

Rosana Satorre Cuerda (Ed.)

# El profesorado, eje fundamental de la transformación de la docencia universitaria

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*El profesorado, eje fundamental de la transformación de la docencia universitaria*

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## 21. Asking and giving information in telecollaboration in Italian as a Foreign Language (IFL)

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### ABSTRACT

This study, framed within the I3CE Programme of Research Networks in University Teaching of the UA, intends to observe the general practice of dyadic oral interaction of IFL learners with native Italian speakers and, specifically, to identify the strategies and tactics used to activate the function “Giving and asking for information” at level A2 of proficiency, in addition to giving information to the interlocutor about non-verbal communication in Italian. In an academic context, the criteria established by the CERFL are employed, based on the PCIC inventory applied to Italian at this level of proficiency. The oral material produced by the learners, who use CALLT and MALLT technologies, is subject to transcription and is included in the student portfolio of the subject, which will be delivered in both hard and soft copy, the latter through the university platform applications. As to the methodology, through the design, implementation and evaluation of the activity, which are the three fundamental phases of the procedure, results will be obtained from the analysis of the performed communication skills related to “giving and asking for information”, in this stage of interlanguage of the trainees. The results obtained are intended to provide the necessary improvements in the programme of this subject, *Lengua D-II Italiano*, according to the action-research approach.

**KEY WORDS:** IFL, orality, action-research, giving and asking for information, telecollaboration.

### INTRODUCTION

Our contribution has its origin in the University Teaching Research Networks Programme, 2021-2022, of the UA’s ESI and, specifically, in network 5502: “*Dar y pedir información en la interacción colaborativa (italiano/español)*”. For our purpose, we have relied on the functions inventoried by the PCIC for Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL), at a level A2, that have been put into practice by apprentices and Ns: Identifying, Asking for information (Proposing alternatives, Expressing curiosity), Giving information (Correcting prior information), Asking for confirmation, Confirming prior information, Describing and Narrating. Among the topics suggested to the trainees for oral interaction in teletandem, we point out the following: music, cinema and TV series, studies, university, parties, free time (personal choice according to their preferences) and symbolic gestures in Italian, not optional for the group of second semester students which includes the informants of this study. The CERFL (2020) considers that the skills of a plurilingual user reach the linguistic baggage as a whole and, in this sense, mentions the need to “use paralinguistic resources (mime, gestures, facial expressions, etc.)” (p. 30). Similarly, users need to “take into account differences in behaviour (including gestures, tones, and attitudes)” (p. 138). Although understanding and expressing certain “culturally determined” non-verbal elements (p. 139) belong to the intermediate-advanced level (B2), as contents of intercultural competence. Non-verbal communication is integrated in a conversation, which, according to Poyatos (1980, p. 212; 1996; 2018), has a triple basic structure: language, paralanguage and kinesics; therefore the communication is multimodal (Poggi, 2006, p. 107). We will focus only on one

of the aspects of gestures, since it is the object of interest in the interaction of our group of learners on which our work is based. Of all the categorizations that have been published about gestures, we point out that those employed by the learners are emblems (also emblematic or symbolic gestures), which have been recognized as a well-defined typology by researchers. According to Ekman and Friesen (1969, pp. 64-66), non-verbal acts correspond to linguistic expressions and are part of the shared knowledge of a community. Ekman himself reviews his proposals and states: “Emblems are the only true ‘body language’, in that these movements have a set of precise meanings, which are understood by all members of a culture or subculture.” (2004, pp. 39-40). Also Poyatos defines the emblem “as a gesture that has a verbal equivalent without any ambiguity in its own culture” (1994, p. 187) recognizing the existence of paralinguistic emblems. In the Italian cultural sphere, gestures have produced an abundant and interesting bibliography, such as the works of Diadori (1990), Poggi (2006), Caon (2010), Nobili (2017) or the classic of De Jorio (1832). Among other works of reference on gestures with a didactic approach and, in particular, on Italian as a Foreign Language (IFL), we point out an article by Diadori (2013) that highlights the need to integrate gestures in the didactic application, with all the attributes that each gesture contains: semantic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, verbal correspondence, etc. and the normalization treatment that corresponds to them in the curriculum. This contribution complements a prior and detailed reference (González-Royo, 2022) developing several aspects related to the knowledge of symbolic gestures that involved the whole group of apprentices. Regarding the online interaction framed within the Teletándem project (Chiapello, González-Royo & Pascual-Escagedo, 2010; Chiapello & González-Royo, In press; Siemens, 2005), CER-FL(2020) provides the descriptors for a level A2, of IFL in our case, where a trainee “Can interact online with a supportive partner in a simple collaborative task, responding to basic instructions and seeking clarification, provided there are visual aids such as images, statistics or graphs to clarify the concepts involved.” (p. 87). The general objective of the Teletándem project is the practice of dyadic oral interaction of IFL learners with Ns of Italian and vice versa, while the specific objectives of this proposal focus on identifying the strategies and tactics used to activate the function “Giving and asking for information”, at level A2, about non-verbal communication.

## **2. METHOD**

### **2.1. Context and participants**

The context of this activity is academic and takes place in the second semester of IFL study, at a level A2 (A2+), in the *Lengua D-II Italiano* subject of the degree in Translation and Interpreting of the UA (T&I), which has 52 students, 5 of which are men. Most of the trainees are multilingual (Spanish & Catalan) and all of them are plurilingual, with IFL as a third language of study. They interact in telecollaboration with 52 Italian-speaking university students of Spanish, within the Teletandem project framework established with UNISA and UNISOB. The aforementioned university teaching network is the umbrella for the practice assigned to the *Lengua (D-I, D-II, D-III) Italiano* students, who hold 2 meetings per semester. However, for this contribution, we rely only on the first recording produced during the second semester by 8 learners (4 women and 4 men), who interact with 8 female N Italian interlocutors, developing a task on Italian symbolic gestures, as per the teacher’s design. This activity is framed in the course guide as a “problem-solving” of the syllabus and, in the ongoing assessment leading to the final evaluation (“guided works” and “evaluation of the oral language”.) This year in the classroom we have counted on the collaboration of two Erasmus students (Ns) in practice, proceeding from UNIKORE.

## 2.2. Tools

This practice is part of the CALLT (Computer Assisted Language Learning Teletandem) or even the MALLT (Mobile Assisted Language Learning Teletandem) methodology, as learners generally use different mobile devices with applications such as Whatsapp, VoiP telephony, video-conferencing platforms, video recording resources accessible from their devices, softwares, etc... As recalled in previous contributions (Chiapello & González-Royo, In press) obeying the characteristics of connectivism (Siemens, 2005), technology is of daily use without substantial investment in specific hardware or software. For that purpose, we encourage learners to adopt free digital tools that are available online. We refer in detail below to the summary of the applications adopted in each methodological phase.

Setting up the activity to introduce the topic to the apprentices in the classroom, we have resorted to videos published on YouTube edited with the MovieMaker application. The instructions are also prepared and disseminated by UACloud thanks to text files, PowerPoint and links shared through Drive. A sequence of items has also been created with the Google Forms application, in order to obtain indications about previous knowledge and the evolution in the acquisition throughout practice.

During the implementation phase, the students have completed the Telétandem task either using tools suggested by the teachers or adopting others based on their preferences. Among the most common ones we point out Whatsapp, Instagram or FaceBook for establishing a contact; for the virtual meetings, the students have used platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, Teams, Skype or Jitsi, recording the conversations in mp4 with the applications on their devices; portfolio deliveries have been made in Word and mp4 through UACloud, Google Drive or WeTransfer. In addition, the apprentices have responded, at the beginning and at the end of the activity, to the two surveys prepared with Google Forms, to internalize their knowledge about the topic in two different moments.

In the evaluation phase, the participants have had access to more extensive information about the contents, with new materials taken from YouTube and the results of the two surveys, reflecting on the knowledge acquired at the end of the activity. Finally, the practice has been evaluated mainly through a face-to-face debate in the classroom with all the participants and a final list has been drawn up collecting the most outstanding lines of discussion.

## 2.3. Materials

The first video-recorded oral production of 8 learners, 4 women and 4 men (the “\*” identifies male participants), was randomly selected. The duration of each virtual meeting was approximately 15’, for a total of 2h:06’:05”, with their corresponding written transcripts, as presented by their authors without intervention or corrections by the teacher. We have observed significant differences in the task of transliteration, with some learners limiting themselves to recording remarkable fragments of the interaction and others who, on the contrary, go into much greater detail in incorporating into the transcription elements that show phenomena of discourse structuring such as the turns of support or the pragmatic gloss. It is noteworthy that they all had the same instruction material which gave examples of how to transliterate pragmatic phenomena, pauses, syllable lengthening, laughter or overlapping, although the details were left to the apprentices’ choice.

## 2.4. Procedure

In the procedure, we distinguish three phases: a) Design: creating pairs of an Italian learner (N) with a Spanish counterpart (NN), providing the instructions drawn up to complete the entire work

plan to deliver those documents that have been published. A video and other material have been prepared to introduce the topic of Italian gestural communication in the classroom; b) Implementation of the activity: an audiovisual presentation is displayed in the classroom and then the participants are proposed to deal with “Italian gestures” in their virtual meetings (VoIP platforms) with Ns. Later on, the learners transliterate the materials and include all the documents of this task in their personal portfolio, to be delivered in hard and audiovisual support, through the university platform; and c) evaluation of the activity: a debate is held (both through the university platform and in the classroom) by the students to self-evaluate the whole teaching-learning process. On the basis of these materials, we will proceed to the analysis of the results of the structures related to “giving and asking for information”, besides reviewing issues of discourse construction between N and learner.

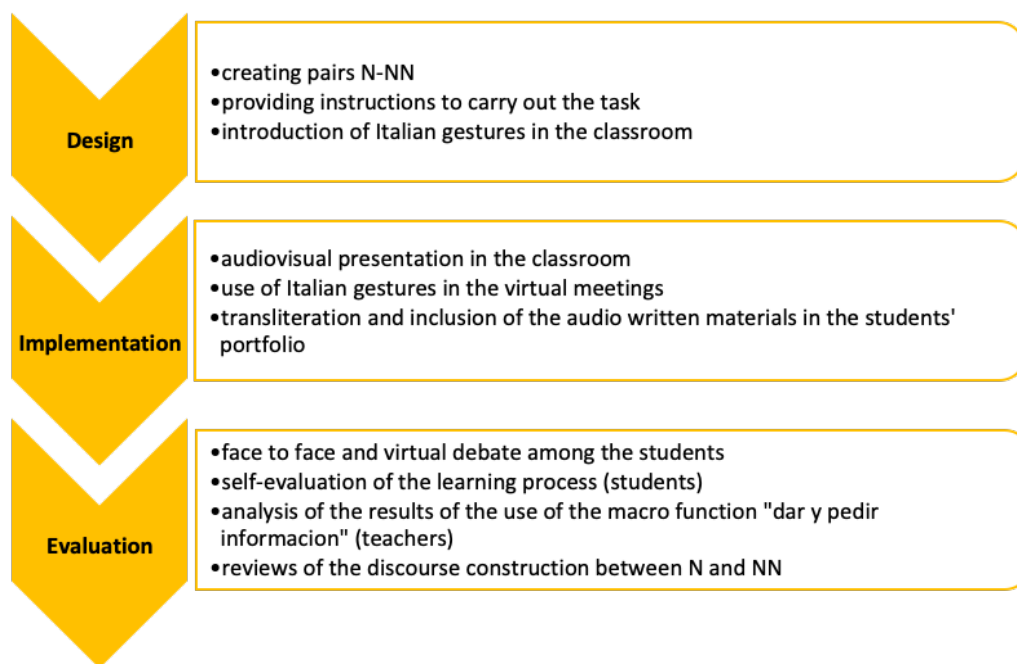


Figure 1. Procedure's phases.

### 3. RESULTS

The analysis of the results provides, on the one hand, information about the learners' communicative skills and, on the other hand, how they manage the function “giving and asking for information” at this stage of their interlanguage. Table 1 specifies some demographic variables of the interlocutors, who are all university students, as well as the code and duration of each interaction.

Table 1. Participants (NN/N, age, sex), code and duration of interaction.

Trainee	Sex Age NN	Sex Age N	Code	Duration
1*	M 19	F 19	VID_UA_2022_1*	15':21"
2*	M 19	F 19	VID_UA_2022_2*	12':22"
3*	M 19	F 21	VID_UA_2022_3*	8':48"

Trainee	Sex Age NN	Sex Age N	Code	Duration
4	F 19	F 23	VID_UA_2022_4	14':34"
5	F 20	F 23	VID_UA_2022_5	14':49"
6	F 19	F 22	VID_UA_2022_6	18':31"
7*	M 19	F 21	VID_UA_2022_7*	18':43"
8	F 19	F 19	VID_UA_2022_8	23':22"
				Total Duration: 2h:06':05"

As to the symbolic gestures, the emerging information of the interactions refers to the morphology of the gesture, semantic information, verbal correspondence, pragmatic information, expression of the communicative act and sociolinguistic information: diaphasic, diatopic, diastratic varieties and the appreciation of the frequency. Moreover, we can also observe questions of an intercultural contrastive nature. Performance errors vary considerably between some apprentices and others, without being able to determine it as a gender issue.

As a result of the debate in the classroom, with free interventions, the two Erasmus students in practice have prepared a final summary that contributes to the evaluation of the process according to the perception of all the participants. In this respect, the learners have appreciated approaching this aspect of the Italian language that conveys to the communication. They have established relationships between the classroom and the real life of the language they study, including the connection with cultural stereotypes or gestures and emojis. See also González-Royo (2022, PRESS.) Regarding the process, the learners have enjoyed the dynamism and the ludic approach. In fact, they have felt very motivated by the variety of multimodal input: video, Ppt presentations, face-to-face discussion and virtual meetings with their teletandem partners and have responded to two surveys that have allowed them to reflect on their knowledge. The final evaluation of the activity was carried out upon the highly positive perception of the learners' motivation and enthusiasm observed during the debate held by the students (both through the university platform and in the classroom), who self-evaluated the whole teaching-learning process through their acquired knowledge.

Finally, we present the results following the functions of the PCIC for level A2 of IFL. All the functions have been put into practice by apprentices and Ns. Additionally, they have employed some strategies and attenuation functions to ask for information or correct prior information, as per the intermediate levels B1 and B2 (PCIC). We then proceed to comment, by function, on these results with the examples we have selected and showed in the tables here below.

### 3.1. Identifying

Both the learners and the Ns have identified a gesture and have shown it to their interlocutors, mimicking it in conversation, generally with the expression "*così*" (table 2, T7; table 3, T74). In table 2 (T8) the N has explained the situation and the context of use, providing also diatopic information, verbal expression and its meaning.



**Table 2.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

5	NN:	okay// il primo è // non so se lo farò bene (RISAS) ma
6	N:	non preoccuparti (RISAS)
7	→ NN:	ma è/ così/// fare qualcosa così/ non so cosa significa (RISAS)
8	→ N:	(e:) allora diciamo che la maggior' parte delle volte questo gesto significa andiamo/ oppure vieni con me/ i significati sono questi di solito/ poi da regione a regione può variare un po' però (a:)// nella regione Campania di dove sono io di solito quando facciamo così intendiamo andiamo/ (m:) ad esempio un'amica si ferma per parlare con un'altro amico/ l'altro non vuole aspettare più e quindi dice/ andiamo (RISAS)/ più o meno la situazione è questa

Once more, in table3 (T74), but in Spanish, the N tries to identify the gesture and asks for a confirmation to the NN. After the confirmation (T75), the N compares with the equivalent Italian gesture (T76) employing cooperation, feedback and contrastivity.

**Table 3.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

74	→ N:	che cosa strana/ così tipo?
75	NN:	sì come-come srivendo/ sì
76	N:	ah! no/ noi per il conto alziamo la mano/ <u>scusa!</u>

In 4 (T9), NN\* identifies the gesture mimicking it with the verbal deictic “*questo*”.

**Table 4** VID\_UA\_2022\_2\*

8	N:	è interessante il fatto di avere un gesto o una forma differente di esprimere una stessa cosa tra due lingue strettamente legate no?
9	→ NN:	sì, è molto interessante e infatti ci sono altri gesti in Italia che si fanno in modo diverso. Per esempio, questo altro gesto in Spagna è fatto di diverse forme. Quindi, qui abbiamo queste due maniere di esprimere lo stesso, cioè, che una persona è pazza. (FACCIO I GESTI).
10	N:	ah, non sapevo che in Spagna ci (xxx()) due forme per dire questo. Già so qualcosa di nuovo.
11	→ NN:	però, è importante fare attenzione perché, se ricordo bene, in Italia c'è un gesto simile a questo, ma invece di essere fatto all'altezza degli occhi, è fatto sulla guancia. Credo che se tu per esempio fai così (FACCIO IL GESTO) per dire che hai mangiato qualcosa di molto buono. Non so se questo è certo.
12	N:	sì sì sì, hai ragione. Quando facciamo questo gesto e per dire che il cibo è stato magnifico, spettacolare...

Finally, in table 4 (T11), the NN\* points out that performing and describing verbally the gesture, with slight variations, gives rise to two different meanings. The N confirms that this description is true and both gestures are identified.

### 3.2. Asking for information

We propose, below, the case of table 5 (T47) in which the NN has asked for information with a direct interrogative question to enhance the conversation progress. In T48, the N answers with a direct corrective feedback, providing various synonyms and an example about a situation in which this term could be applied.

**Table 5.** VID\_UA\_2022\_4

47	→	NN:	e che vuole dire ¡ah furbo! ¿che voleva dire furbo?
48		N:	furbo significa (m:) molto / voglio trovarti la parola / perspicace molto intelligente <ah> per esempio / se sei in una situazione complicata difficile / sai sempre come (a:) affrontarla // questo significa sei molto furbo
49		NN:	capisco (RISAS) que- ques- questo gesto (m:) mi piace molto interessante perché-

In table 6 (T25), the NN, after identifying the gesture, asks her interlocutor to react and starts giving her the information, through the input “*ma (a:) non lo so*”, to pursue her cooperation. The N, with a sustained monologue, clearly provides an exhaustive feedback: distinguishing the gesture from another with a similar morphology; giving the verbal correspondence bringing up an example of a situation in which it could be used, the colloquial register, or not, and the frequency of use in her geographical area.

**Table 6.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

25	→	NN:	si! (e:)/// anche c'erano altre due// che (e:) non so (e:) penso che sono un po' simili tra loro/ magari no/ non lo so (RISAS) e il primo è/ così/ non so se si vede/// e l'altro è// così/ ma (a:) non lo so
26		N:	allora questo qui così/ significa mi fa male la pancia/ invece questo altro qui/ almeno da me dove abito io/ significa quando magari non si sopporta una cosa/ una (a:) un discorso non so/ e quindi si fa in questo modo per dire basta/ non ne posso più di questa (a:)// discussione di questo (o:) non lo so (m:) una situazione qualunque e si fa così per dire basta (a:)// voglio che tu la smetta/ spesso no si fa direttamente all'altra persona (e:)// magari ci sono due amici e l'altra sta parlando/ anche magari distante/ e (e:) nel momento in cui non ce la facciamo più/ diciamo all'amica vicina/ basta! (RISAS) però non è molto usato questo gesto sinceramente non (n:)// lo vedo molto molto raramente ma anche questo qui eh/ questo qui così noi per dire mi fa male la pancia facciamo/ mi fa male la pancia! (RISAS)
27		NN:	ah!/// si!/// anche noi/ anche noi facciamo questo/ si

In table 7, the NN does not use a direct question to ask for the information she wants, but uses attenuation strategies at an intermediate level (B1), with an indicative imperfect or a conditional + infinitive (T12 and T16) as a form of politeness. This strategy has also been used by the NN (8 and 1\*) in table 8 (T3) and 9(T5).

**Table 7.** VID\_UA\_2022\_6

12	→	NN:	Hm? Niente-niente di nuovo/ sì/ (e:) qui-qui siamo// volevo-volevo chiederti una cosa
13		N:	Dimmi
14		NN:	La: la settimana scorsa abbiamo/ abbiamo visto a: a lezione d'italiano alcuni: gesti che: utilizzate gli italiani
15		N:	Aaah (RISAS)
16	→	NN:	E non so cosa significano/ quindi: potresti: dirmi cosa/ cosa sono/ cosa significano?
17		N:	Certo/ certo! (RISAS) Con molto piacere/ spero di: conoscerli tutti =

**Table 8.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

3	→	NN:	bene anch'io// oggi parleremo un po' dei gesti tipici italiani (e:)/// io a (a:) alla lezione d'italiano (e:) la nostra professoressa ci ha mostrato alcuni esempi di questi gesti/ e quindi io ho (o:) preso note di quelli gesti che mi hanno incuriosito di più ma non so cosa significano e (e:) vorrei che tu me li spieghi
4		N:	va bene Nome8! okay per me possiamo iniziare

**Table 9.** VID\_UA\_2022\_1\*

5	→	NN:	io sto studiando un sacco anche ma bene tutto bene stiamo facendo in classe il tema dei gesti che usate mentre parlate allora vorrei che tu me spieghi qualche gesto
6		N:	qualche gesto

### 3.2.1. Providing alternatives asking for information

The NNs propose alternatives while asking for information. In table 10 (T50), the NN acknowledges the information and, in T52, she provides alternative proposals by putting the gesture in context. In T56, the NN completes the proposal that was started several turns before and, the N cooperates with feedback, as a positive support, to each NN's turn (T53, T55, T57).

**Table 10.** VID\_UA\_2022\_6

50	→	NN:	<i>Ahhh/ okay/ come-</i>
51		N:	Tipo/ "ma che stai dicendo?"
52	→	NN:	Sì! Sì! Sì/ perché io ho visto (e:) in/ come: partite di calcio =
53		N:	Ah/ okay
54	→	NN:	= (e:) i giocat- giocatori?
55		N:	Sì!
56	→	NN:	Quando vanno a: a prot- come a: <u>protestare/ non so</u>
57		N:	Esatto/ sì sì

### 3.2.2. Asking for information expressing curiosity

In general, interlocutors show interest and motivation throughout the interactions. In this regard, we exhibit table 5 (T49), table 11 (T208, T212, T217), where both NN and N express curiosity about the information provided by their counterpart. Similarly, in table 12 (T11), the NN communicates this feeling with the expression of support "Ah," repeating the echo answer "così", the gesture and its verbal expression of the N (T10).

**Table 11.** VID\_UA\_2022\_6

207		N:	(RISAS) scaccia la sfortuna/ <u>insomma</u> =
208	→	NN:	<u>ah!</u>
209		N:	= per mandare via/ <u>le negatività</u>

210	NN:	<u>qui-</u>
211	N:	(RISAS)
212	→ NN:	è curioso!
213	N:	non/ non è usato anche in Spagna o così?
214	NN:	(m:) abbiamo anche un gesto per// per la sfortuna ma// è: come: si dice (e:) toccare/// (RISAS) <i>madera/ non so come è madera</i>
215	N:	ah/ okay! Toccare legno
216	NN:	sì/ e: vai e tocchi una: come un tavolo o:
217	→ N:	ahhh! Qui: (a:) per la: sfortuna// bisogna sempre toccare qualcosa/ ma non il legno/ il ferro

**Table 12.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

9	NN:	(RISAS) sì/ non lo sapevo/ in spagnolo questo lo facciamo/ così
10	→ N:	ah/// così <i>vienes</i> (RISAS)
11	→ NN:	(RISAS) sì! <u>molto curioso</u>

### 3.3. Giving information

Although this practice is mainly designed for making the NNs ask for information to know the meaning of some symbolic gestures of Italian culture, actually they are also able to contribute giving the required information, in some cases. In table 13 (T41, T43), the NN introduces the task to be carried out during the interaction to identify and mimic the specific selected gesture. This information has been found in all our sampled conversations.

**Table 13.** VID\_UA\_2022\_5

41	→ NN:	noi in questa conversazione dobbiamo parlare di alcuni gesti italiani che ho visto nelle lezioni
42	N:	OK
43	→ NN:	per esempio questo gesto
44	N:	sì

Likewise, in table 14 (T71), the NN gives information to her interlocutor and narrates the facts to introduce a new topic with a sustained monologue.

**Table 14.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

71	→ NN:	sì/// anche mi sto ricordando adesso di (i:) perché adesso a (a:) alla nostra classe con la nostra professoressa ci sono due (e:) ragazze italiane// e (e:) quando abbiamo cominciato a parlare dei gesti (i:)/ a (a:) alla lezione/ loro ci hanno detto che (e:)/ li è sembrato molto interessante che noi gli spagnoli (a:)/ quando andiamo in ristorante// per chiedere il conto facciamo così/ come si scriviamo nell'aria
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72	N:	ah! oddio!
73	NN:	e mi ho ricordato adesso e/ per parlare un po' anche di alcuno spagnolo

### 3.4. Asking for confirmation

In 15 (T159), 16 (T1) and 4 (T11), we see how the NNs ( 8 and 2\*) ask their interlocutors for confirmation with direct questioning, interrogative clauses either direct or indirect : “*vero?*” or “*non so se questo è certo*”.

**Table 15.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

158	N:	per il momento no/ non mi vengono in mente/ diciamo che la maggior' parte li abbiamo fatti anche quelli più utilizzati ecco/ magari quando si trova (()) la signora che dice così (RISAS) puoi capire cosa vuol' dir' (RISAS)
159	→ NN:	sì (RISAS)/// sì/ anche io perché pen-questo l'abbiamo già detto vero?
160	N:	sì sì sì/ sì sì/ paura oppure stringi il discorso/ ne ho solo l'ultimo e poi ci salutiamo/ <u>che</u> sarebbe questo/ che è molto simpatico e ha due significati/ uno è positivo diciamo e uno nega-un po' più negativo/ però può essere anche positivo eh// prova ad indovinare dai è più semplice così

**Table 16.** VID\_UA\_2022\_2\*

1	→ NN:	ciao Nome, come stai ? È passato molto tempo dall'ultima volta che abbiamo parlato, vero? Se la mia mente non mi sbaglia, penso che sono passati circa 3 mesi almeno.
2	N:	ciao Nome2*. Sì, giusto, è passato molto tempo dall'ultima volta.3 mesi è tanto. E tu come stai ?

In 17 (T163), the NN asks for confirmation providing an hypothesis, which is confirmed by the N with “*esatto*”, and that resorts to the sustained monologue strategy to provide the most exhaustive information to the counterpart.

**Table 17.** VID\_UA\_2022\_8

163	→ NN:	(RISAS) che (e:) per dire per esempio che qualcosa è buona?
164	N:	esatto/ quello è il significato positivo/ <i>wow</i> perfetto quando parli ad esempio con uno chef e ti prepara un piatto/ perfetto (RISAS)// (e:) oppure può voler' dire quando (o:) sia (a:) non un pregiudizio verso un'altra persona/ si ha un'idea precisa verso l'altra persona/ spesso negativa no? e ci si aspetta che l'altra persona faccia qualcosa di sbagliato di un momento a l'altro/ e il momento in cui quella persona sbaglia/ qualche volta capirebbe di noi ci voltiamo a l'altra persona con cui abbiamo parlato no? della (a:) del nostro dubbio di quella persona/ ecco qua/ ecco qui lo sapevo/ che avrebbe fatto una cosa del genere/ in questo senso/// ovviamente può essere sia una cosa negativa o sia una cosa positiva però di solito/ si utilizza quando non ci convince quella persona e/ dubbiamo su di lei/ e quindi eccolo qua/ lo sapevo che avrebbe fatto una cosa del genere/ in questo sento// e credo siamo conclusi

On the contrary, in table 18 (T55), NN asks for information with an interrogative statement which advances an hypothesis. Then the N provides a negative answer with the semantic and verbal information (T58).

**Table 18.** VID\_UA\_2022\_4

55	→	NN:	(e:) ¿è lo stesso gesto che questo?
56		N:	no / no / questo significa-
57		NN:	è diverso
58		N:	è come un punto interrogativo <ah> / esempio Nome4 ¿ma che stai facendo?

### 3.4.1. Confirming prior information

The N confirms the information provided by the NN. In table 19 with “*certo*” (T5), in table 20 (T56) with “*vero*” and in table 4 (T12) with “*sì sì sì, hai ragione*”, expressed with emphasis and a rising intonation.

**Table 19.** VID\_UA\_2022\_3\*

4		NN:	l'altro giorno in classe si diceva che se gli italiani non avessero le braccia non potrebbero parlare è vero
5	→	N:	è certo sì sì

**Table 20.** VID\_UA\_2022\_5

55		NN:	sì ma in Spagna credo che noi li usiamo / sì li usiamo meno che voi
56	→	N:	è vero noi gesticoliamo molto

On the contrary, in table 21 (T46) the N does not confirm the information introduced by the NN. However, the adverb “*no*” is justified providing a reason for the NN’s error to save her face, showing a strategy of politeness.

**Table 21.** VID\_UA\_2022\_4

45		NN:	è come un okay ma-
46	→	N:	no (e:) no / non / è che non- si non sai / c’è si non sei molto spesso / si non sei nativo e si non sai cosa significa non ci puoi arrivare (RISAS) non riesci a capirlo / così significa sia molto furbo

In table 22 (T16), the N identifies and performs the gesture to confirm the verbal correspondence, advanced by the N (T18). The meaning is defined semantically and the phraseological unit “*le falta un tornillo*” verbalizes it in a more expressive and idiomatic way.

**Table 22.** VID\_UA\_2022\_1\*

15		NN:	in Spagna facciamo come ho capito
16	→	N:	ah così in Italia se fai così significa è pazzo
17		NN:	come?
18	→	N:	estas loco e pazzo

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19	NN:	in spagna è come estas loco
20	N:	ah ok
21	→ NN:	perché in Spagna se dice che quando una persona sta esta loca
22	N:	fazza
23	NN:	se dice che le falta un tornillo un tornillo è come è come tornillo sai?
24	N:	ah ok

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#### 4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Telecollaboration projects, such as our Teletándem, are being implemented with increasing frequency in the field of language teaching-learning throughout the world and, in particular, in higher education. There is an extended bibliography published on the topic, but we refer to Telles & Vassallo (2006) and O’Dowd (2019) as reference works that, in turn, have given rise to numerous projects with combinations of different languages, bilingual and multilingual.

Collaborative exchange networks have been established internationally between universities that exemplify very heterogeneous organizational models: from the free participation of students, without teacher feedback, to programmes aimed at certain subjects; institutionalized projects or projects dependent on a team or a single teacher, included in the teaching programme or as self-study, etc. In the same way, the objectives that the projects set illustrate a wide range of possibilities: practicing the written language, grammar, interculturality, orality or even the user’s free choice. Consequently, the modalities and objectives determine the use of the appropriate digital tools in each case. As far as the teaching-learning of IFL is concerned, we refer specifically to Chiapello & González-Royo (In press), a work in which numerous and very diverse approaches on the subject are reported in universities from all over the world, where the Italian language is present.

The work presented here is original as a thematic approach, although from different points of view (Diadori 1990; González-Royo, 2022; Nobili, 2017); however, the progress of our experience with the indications of the Teletándem project (Chiapello, González-Royo & Pascual Escagedo, 2010) have allowed us to introduce new technology and to put into practice numerous activities at different levels of proficiency, due to its flexibility. Our Teletándem project focuses on orality which, through interaction, can be put into practice by IFL’s learners in the Bachelor degree they are enrolled in (T&I). As a brief reference that illustrates the line of research carried out over a decade, we indicate in the bibliography only two of the latest published studies that are also the result of as many seminars in teaching networks with participants from Italian universities UNISA and UNISOB with the UA. In Chiapello & González-Royo (2020) the oral narrative in IFL at level B1 has been studied, as well as the oral description at level B1 (2021.)

The research network in university teaching facilitated the opportunity to focus, at the same time, on telecollaboration, the functions “giving and asking for information” and non-verbal communication in a group of informants from the second semester of IFL (A2). At this level, according to the CEFRL, the use of gestures is not yet included among its competencies. However, awareness of this aspect of communication can anticipate future acquisition and interlanguage integration of learners. With this purpose, we have selected the recorded audio-video production of 8 apprentices, 4 men and 4 women, among the 52 enrolled in the course, reaching over two hours in total.

Thank to the information that the PCIC inventory provides for the study of SFL, we have highlighted the functions recognised by the level A2 and present in all the examples displayed, if needed: Identifying, Asking for information (Alternatives proposal, Expressing curiosity), Giving information, Asking for confirmation (Confirming prior information), Describing and Narrating. The apprentices have even used some mitigation strategies and functions or correcting prior information, which the PCIC includes in an intermediate level B1 and B2. Likewise, the high involvement of both interlocutors (Ns and NNs) was visible throughout the task, by means of cooperation, feedback, follow-up with support shifts, interest and motivation. In this sense, the more relevant analysis of results is qualitative.

In terms of correctness, we observe that the strategies for giving and asking for information, listed for level A2, are acquired and used in context in all 8 cases. There are no gender markers to indicate whether it is the production of a male or a female speaker. Nevertheless, the most significant differences between the learners' interactions are grammatical, but classified as performance errors rather than competence errors.

Sociolinguistic issues have been addressed by means of request and provision of information regarding the diatopic variety of some of the gestures discussed; the register; the diastratic variety, and the frequency of their use, of which no examples are shown. Besides, the interlocutors have referred to the meaning of the gestures requested by the N, mainly to their verbal correspondence and to the linguistic or situational act in which their use is appropriate. Regarding the intercultural contrast, we have found differences and similarities that the interlocutors have established between certain Italian gestures and others related to other foreign languages they know. In the comments, we observe that the interlocutors are aware of possible differences in the register and in the meaning of some of these emblematic gestures. In addition, we highlight the Ns and NNs are aware that Italian culture relies on gestures more than others known by these plurilingual users.

In conclusion, the final evaluation of this activity is highly positive and the elements that confirmed such results are motivation, enthusiasm and knowledge acquisition, as stated by all participants. Therefore, this complex activity will be proposed again in the future.

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