Covid-19, per praticare l'ASCOLTO nella lingua straniera quanto ha utilizzato supporti tecnologici? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

VERIFICA DEI CONTENUTI

12. La modalità di verifica dei contenuti ha subito dei cambiamenti durante l'emergenza Covid-19? *

- Ha subito moltissimi cambiamenti
- Ha subito molti cambiamenti
- Ha subito qualche cambiamento
- Non è cambiata per nulla

13. La modalità di correzione e valutazione degli "verifiche scritte" degli studenti ha subito dei cambiamenti in questa fase di emergenza? *

- Ha subito moltissimi cambiamenti
- Ha subito molti cambiamenti
- Ha subito qualche cambiamento
- Non è cambiata per nulla

14. La modalità di correzione e valutazione delle "verifiche orali" degli studenti ha subito dei cambiamenti in questa fase di emergenza? *

- Ha subito moltissimi cambiamenti
- Ha subito molti cambiamenti
- Ha subito qualche cambiamento
- Non è cambiata per nulla

15. Quale modalità di verifica ha presentato le maggiori difficoltà di attuazione? *

- Orali
- Scritte
- Altro: _____

SEZIONE 3:

DIDATTICA DOPO IL COVID-19:

integrazioni o modifiche nella didattica futura?

16. Secondo lei, quanto sarà importante l'utilizzo di supporti tecnologici nell'insegnamento della lingua straniera in futuro, dopo diffusione Covid-19? *

- Risposta:

(da “per niente”) 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 (a “moltissimo”)

17. Dopo questa esperienza di insegnamento online, a suo parere, quanto l'utilizzo della tecnologia 2.0 condiziona i seguenti aspetti della vita scolastica? *

- Le relazioni tra gli studenti:

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Le relazioni tra gli studenti e gli insegnanti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- La coordinazione tra il corpo docenti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Frequentazione delle lezioni da parte degli studenti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Lo svolgimento delle prove di verifica

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- La comunicazione tra insegnanti e studenti (assegnazione compiti per casa, avvisi, etc.)

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Approccio alla materia da parte degli studenti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Motivazione degli studenti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- L'applicazione dei vari metodi di studio da parte degli studenti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- L'auto-gestione dello studio da parte degli studenti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Gli studenti intervengono spontaneamente per partecipare alla lezione

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- L'apertura al confronto e all'espressione personale

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Gestione dell'ansia durante lo svolgimento delle prove di verifica scritte

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Gestione dell'ansia durante lo svolgimento delle prove di verifica orali

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Gestione dell'ansia durante la partecipazione ad attività di gruppo

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

- Sviluppo ed applicazione dei personali metodi di studio da parte degli studenti

Per niente – Pochissimo – Poco – Abbastanza – Molto – Totalmente

18. Indicare una o più metodologie che riutilizzerebbe nella didattica futura post-Covid-19 nel campo delle lingue straniere, motivando la risposta *

- Risposta breve: _____

19. Indicare una o più metodologie che NON riutilizzerebbe nella didattica futura post-Covid-19 nel campo delle lingue straniere, motivando la risposta *

- Risposta breve: _____

SEZIONE 4:

GESTIONE DELLE RELAZIONI INSEGNANTI-STUDENTI

- Scelga se ha avuto le seguenti percezioni durante l'insegnamento IN AULA o A DISTANZA

20. Durante lo svolgimento delle lezioni, ho avuto le seguenti percezioni: *

- Gli studenti sono attenti durante la lezione

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Gli studenti lavorano bene in gruppo

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Gli studenti intervengono spontaneamente per partecipare alla lezione

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Gli studenti sono portati a socializzare nei momenti di pausa

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Il lavoro individuale viene portato a termine in maniera efficace dagli studenti

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Il lavoro di gruppo viene portato a termine in maniera efficace dagli studenti

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Mi sento a mio agio quando insegno

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- La comunicazione insegnante-studenti avviene in maniera efficace

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Il tempo viene utilizzato in maniera ottimale e senza perdite di tempo

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Mi piace preparare le lezioni in modo creativo

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

- Usfruisco di un supporto tutor

IN AULA | A DISTANZA

SEZIONE 5:
PROFILO DELL'INSEGNANTE

21. Tipologia di scuola in cui insegna *

- Liceo classico
- Liceo scientifico
- Liceo linguistico
- Liceo artistico
- Istituto tecnico
- Istituto professionale
- Altro: _____

22. Categoria professionale *

- Docente di ruolo
- Insegnante supplente
- Insegnante di sostegno
- Altro: _____

23. Regione e città nelle quali insegna *

- Risposta breve: _____

24. Anni di esperienza nel campo dell'insegnamento *

- Risposta breve: _____

25. Quale lingua insegna (più di una risposta possibile) *

- Inglese
- Spagnolo
- Francese
- Portoghese
- Tedesco
- Cinese
- Russo
- Altro: _____

26. Età *

- 25-35 anni
- 36-45 anni
- 46-55 anni
- 56-65 anni
- oltre i 66 anni

27. Sesso *

- Femmina
- Maschio
- Altro: _____

28. Secondo le sue esperienze personali di insegnamento, ha suggerimenti considerazioni ulteriori da aggiungere?

* * *

GLOSSARY

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

CALL: Computer-Assisted Language Learning

L2TL: Second Language Teaching and Learning

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

FL: Foreign Language

L2: Second Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

VLEs: Virtual Learning Environments

SNSs: Social Network Sites

SNECSs: Social Network-Enhanced Commercial CALL Sites and Services)

ITP: Insegnante Tecnico Pratico (in secondary schools, high and middle)

DaD: Didattica a Distanza

* * *

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Irene Caramaschi