
ALTE: Association of Language Testers in Europe and its CEFR Special Interest Group



Letizia Cinganotto and Graham Seed

ALTE: Association of Language Testers in Europe



- *An association of language assessment providers across **Europe and beyond***
- *Advocates **quality** in language assessment practices*
- *Supports **collaboration** between practitioners, researchers and policy-makers*
- *Promotes shared **standards** among members*

ALTE 9th International Conference, Munich



- *Responsible Language Assessment to Empower Learners*
 - www.alte.org/Munich-2026
 - *Registration closes 30th March 2026*
-

Support for multi- and plurilingualism



- *Promotes quality and comparability of assessments across **all languages***
 - *Particular support for **less-widely** spoken languages, including **sign** languages*
 - *Promotes development of **plurilingual competence** as described in the CEFR*
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Support for CEFR



ALIGNING



LANGUAGE



EDUCATION



WITH THE CEFR:



A HANDBOOK

April 2022



UKALTA

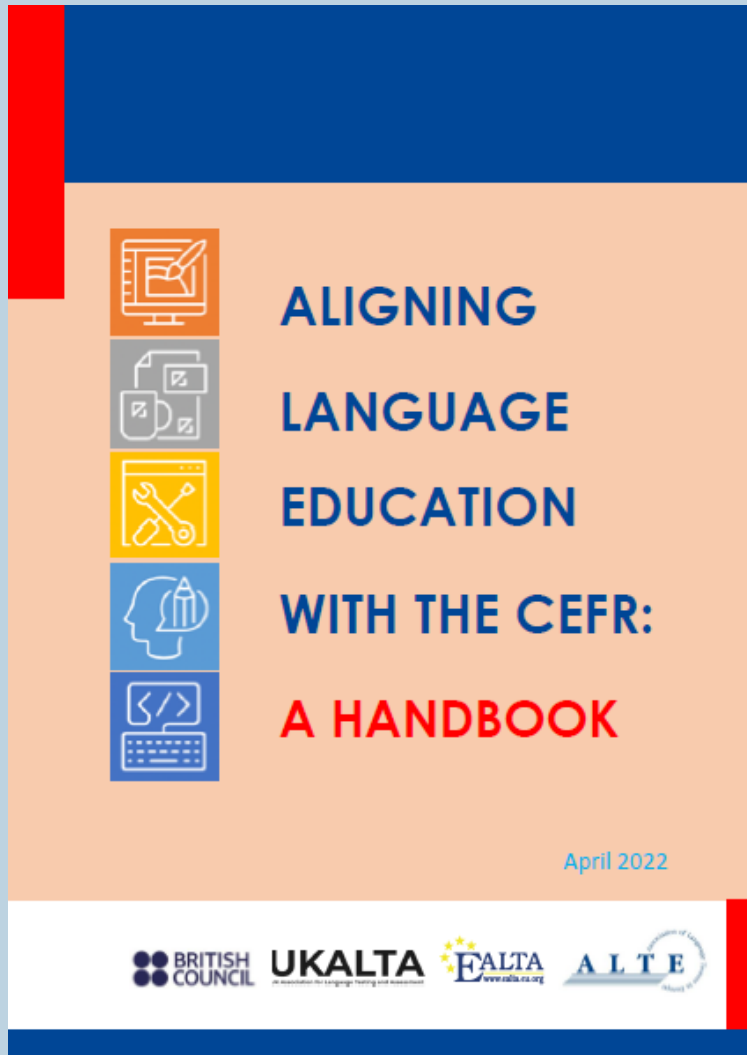


- *Instrumental in developing what became the CEFR in 1990s and beyond*
 - *Continuing relationships with Council of Europe and ECML*
-

Council of Europe-ALTE Survey on Language Policies for Migrants in Member States

- *Previous surveys 2007, 2014, 2018*
 - *Looks at language and KoS requirements in different Member States*
 - *New survey to take place in 2026/7 for updated reliable data, identify trends, examples and challenges*
 - *Specific focus on KoS & links to Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture*
 - *Provides recommendations for policymakers*
-

Support for CEFR



- *Publications linking to the CEFR, e.g.:*
 - Aligning Language Education with the CEFR: A Handbook (2022)
 - Manual for Language Test Development and Examining (2011, 2026)
-

CEFR SIG



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ALTE CEFR SIG

Letizia Cinganotto

University for Foreigners of Perugia, Italy

Co-chairs:

Adolfo Sánchez Cuadrado

Joaquín Cruz

Sarah Ellis

Seçil Alaca

Mika Hoffman

CEFR SIG



- *Explores real-world CEFR(-CV) implementation in language assessment*
 - Alignment
 - Mediation
 - Use of AI





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OVERVIEW

- SURVEY ON AI AND MEDIATION
- CASE STUDY: TEST OF TURKISH
- WINTER SCHOOL ON AI



Results of CEFR SIG Survey, 2024

A comprehensive survey conducted by the CEFR Special Interest Group, exploring two critical dimensions shaping the future of language assessment: the integration of Artificial Intelligence in language testing and teaching, and the adoption of mediation scales across member institutions.

Context

Background and institutional profiles of respondents

AI Practices

Experiences and current use of AI in language testing and teaching

Mediation

Integration of mediation scales in language testing frameworks

CEFR SIG SURVEY 2024

Part I: Artificial Intelligence

Exploring how ALTE member institutions are experiencing, adopting, and responding to AI across the full spectrum of language testing – from item creation to marking and feedback.



Country of Origin of Respondents

A total of 29 responses were collected from ALTE member institutions across 16 countries and territories, reflecting broad international representation within the language testing community.

Europe & Beyond

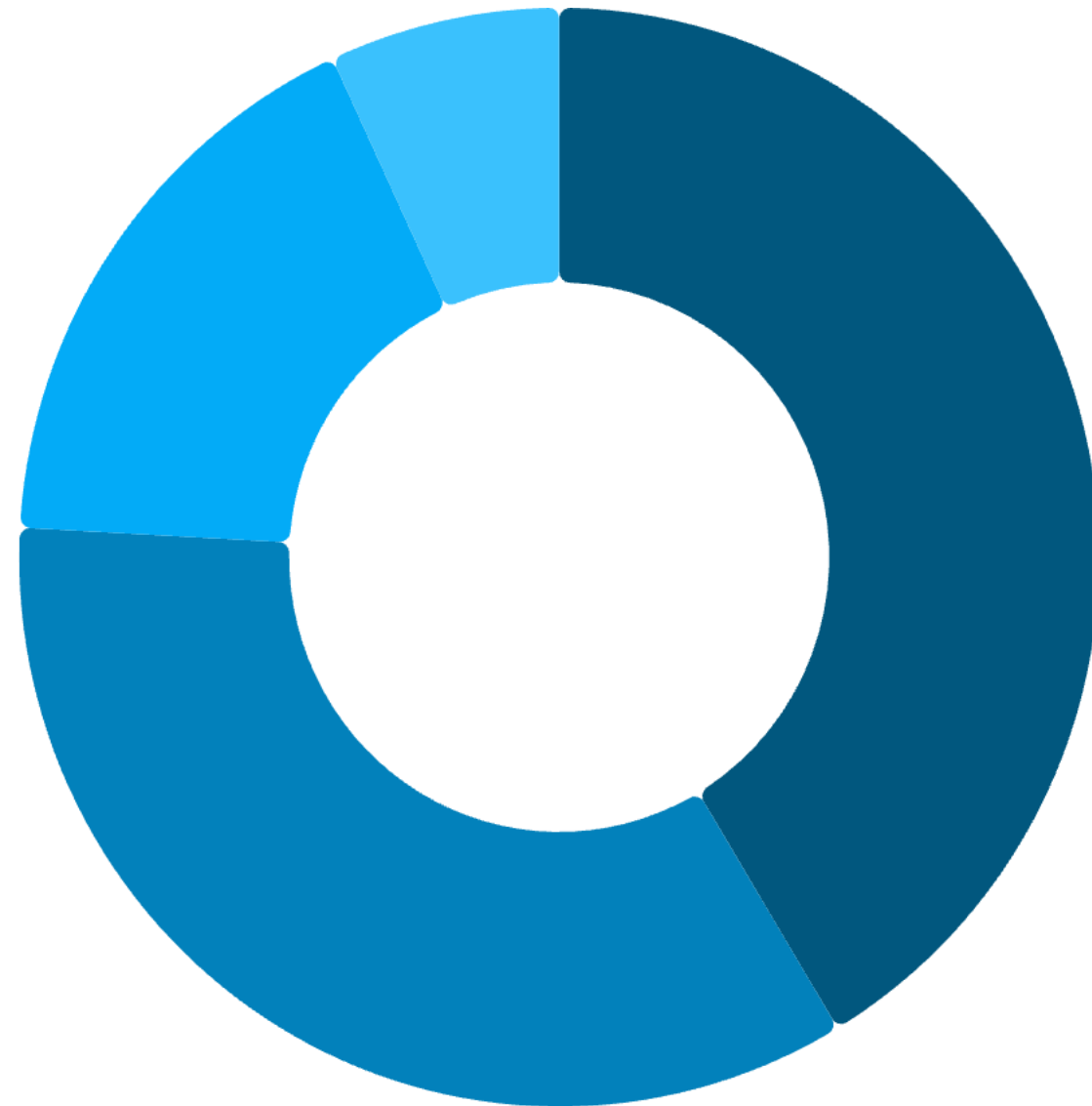
Country	n
Belgium	2
Czech Republic	3
France	1
Germany	3
Greece	1
Israel	1
Italy	2
Luxemburg	1

Further Afield

Country	n
Philippines	1
Romania	2
Spain	1
The Netherlands	4
Türkiye	2
United Kingdom	2
USA	1
Wales	1

Type of ALTE Membership

Respondents represent a cross-section of ALTE membership categories, from full members to associates and observers, reflecting a wide range of institutional engagement with the CEFR framework and language assessment standards across Europe and beyond.



- Full Members·41.38%
- Associates·36.48%
- Observers·17.24%
- Other / Unknown·6.9%

Languages Assessed by Respondent Institutions

Survey respondents collectively assess a remarkably diverse portfolio of 16 languages, spanning major world languages, European regional languages, and heritage varieties – a true reflection of the multilingual mission of ALTE member institutions.

Major World Languages

- **Arabic**
- **Chinese**
- **English**
- **French**
- **German**
- **Portuguese**
- **Russian**
- **Spanish**

European & Regional Languages

- **Czech**
- **Dutch**
- **Hebrew**
- **Luxemburguese**
- **Romanian**
- **Welsh**

Unique & Heritage Languages

- **Esperanto**
- **Papiamentu**

These languages highlight the breadth of ALTE's commitment to linguistic diversity beyond mainstream assessment contexts.

Key Concerns About AI in Language Testing

Ethical Issues

- **Bias leading to inequitable outcomes for test-takers**
- **Risk of job displacement for human test developers and markers**
- **The imperative to keep humans in the loop in all decision-making**
- **Potential for test leaks via AI-generated or publicly available content**

Legal Dimensions

- **Who holds authorship of AI-generated test materials?**
- **Need for transparency with candidates and stakeholders**
- **Accountability when decisions are made or influenced by AI systems**

Construct Validity

- **Are we measuring Human-to-Human (H2H) or Human-to-AI (H2AI) language?**
- **Only 2 institutions are planning training on AI – a significant gap**
- **Reliability of AI-generated items is yet to be empirically established**
- **Questions around authenticity of AI-produced test content**

Benefits of AI Across the Testing Cycle

Despite the concerns, respondents identified meaningful advantages of AI at each stage of the language testing process – from material creation through to candidate feedback.



Creating Tests

- **Rapid generation of copyright-free texts and stimulus materials**
- **Saves time in early drafting stages of item development**



Delivering Tests

- **Chatbots can generate realistic interaction in productive components (speaking/writing)**
- **Adaptive algorithms help shorten multi-level assessments efficiently**



Marking Tests

- **Potential for automated marking at scale**
- **Personalized feedback tailored to individual candidate responses**
- **Reduced susceptibility to rater bias and the halo effect**

AI Toolkit Used by Respondent Institutions

Respondents reported using a range of commercially available AI platforms for test development, research, and pedagogical purposes. The following tools were most frequently cited across institutions.

ChatGPT

General-purpose conversational AI widely used for text and item generation.

chat.openai.com

Gemini

Google's multimodal AI assistant for research, drafting, and analysis tasks.

gemini.google.com

Copilot

Microsoft's integrated AI tool for productivity and document workflows.

copilot.microsoft.com

Le Chat Mistral

European open-source LLM with strong multilingual capabilities.

chat.mistral.ai

Fliki TTS API

Text-to-speech API for generating audio stimuli in listening assessments.

fliki.ai

NotebookLM

Google's research AI for synthesizing sources and supporting content analysis.

notebooklm.google.com

Adoption Patterns & Voices From the Field

AI adoption remains cautious but growing. Only 6 out of 30 respondents confirmed active use, with confidentiality and ethical concerns cited as primary barriers. Those using AI report it is mostly experimental and requires human oversight.

"Our organisation is experimenting with AI for item writing and grading speaking/writing responses."

– *British Institutes*

"ChatGPT generates texts and items well, but needs editing for level and authenticity before use."

– *Czech Republic respondent*

"Hallucinations and bias are real risks – human oversight is absolutely essential at every stage."

– *Germany respondent*

"There's an ethical paradox: test constructors may use AI, yet candidates are prohibited from doing so."

– *Luxembourg respondent*

Key Takeaways: AI in Language Testing



Already in Use

AI is actively being used for test development – particularly for text and item creation – even if adoption remains limited and largely experimental across member institutions.



Training Gap = Opportunity

With only 2 institutions planning AI training, there is a clear and urgent opportunity for the ALTE community to develop shared guidelines, capacity-building programs, and professional development resources.



Concerns Are Real

Bias, legal accountability, and construct validity are top concerns. The H2H vs. H2AI question challenges the very definition of communicative language ability.



Auto-Marking Potential

Automated marking and personalized feedback represent the most promising near-term applications – though reliability and validity evidence must be established before widespread adoption.

CEFR SIG SURVEY 2024

Part II: Mediation

Examining how ALTE member institutions perceive, integrate, and operationalize mediation as a language skill – and what role it plays in shaping the future of task design, rubric development, and authentic assessment.



Mediation in Practice: Findings & Voices

Around 40% of respondents foresee a "significant" future role for mediation in test design. Many others see it playing a "small but confirmatory" role – validating existing practice rather than introducing entirely new paradigms.

"Mediation tasks in telc tests involve relaying information – a natural fit for real-world communication."

– *Germany respondent*

"In ESP for medics, mediation reflects authentic patient communication scenarios."

– *Czech Republic respondent*

"Oral mediation tasks were well received by both testers and candidates – positive washback on rubric development."

– *Czech Republic respondent*

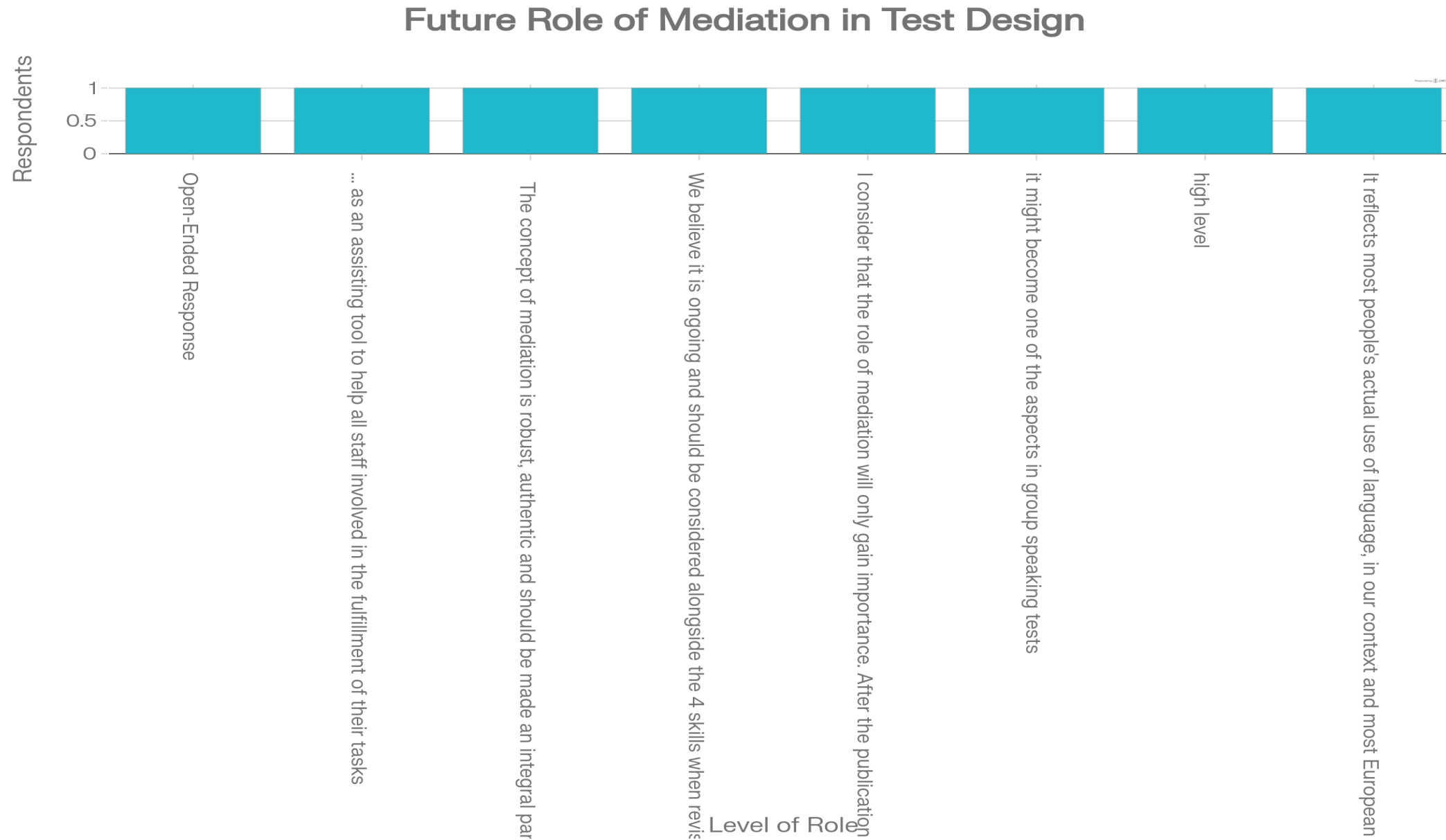
"Mediation reflects real clinical situations and how language is actually used in professional medical contexts."

– *Czech Faculty of Medicine*

📄 Most frequently cited mediation activity: mediating texts and explaining or relaying data. Organized training sessions on mediation remain rare across institutions.

Future Role of Mediation in Test Design

Survey respondents were asked to evaluate multiple statements about mediation’s future role. The chart below summarizes the distribution of responses across key perspectives – from open-ended views to specific claims about mediation’s importance in group speaking tests and European language contexts.



Key Takeaways: Mediation in Language Testing

Not Perceived as New

Most institutions view mediation as an extension of existing practice rather than a disruptive innovation – it formalizes communicative behaviors already present in authentic language use.

Limited Test Impact So Far

The direct influence on test instruments remains modest. Where impact is felt, it is primarily in the task-development cycle and in the refinement of scoring rubrics.

Text Mediation Dominates

Mediating texts is the most frequently cited form – asking candidates to summarize, relay, or explain content to a different audience in a different register or language.

Authenticity Drives Future Relevance

Mediation is widely seen as reflecting real-world language use, which underpins the expectation that its importance will grow as CEFR-aligned assessment becomes more communicatively authentic.

A Case Study from the CEFR SIG

63rd ALTE Conference and Meeting Pécs, Hungary – November 2025

Presented jointly by the University for Foreigners of Perugia and the Association of Language Testers in Europe, this case study brings together survey insights and practical implementation examples from across the ALTE community.



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e-YDTS: A New Era in Turkish Language Testing

The e-YDTS was developed to meet the growing demand for a standardized, CEFR-aligned Turkish proficiency assessment. It covers four core skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking) at B2, C1, and C2 levels.

The Need for Standardization

A growing international student population demanded a unified, reliable tool. A specialized panel was formed and a comprehensive CEFR training program was implemented.

Expert Shortage

Limited availability of professionals with both CEFR literacy and language assessment expertise required deliberate capacity-building across institutions.

Translation Issues

CEFR descriptor translations into Turkish suffered from meaning loss and inconsistencies – the same English terms rendered differently across contexts, causing evaluation confusion.

New Concepts

Mediation as a new skill required targeted explanation, specialist training, and careful integration into the existing test framework before it could be assessed reliably.

The Solution: A Systematic Development Approach

A structured, four-phase training and development program was designed to address expertise gaps, resolve terminology inconsistencies, and ensure e-YDTS met international standards for reliability and validity.

Training Program Components

- 1 Fundamental CEFR Concepts
Language proficiency levels, descriptors, and core assessment principles
- 2 Practical Application
Hands-on workshops applying CEFR descriptors to Turkish language assessment tasks
- 3 Terminology Standardization
Identifying and resolving translation inconsistencies across all test components
- 4 Mediation Skills
Understanding and implementing this new competency area within the assessment framework

Measurable Results

- **Significant improvement in the expert panel's CEFR understanding following the training program**
- **Development of comprehensive test specifications aligned with CEFR at B2, C1, and C2**
- **Creation of a reliable, valid Turkish proficiency test meeting international standards**
- **Established foundation for consistent evaluation across all universities nationwide**

Winter School on Artificial Intelligence

For Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment

University for Foreigners of Perugia, CVCL19–23 January 2026

A professional development opportunity hosted by the University for Foreigners of Perugia in collaboration with ALTE, bringing together international experts and practitioners in AI-enhanced language education.



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Dr Chahra Beloufa · 1st
Assistant Professor of English Language and Literatur...
4h · 🌐

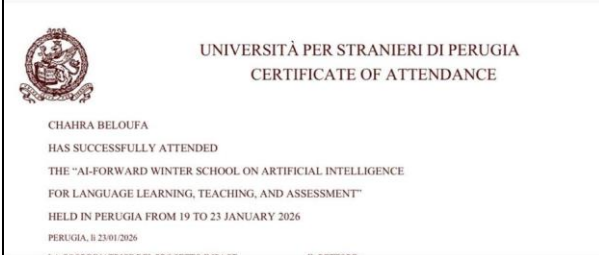
I am pleased to share that I have received my Certificate of Attendance for the AI-Forward Winter School (19–23 January 2026). Special thanks to **Letizia Cinganotto** and the **Università per Stranieri di Perugia** for this opportunity.

The program offered an engaging space to reflect on the evolving role of artificial intelligence in research, higher education, and knowledge production.

For those of us exploring the intersection of AI, language, and education, these conversations are essential as we continue to examine how emerging technologies reshape academic practices, learning environments, and research methodologies.

Grateful to the organizers and participants for such a stimulating and forward-looking experience.

#ArtificialIntelligence #HigherEducation #AcademicResearch #AIinEducation #ProfessionalDevelopment



UNIVERSITÀ PER STRANIERI DI PERUGIA
CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE

CHAHRA BELOUFA
HAS SUCCESSFULLY ATTENDED
THE "AI-FORWARD WINTER SCHOOL ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT"
HELD IN PERUGIA FROM 19 TO 23 JANUARY 2026
PERUGIA, 0 23/01/2026



Özge Zeytin Bildirici · 1st
AI in Education Mentor | Digital Pedagogy | English Le...
10h · 🌐

One Step Closer to the Future of Educational Technologies! 🚀


I am delighted to share that I have successfully completed the "AI-Forward Winter School on Artificial Intelligence for Language Learning, Teaching, and Assessment" organized by Università per Stranieri di Perugia in Italy.

During this intensive week-long program, which was worth every second, I gained invaluable academic perspectives on integrating AI into language learning, teaching, and assessment processes. It was an inspiring experience to broaden my vision and exchange ideas with experts in the field.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the entire organizing team, and especially to **Letizia Cinganotto**, for this incredible opportunity. Now, it's time to put these new insights into practice! 🇮🇹 📖

#AIinEducation #ArtificialIntelligence #LanguageLearning #EdTech #Italy #WinterSchool #Perugia #ProfessionalDevelopment

AI for Language Learning & Teaching... · 1 page




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CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE


ÖZGE ZEYTIN BILDIRICI
HAS SUCCESSFULLY ATTENDED
THE "AI-FORWARD WINTER SCHOOL ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE
FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING, TEACHING, AND ASSESSMENT"

WINTER SCHOOL 2026


AI-Forward Winter School 2026


Artificial Intelligence for Language Learning, Teaching and Assessment


 Dates
January 19–23, 2026

 Coordinator
Prof. Letizia Cinganotto

 Funding
PNRR-TNE IMPACT Project (EU – NextGenerationEU)

 Location
Palazzo Gallenga, Perugia
Hybrid: in-person & online

 Organizers
University for Foreigners of Perugia in cooperation with ALTE

 Target Audience
Language educators, curriculum developers, instructional designers, and assessment specialists

Winter School: Program & Objectives

Program Highlights

Five days of intensive learning featuring:

01

Keynote Lectures

From leading international experts in AI and language education

02

Hands-On Workshops

Practical sessions applying AI tools to real assessment and teaching scenarios

03

Case Studies

Real-world examples of AI integration across diverse educational contexts

04

Collaborative Discussions

Peer exchange and community-building across institutions

Core Focus Areas

- AI integration in language learning
- AI-enhanced language assessment
- Ethics and responsible AI use
- Inclusion and accessibility in AI-driven contexts
- Digital transformation in education

📄 **Learning Outcome: Participants will gain the knowledge, tools, and strategies to effectively integrate AI in language education while promoting responsible and inclusive use of technology across teaching, learning, and assessment.**



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COMING SOON!

Spring Days
on Artificial Intelligence
for language learning, teaching and
assessment

University for Foreigners of Perugia, CVCL, 18-20 May 2026



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Thank you!

Letizia Cinganotto

University for Foreigners of Perugia, Italy

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