MEDIATION IN TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT (METLA)

A TEACHING GUIDE FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

ENG

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MEDIATION

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Introduction

Understanding the concept of cross-linguistic mediation

We mediate when there is a need to make information accessible to others (friends, colleagues, family members, tourists, etc.) who are experiencing difficulty understanding oral or written speech in a particular situation. We may have to explain part of what was said or written, to relay one or more messages, ideas, pieces of information in language that the person we are mediating for understands. It may be a different language (when we mediate *cross-linguistically*), or a different variety of the same language (when we mediate *intra-linguistically*). In both cases, the role of mediator is important because s/he intervenes to facilitate communication. The mediator acts as an intermediary who passes on source text information to someone else to (an)/other language(s) or within the same language in order to bridge communication gaps.

In this Teaching Guide, we are concerned with *cross-linguistic mediation*, not because it is more important or more common than intra-linguistic mediation, but because language teachers are less familiar with this sort of activity. In language education, the term mediation first appeared (but was not greatly developed) in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001) with its meaning being further expanded in the *CEFR Companion Volume* (CEFR-CV) (Council of Europe, 2020), upon which this Guide draws.

The METLA project (2020-2022)

The METLA (Mediation in Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment) project team has developed this Teaching Guide for foreign language teachers as a response to the importance of mediation in communication and the ever-increasing relevance of cross-linguistic mediation within multilingual and multicultural societies. The Guide aims to help teachers of primary and secondary education who want to include linguistic mediation in their teaching practices. It contains information about the theory and practice of language teaching, learning and assessment in relation to mediation together with examples of mediation tasks in different languages. Such examples draw on the new Companion Volume of the CEFR (CEFR-CV)

(Council of Europe, 2020). This Guide also provides tips and suggestions for teachers on how they can design their own mediation tasks.

The METLA project has also developed a databank with additional sample cross-linguistic mediation tasks in different languages for different contexts. This databank is available through the resource webpage, where teachers can familiarise themselves with the notion of mediation by means of practical examples. The webpage also identifies and explains the key concepts of the Guide.

There are clear synergies between this Guide and other resources published by the ECML. METLA complements amongst others the tools developed within the framework of the projects "CEFR Companion Volume implementation toolbox, "*Developing teacher competences for pluralistic approaches: Training and reflection tools for teachers and teacher educators*" and the *FREPA (A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures)* materials. Users of the Guide might in addition find it beneficial to access the Council of Europe's *CEFR Companion Volume (CEFR-CV)* along with the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*, as these very influential documents have informed the production of METLA tasks. As further explained in Chapter 3, METLA tasks draw upon the common language proficiency levels (A1-C2) and use the new scales for mediation and mediation strategies as suggested in the CEFR-CV. Each task is linked to specific scales and has specific objectives. Teachers can decide whether the task is relevant and appropriate for their class depending on the learners' needs.

Guide: contents and structure

This Guide is written for the use of teachers who intend to incorporate cross-linguistic mediation in their practices by providing the relevant theory on mediation (Chapters 1-3) and practical suggestions, tips and orientations as to how cross-linguistic mediation can be taught and assessed (Chapters 4-7). Specifically, the Guide offers guidelines and provides suggestions on how foreign language (FL) teachers can:

- help learners develop mediation strategies;
- adapt and differentiate tasks across languages, proficiency levels, learner groups;
- incorporate learners' heritage/home languages;
- integrate the pluricultural component in activities which require the parallel use of languages;
- develop learners' collaborative and social skills across languages;

- develop learners' intercultural understanding, openness, respect towards other cultures;

- assess learners' mediation performance by providing ideas for alternative assessment.

This publication is based on a series of twenty mediation tasks (which can be downloaded from the project's website) involving multiple languages. It also explains the underlying principles and features of METLA tasks (Chapter 3). Teachers who are already familiar with theoretical aspects of cross-linguistic mediation and are looking for specific ideas on how to design cross-linguistic mediation tasks may want to focus their attention on Chapter 5 and 6. Chapter 5 provides helpful insights on how METLA tasks can be adapted in order to cater for different teaching and learning contexts. Information and guidelines for aligning cross-linguistic mediation tasks with CEFR-CV descriptors are provided in Chapter 6. The teacher can also download useful checklists for designing mediation activities, infographics with tips about how to develop such tasks, and assessment grids both for teachers and students.

> **Various aspects of cross-linguistic mediation are illustrated by means of specific examples of mediation tasks presented throughout the Guide. Further examples for all proficiency levels combining different languages are also included in the METLA databank.**

The Guide provides different perspectives, suggestions and ways to teach and assess mediation through specific examples of cross-linguistic mediation tasks. However, it is important for teachers to know that they can **select** and **adapt** the METLA material according to their specific goals, target groups and the local cultural context. The range of tasks provided in the Guide does not aim to cover all possible aspects of cross-linguistic mediation and cannot involve *all* languages that might be used in mediation tasks. Complementing this Guide is the METLA Glossary which provides definitions for the main terms used in the Guide.

Who is the Guide for?

This Teaching Guide is addressed to *foreign* language teachers of primary and secondary education. With the help of the Guide, teachers will be able to introduce different languages that students may bring into the classroom. They will gain awareness on how to design materials aiming at developing and assessing learners' mediation performance. While most cross-linguistic mediation tasks will focus on foreign languages taught in schools, examples which incorporate additional languages (such as students' home languages) will also be given. In addition to teachers, this Guide is intended to support teacher educators who wish to

incorporate mediation into their programmes. Decision makers, such as school principals, curriculum planners or material developers may also find this Guide useful.

THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN USING THIS GUIDE

Language A vs. Language B:

➡ When reference is made to the languages involved in a cross-linguistic mediation task, the team uses the distinction between <u>Language A</u>, i.e. the language of the source text(s) and <u>Language B</u>, i.e. the language of the output of mediation. Of course, the teacher is free to add any additional language that his/her students may bring into the classroom;

➡ Language A vs. Language B is a distinction also made in the CEFR-CV;

➡ *CEFR language proficiency levels* in the task descriptions refer to the output text(s) (<u>Language B</u>), complexity of source texts (<u>Language A</u>) and task complexity.
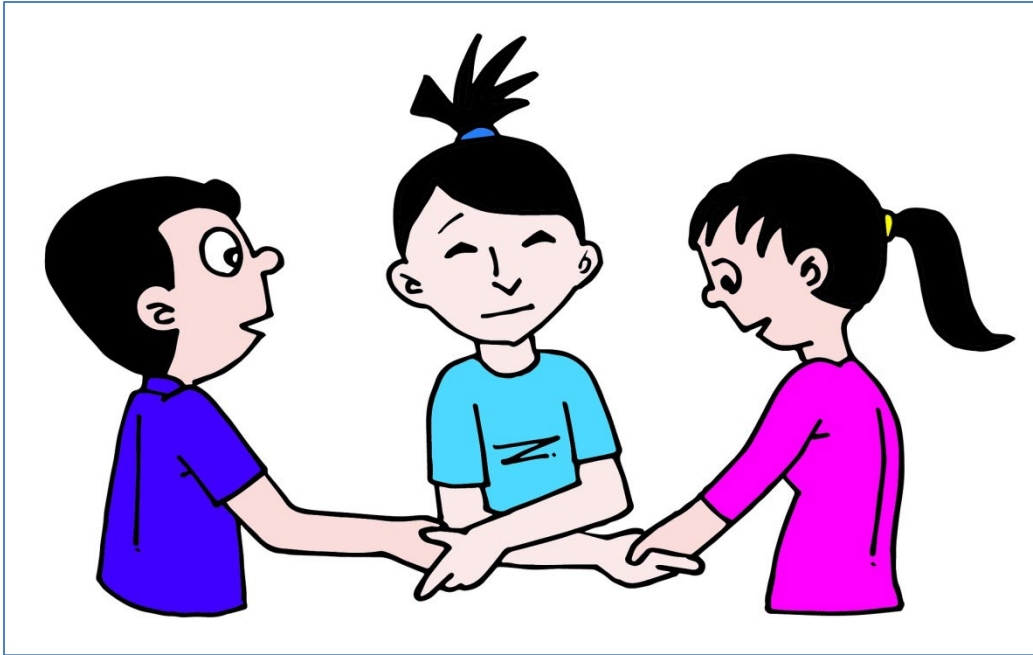
CHAPTER 1

Introduction to cross-linguistic mediation

This chapter discusses the notion of mediation from three different perspectives. Cross-linguistic mediation is seen as:

i) *an act of communication involving different languages;*

ii) *an everyday experience of language users in today's multilingual and multicultural societies; and*

iii) *an important ability to be learnt within the framework of foreign language teaching and learning*

This chapter thus addresses questions such as: How is mediation defined in literature? What is the role of the mediator? What is cross-linguistic mediation and how is it experienced by plurilingual speakers? How can it be taught and assessed? The chapter also discusses mediation within the framework of the CEFR-CV and explains those aspects of the CEFR-CV that have informed the METLA project.

1.1. When do we mediate?

We mediate when there is need to make information accessible to a friend, a colleague, a family member, a tourist, and generally to parties who do not grasp or have difficulties to understand this information due to linguistic and/or cultural differences. As indicated in the CEFR-CV, "in mediation, the user/learner acts as a social agent who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning, sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another (cross-linguistic mediation)". *Cross-linguistic* (or interlinguistic) mediation, which is the focus of this project, thus refers to the activity of relaying information from one language to another. *Intralinguistic* mediation takes place when the relaying of information occurs within the same language. Explaining content of graphs and tables within the same language is an example of intralinguistic mediation.

1.2. Defining *cross-linguistic* mediation

Cross-linguistic mediation is the process of relaying or transferring information from one language to another for a given communicative purpose. Within a multilingual and multicultural context, it is an important activity which facilitates the exchange of meanings and information and ensures mutual understanding.

It is an instance of multimodal and cross-cultural communication which leads to meaning construction. In today's globalised world, we often find ourselves in situations in which we have to mediate across languages and interlocutors in order to ensure understanding.

> **Cross-linguistic mediation is an everyday social activity and occurs when there is a need to communicate information from (at least) one language into another (or others), to have something clarified, to (re)interpret a message, to sum up what a text says for one or more persons, for an audience or for a group of readers, etc. considering the addressee and the aim of the task.**

- A tourist in our city stops and asks us about a concert that is announced through a poster which is written in the local language. We read and give information to the tourist about the when and where of the concert and other details he or she wants to know.

- A friend relays information from a magazine article in a foreign language in order to warn someone else about the dangers of smoking.

- A friend reads an interesting article in a language we do not understand about electric cars and he or she suggests we wait and not buy a new car that runs on fuel yet.

- We watched a video in one language that our parents do not understand, and give them instructions (in another language) on how to open the door of the washing machine when the wash is finished.

- A passer-by asks a street artist to explain in a foreign language the meaning of a piece of graffiti on the road.

- Two of our friends are looking at a comic in one language and disagree on what the humorous point is. I am more proficient in the foreign language than my friends, so I try to help.

- We look at the weather in our weather app in one language and advise our sister in another language what kind of clothing she should take on the trip.

- A classmate heard a new song in her home language, and because she knew that I would like it, she tells me what it is about in a shared language.

In all the examples above, cross-linguistic mediators comprehend the language used in a spoken, written and/or visual text while others involved in the same communicative situation do not, so the mediators help them by conveying what they need to know in a language they can understand. Being able to mediate across language is necessary in public and private domains, in the professional and educational fields, and more specifically whenever messages have to be reformulated or rephrased from one language to another in order to facilitate the construction of meaning and to bring interlocutors closer together. Thus, cross-linguistic mediation:

- ➡ always occurs in a social context, is a purposeful activity and 'social practice' in which language users become involved when there is a communication gap. Therefore, mediation always serves a communicative purpose and can achieve that purpose by considering the situational context (who is writing/speaking to whom). It thus requires the mediator to use the appropriate language and select the appropriate vocabulary for the particular context;

- ➧ entails the purposeful selection of information by the mediator from a source text in one language and the relaying of this information into another language;

- ➧ is part of the mediator's plurilingual competence. The mediator is a plurilingual social agent actively participating in (at least) two worlds, drawing upon Language A content and shaping new meanings in Language B for the readers or listeners of a different linguistic or cultural background;

- ➧ involves a variety of abilities: reception (listening and reading), production (writing and speaking), and interaction, as well as non-linguistic resources, such as body language and gestures;

- ➧ is directly linked to the growth of multilingual and multicultural societies. Speakers around the globe are continuously called on to act as mediators, i.e. to use more than one language to bridge communication gaps between speakers of different languages who are unable to directly communicate with one another;

- ➧ not only involves being competent in two (or more) languages and selecting from a repertoire of possible meanings, but also entails being competent in moving between languages according to the rules and possibilities of the communicative encounter. Mediation strategies thus have to be used by the mediator in order to achieve the communicative aims.

The figure below (Figure 1) indicates different ways in which we can understand cross-linguistic mediation. These categories have been drawn up by asking our METLA network (experts on plurilingualism, educators, teacher trainers, syllabus and materials developers, and researchers) the question: "What is cross-linguistic mediation for you?". Some respondents defined mediation as an act which facilitates communication and understanding; others as an everyday experience in their social interactions. The vast majority of them viewed mediation as a language learning tool.
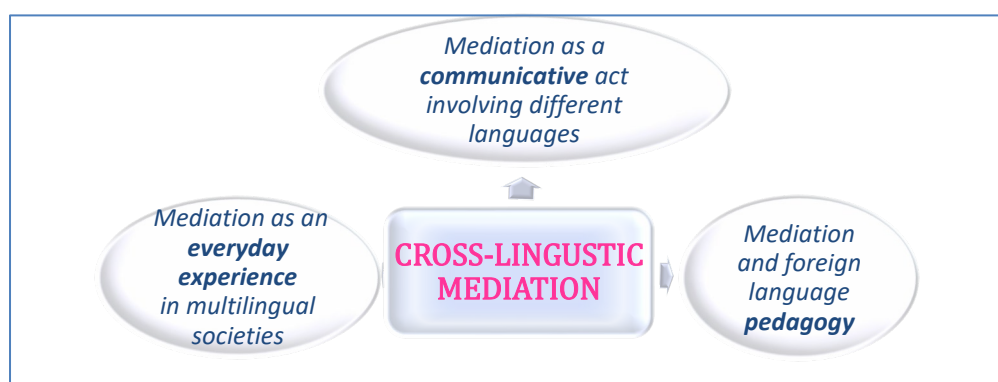
Figure 1: **Cross-linguistic mediation from different perspectives**

Figure 2 provides specific examples from their answers, which reflect the multiple understandings of mediation.

Figure 2: **Multiple understandings of cross-linguistic mediation**

1.3. The role of the mediator

As a term, 'mediation' has a long history and multiple uses in different contexts. The term implies some sort of intervention of a 'third party' with a 'mission' to accomplish. Mediation creates a safe space where individuals, parties or opposing forces interact and communicate efficiently. Metaphorically speaking, it is as if a person who suffers from short sightedness is able to see clearly the blurred figures through the "mediation lenses". In this way, the unknown is no longer blurry or far away. Linguistic and cultural differences, influencing behaviours, perceptions, one's limited ability to access knowledge and interpret the world, are minimised, as access is facilitated through the role of a mediator. The mediator's task is to bridge communication gaps between languages and users of different languages. S/he operates as a **facilitator**, a **meaning negotiator**, a **meaning-making agent** (Dendrinos, 2006) especially when s/he intervenes in situations which require linguistic and intercultural reconciliation.

The mediator:

- creates meanings for someone who is unable to (fully) understand a text in one language and with whom he/she may or may not share the same cultural or social experiences;

- helps other people understand information, written, spoken or signed, in a language, register or modality that they do not speak or understand;

- is considered as a kind of a 'go-between' or an intermediary between cultures, languages, discourses and texts;

- is not a neutral third party; rather s/he is a social actor co-responsible for the construction and negotiation of meaning and an active participator in the communicative encounter, responsible for selecting information and passing it on. In this regard, Piccardo and North (2019: 175) state that "the essence of mediation is that the user/learner is not just focused on personal expression (as in production) or with negotiating meaning in order to communicate with other people (as in interaction)" but mediation also involves "the collaborative (co-) construction of new meaning" (rather than mere reproduction) (ibid: 175) and "the facilitation of the (co-) construction by others, i.e. to facilitate someone else's access to new concepts or to facilitate communication itself" (ibid: 185);

- takes an active, responsive attitude both towards the source text(s) (Stathopoulou, 2013) and the aims and goals of the interaction.

The discussion above sheds lights on the role of the mediator as a social agent who monitors the process of interaction, acts when some sort of intervention is required in order to bridge communication gaps and creates new meanings as s/he moves across texts and languages, interprets source information, selects what to relay, and uses his/her own communication means (e.g. paraphrasing, summarising, etc.) in order to make messages understood.

Functioning as "'social agents', i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action" (Council of Europe, 2001), the mediator needs to move effectively between different texts or other sources, types of discourse and languages, depending on the context of communication, its conventions and conditions. The effective mediator should thus possess all those **competences** which are needed when there are linguistic and cultural gaps. An effective mediator is one who is able and trained to activate a number of **strategies** in order to process, interpret and generally deal with source language information and convey meanings and messages in the target language. The second chapter

of the Guide further elaborates on these competences and strategies needed for a mediator to be successful in his/her task.

1.4. Mediation in the CEFR and Companion Volume

As far as these Council of Europe publications are concerned, mediation is both an old and a new concept. It was included as a notion, and regarded as an important ability, in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), which is best known and widely used for its descriptions of communicative language competences across six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2) with regard to reception, production and interaction. The CEFR suggested that mediation was, in part, synonymous with translation and interpretation. *Oral mediation* was seen as synonymous with simultaneous interpretation (at conferences, meetings), consecutive interpretation (speeches, guided tours), informal interpretation (in social and transactional situations for friends, family, clients, or of signs, menus, notices). *Written mediation* was linked to translation (of legal and scientific texts), literary translation, as well as summarising gist and paraphrasing. However, mediation in the CEFR (2001) was not complemented with can-do statements as was the case with other abilities – reading and listening comprehension, writing and speaking. Although the CEFR included mediation as a communicative ability, it did not provide competence descriptors, which meant that it did not receive the attention given to the other communicative activities (reception, interaction, production).

Twenty years later, the Companion Volume to the CEFR (CEFR-CV) took a fresh look at mediation and expanded its definition as follows:

> The user/learner acts as a social agent who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning, sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another (cross-linguistic mediation) […]. (Council of Europe, 2020: 103).

Mediation in the CEFR-CV is thus not limited to cross-linguistic mediation (i.e. transferring information from one language to another and reducing distance between interlocutors who speak different languages) but also refers to the transfer of information within the same language (intralinguistic mediation). A further important innovation in this important document was that it included new sets of mediation descriptors (can-do statements). This has changed the way in which mediation can be taught and assessed. Next, we shall discuss the notion of mediation in the CEFR-CV and explain how the new mediation descriptors are relevant to *our* project.

The CEFR-CV proposes new descriptors related to mediation, both intralinguistic and cross-linguistic. The three categories of scales proposed are the following: a) *mediating a text* (including literature) b) *mediating concepts and* c) *mediating communication* (see categories in Figure 3).
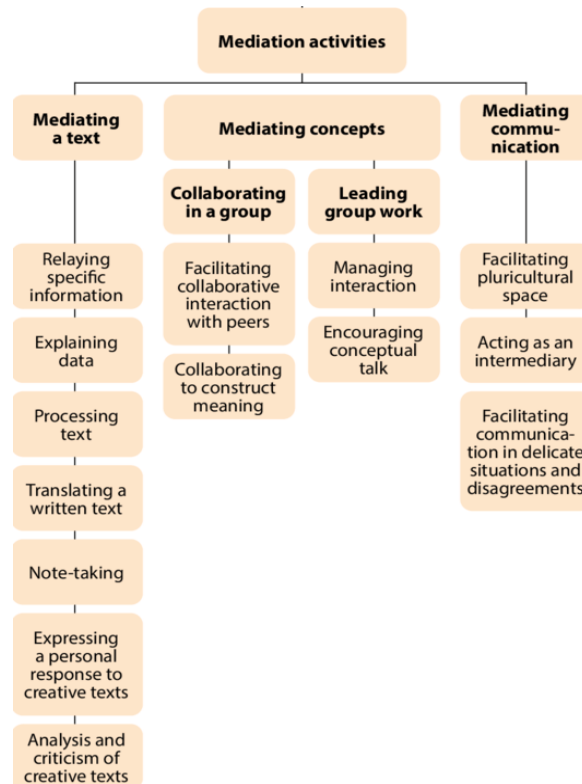
Figure 3: **The new categories for mediation in the CEFR-CV (2020, p. 90)**

➡ '**Mediating a text**' involves transferring information to a person who has no access to the original text due to linguistic, cultural or social barriers. 'Texts' refer both to verbal texts (e.g. articles, e-mails, leaflets, reports) and videos, photos, graphics, etc. 'Passing on' to another person the content of a text is the key activity here. The METLA project focuses specifically on this particular set of scales providing guidelines to teachers as to how these can be exploited when introducing cross-linguistic mediation tasks in their classrooms.

> The METLA project focuses on the scales relevant to 'Mediating a text' and particularly across languages

➡ '**Mediating concepts**' refers to the "process of facilitating access to knowledge and concepts for others" (p. 91). It is related to the pedagogic aspects of mediation and the scales relevant to this category refer to educational domains which mainly

require teachers to facilitate conditions for conceptual development and to support collaborative learning.

➠ '**Mediating communication'** scales refer to the process of facilitating understanding between participants, as, for instance, in tensions, disputes or disagreements. Negotiating, creating shared spaces and resolving conflicts are the key practices here.

Scales and descriptors for **mediation strategies** were also developed. These will be further discussed in Chapter 2, which focuses on the learner and what competences and strategies s/he should use in order to be successful in cross-linguistic mediation tasks. Also, Chapter 6 provides an overview of the new scales to help teachers understand the main differences across the scales and choose the most appropriate ones when designing mediation activities.

> **"Mediation strategies are the techniques employed to clarify meaning and facilitate understanding. As a mediator, the user/learner may need to shuttle between people, between texts, between types of discourse and between languages, depending on the mediation context"**
> (Council of Europe, 2020: 117)

1.5. Plurilingual education and mediation

The movement of populations, the subsequent flow of refugees and migrants as well as the fluid language practices typical of the world nowadays, have led to the need for educational reforms as far as the teaching of languages in Europe is concerned. In this context of increasingly multilingual and multicultural spaces, both inside and outside the classroom, teachers need to develop pedagogies which emphasise the relationships between languages –

> Being "plurilingual" does not necessarily mean having balanced and high developed competences in multiple languages, but rather being able to integrate various repertoires and draw on them, for different communicative purposes.

foreign languages, language of instruction, home languages-, thus creating linguistic bridges. Respecting students' home languages and cultures and seeing heterogeneity as an asset rather than as a burden seem to be the key to social and linguistic integration.

The notion of plurilingualism came to prominence following the publication of the CEFR and states that the individual does not keep the knowledge of different languages and cultures "in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence

to which all knowledge and experience of language contribute and in which languages interrelate and interact" (Council of Europe, 2001: 4).

Plurilingualism starts with the integration of the individual's various linguistic repertoires. In fact, the concept of 'repertoire' is fundamental in plurilingualism. It refers to language users' varied communicative resources which include different languages and cultures (see Glossary). The practice of mediation aims to foster the individual's plurilingual competence since those who participate in cross-linguistic mediation activities are encouraged to make use of their full communicative repertoires. The Guide views cross-linguistic mediation as part of someone's plurilingual competence. It follows that:

- plurilingual competence is not merely linked to knowledge of certain languages (mere addition of monolingual competences, 'speak English', 'speak French' etc.) but also entails a creative movement across languages, of passing on information and constructing new meanings;

- plurilingualism is linked to cross-linguistic mediation since the former involves the interplay among languages. The (plurilingual) mediator engages in tasks that require his/her agency in strategically employing all resources available to accomplish a mission (Piccardo, 2016).

1.6. Teaching and assessing mediation

When carrying out a cross-linguistic mediation task, learners of a given language receive information in one (or more) languages, interpret messages found in the text, select which messages would fulfil the communicative purpose set by the task, and ultimately transfer them into (an)other language(s). Throughout this process, learners make use of their entire linguistic repertoire in a dynamic, purposeful and creative way. The benefits of such fluid language practices in the classrooms are many. On this, Makalela (2015: 215) states that "breaking boundaries between a range of linguistic resources in multilingual classrooms affords the students a positive schooling experience and affirms their multilingual identities." When designing meaningful mediation task, teachers can draw on a number of tools to help them incorporate mediation in their courses and syllabuses; such as the CEFR-CV descriptors for mediation referred to in Section 1.4. The next chapters provide ideas and suggestions on how this can be done.

Many of the tasks in the Guide can be used both for teaching and for assessment purposes – for example, class tests. It is important to keep in mind that such tests should match actual language practices of learners in their everyday life. The necessity to adopt plurilingual approaches, not only in language teaching and learning but also in assessment, informs the content of this Guide. In addition to providing examples of testing tasks, the Guide will place particular emphasis on formative aspects of assessment (such as reflection, self-assessment etc.).

> **Cross-linguistic mediation can be taught and assessed through mediation tasks which ask for the use of different languages (i.e. passing on information from one language to another), softening linguistic and cultural gaps in the process**.

CHAPTER 2

The learner as a mediator

This chapter focuses on the learner and competences and strategies which s/he should mobilise in order to be successful in cross-linguistic mediation. We will address questions such as: What must the learner as a mediator do to transfer information from one language to another? What mediation strategies does s/he need to apply in order to successfully complete a mediation task?

2.1. Selecting and transferring information

Mediation can be characterised as a selection process where the mediator is required to select the messages to transfer into the target language(s) in order to reach (or help someone reach) a communicative goal. In order to mediate effectively, the mediator/learner must:

- be aware of the task requirements;

- select information from the source text;

- consider the context of situation and the interlocutors;

- decide how to mediate the information – translate, summarise, etc;

- apply appropriate mediation strategies;

- decide what language forms (grammar, vocabulary, syntax) to use.

> **The type of task determines what source information will be *selected* and ultimately *included* in the target text.**

Keeping in mind the task requirements and constraints, the learner/mediator has to purposefully select information, ideas and messages from the source text in order to relay it in the target language. The sort of information the mediator will include in the target text in a different language is determined by the task at hand (what type of text will be produced and where will it appear? who is the target audience? what is the relationship between the interlocutors?). If, for instance, the task involves summarising the plot of a theatrical play in an e-mail to a friend, then the mediator will have to transfer the main ideas of this play but in an informal style. If the task, on the other hand, asks for the use of very specific information in the target text (i.e. to relay only some bullet points included in a report), then the relayed information will not concern the general ideas but only some specific ideas of the source text. The types of strategies that will be used will also be different. In the former example, the mediator will need to condense or/and reorganise source information in order to provide the gist, whereas in the latter task, s/he may need to paraphrase or expand some of the bullet points in a continuous text. The mediator also decides the language means (e.g. grammar, syntax, vocabulary, etc.) through which to relay the source messages.

Below are three examples of C1 level written mediation tasks with different requirements. Note that source texts have been omitted since the aim of these examples is to illustrate how the tasks affect the 'what' and the 'how' of relaying information.

Example 1 (source text: Portuguese leaflet)
Using information from the Portuguese leaflet with suggestions on how to save energy in our everyday life, make your own **leaflet** in English.

Example 2 (source text: Swedish newspaper article)
Imagine you are studying in the UK. Your **university newspaper** includes a section entitled HOW WE CAN PROTECT THE PLANET. Students often send letters to appear here, with suggestions about what can be done to protect our planet. Using information from the Swedish article, send a **letter (in English) to the newspaper editor**.

Example 3 (source text: Croatian book extract)
Using information from a Croatian book, write a brief English **book presentation** for the **catalogue of the publishing house** you work for.

The three tasks above ask learners to read Language A texts and produce a written text in English (Language B, foreign language). In both Examples 1 and 2, learners are asked to produce texts which provide suggestions but their target text types will be different.

In the former, they will produce a leaflet while in the latter case a letter; that is, two different genres (or text types). In Example 3, learners are asked to write a book presentation. In order for them to be successful in their task, they need to be aware of the different conventions related to the different text types and be familiar with the language used in such texts. The type and the amount of source text information that will be extracted and ultimately used in the target text along with the linguistic means used (grammar, syntax, vocabulary, etc.) is dependent upon these task parameters. Some of these task-related variables are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Task requirements

		Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
1.	Type of source (Language A) text	leaflet	newspaper article	book extract
2.	Type of target (Language B) text	leaflet	letter	book presentation
3.	Communicative purpose	to suggest	to suggest	to present
4.	Addressee	general public	newspaper editor	catalogue readers

2.2. Competences and strategies

The "art" of mediating is closely dependent on the ability to mobilise a number of *competences* and *strategies*. In the _Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Citizenship_, competence is defined as, "the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and/or understanding in order to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands, challenges and opportunities that are presented by a given type of context" (Council of Europe, 2018: 32). We have already discussed how

> **"In performing tasks, competences and strategies are mobilized in the performance and in turn further developed through that experience"**
> (Council of Europe, 2020: 32)

being plurilingual does not necessarily entail having the same competences in all the languages present in our 'repertoire' (see definition of 'repertoire' in the Glossary). This means that mediators might have very different competences in the languages at play in cross-linguistic mediation situations. These languages may include the home/heritage language and a foreign language but can also be two foreign languages. A cross-linguistic mediation task requires the activation of the following:

1. *Cognitive skills* (e.g. selecting, combining, problem solving, recalling information, predicting, analysing, guessing, making hypotheses, activating critical thinking skills, etc.) are required to enable the mediator to evaluate (source) information, select appropriate information and fulfil the task;

2. The ability to mediate across languages entails being *linguistically competent* in the languages involved in order to create a meaningful message;

3. *Sociolinguistic competence* to recognise the communicative needs of the audience (the addressee) and form a message suitable for the situational context is equally important (e.g. using formal impersonal style when writing to a principal, or informal language when sending an e-mail to a friend).

Mediation is not only a matter of doing something but also of how somebody does it. The successful use of *mediation strategies* is crucial for the effective completion of a mediation task. Mediation strategies, which form part of someone's strategic competence, are seen as those techniques used by the mediator in order to pass on information from one language to another. Mediation strategies are activated and employed to "clarify meaning and facilitate understanding" (Council of Europe, 2020: 117). Some examples of such strategies include: paraphrasing the original messages; summarising; regrouping/reorganising information; crisscrossing-information; condensing or expanding messages; blending new with source text meanings, etc. Drawing upon the CEFR-CV but also on relevant research on mediation strategies (Stathopoulou, 2015), these generally refer to:

- how source content is handled, paraphrased and incorporated into the target text or discourse;

- how source information is presented, (re)/organised and structured in the target text;

- how selected (source) messages and extra-textual (inserted, new) messages are mixed or are combined in the final output;

- how extra-textual content (i.e. content not included in the source text) is used and incorporated into the target text.

Given their importance, the CEFR-CV provides two sets of scales relevant to mediation strategies (see Council of Europe, 2020: 117-122):

1. STRATEGIES TO EXPLAIN A NEW CONCEPT

- *Linking to previous knowledge:* explaining new information by making comparisons and by describing how it relates to something the recipient already knows.

- *Adapting language:* refers to inclusion of synonyms, similes, simplification or paraphrasing and other shifts in use of language, style and/or register in order to integrate the content of a text into a new text of a different genre.

- *Breaking down complicated information:* refers to the techniques of breaking a process into a series of steps, or presenting ideas or instructions as bullet points.

2. STRATEGIES TO SIMPLIFY A TEXT

➡ *Amplifying a dense text:* using repetition, expanding source input, including comments, details, reasoning or examples.

➡ *Streamlining a text:* condensing or excluding source information, eliminating repetitive expressions.

Although learning how to mediate can be a lifelong and challenging process, mediation strategies can be developed through pedagogic practices which incorporate a series of cross-linguistic mediation tasks. Chapter 4 provides plenty of ideas on how these strategies can be taught and developed.

CHAPTER 3

METLA mediation tasks

This chapter defines cross-linguistic mediation tasks, provides examples and explains the philosophy behind the creation of such tasks. In addition, the chapter provides information about the methodology adopted for the development of relevant material, with specific reference to the aims of METLA mediation tasks. Finally, it elaborates on the template used in this Guide to design and analyse tasks.

3.1. What is a mediation task?

Mediation tasks can be either *intralinguistic* (within the same language but across texts, discourses and registers) or *cross-linguistic* (involving more than one language).

Some examples of **intralinguistic mediation** may be:

- between two friends, one of whom relays information from a previously read magazine article in order to warn or advise the other on a certain topic, or

- the case of a doctor explaining the blood test results to his/her patient who is unable to understand this particular text type and what it implies as far as his/her health is concerned.

Cross-linguistic mediation tasks (the focus of this Guide) are those that require users of languages to relay information from one language to another for a given communicative purpose or to engage in meaning negotiation across languages. When learners are involved in a mediation task across languages, they first have to process information presented in a text (either verbal or visual) in Language A and then transfer some of its messages in Language B (or other languages, i.e. Language C or D, etc.) in a way that is appropriate to

Cross-linguistic tasks involve mediation *across* languages while intralinguistic mediation refers to mediation *within* the same language but across different types of texts.

the context of situation. More than two languages may be involved either at the level of reception and/or at the level of production (see Chapter 1 for the relevant definitions). Specifically, **cross-linguistic mediation tasks** may take different forms, for instance:

- reading/listening in one language, writing/speaking in another language;

- understanding instructions in one (or more) language(s) and sources, carrying out tasks in another language;

- selecting information in one language, carrying out a project in another language;

- using resources in multiple languages with the aim of reaching specific outcomes;

- using stimuli such as photographs or images accompanied by short texts, infographics or posters and transferring the main ideas (i.e. the gist), in writing or orally in another language or using multimodal resources.

Depending on the task at hand, the learner may:

- either use his/her home language knowledge in order to understand a message and then transfer it in the foreign language in writing or speaking; or

- produce a message in his/her home language on the basis of a written or oral message in the foreign language.

Here are some examples of **cross-linguistic mediation** activities:

1. Retelling a story which students know in their home language in the language they are learning, or the other way around.

2. Reading the news in Language A and telling/ writing the main ideas in Language B.

3. Writing a report/summary of the foreign language lesson in other languages, i.e. home or school languages for students who missed the class.

4. Helping a newly-arrived student – with whom you do not share a common language – by using your knowledge of another language.

5. Helping someone with a basic knowledge of the local language to make sense of administrative language by providing input in that particular register.

6. Providing cultural input to a tourist who may know the local language but needs this cultural information to manage a situation.

In all these examples of cross-linguistic mediation (see further examples in Chapter 1), there is always the two-way dynamic relationship between the input (oral or written text in Language A in the form of a video, an audio extract, a newspaper article etc.) and the output (oral or written text in Language B) which is dependent upon the situational context in which the task is embedded.

Figure 4: **The two-way dynamic relationship between the input and the output in mediation**

3.2. Underlying principles of METLA tasks and the plurilingual approach

The mediation tasks included in this Guide clearly echo the Council of Europe values and principles of respect for human rights, mutual understanding, social cohesion, inclusion of languages and pupils from different backgrounds, intercultural dialogue, culture of democracy, and cooperation. The tasks illustrate some paths of teaching and assessing cross-linguistic mediation by putting the aforementioned principles into practice in order to ensure quality education.

Some of the main concepts of the CEFR, such as: pluralistic approaches to the teaching of languages (Candelier et al., 2012) which embrace different sorts of multilingual and intercultural pedagogies; development of learners' plurilingual competence; learners as social agents (Piccardo and Galante, 2018); co-constructing meaning in interaction (Melo-Pfeifer and Araújo e Sá, 2018); intercultural openness; social inclusion (Byram, 2008), respect of democratic values (Council of Europe, 2016) and the non-separation of languages of the communicative repertoire (Busch, 2017; Moore, 2006) are also reflected in the METLA educational materials.

In the CEFR-CV, the aforementioned concepts have been further developed and are also exploited for the purposes of this project with the main aim of developing learners' plurilingual competence. Specifically, the idea of learner as *social agent* and generally the action-oriented approach (cf. Piccardo and North, 2019) as highlighted through the CEFR-CV is reflected in the METLA mediation activities. Learners are seen as members of society "who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action" (Council of Europe, 2001: 9). In mediation, the interaction between different languages and search for creative solutions help in fostering individual agency. In a plurilingual perspective, "the learner engages *collaboratively* in real-life tasks that require

> **The principles of the action-oriented teaching are manifest in the METLA educational material and, specifically, the concepts of:**
> - **social agency of learners;**
> - **collaborative tasks and co-construction of meaning;**
> - **learning by doing (through action);**
> - **authenticity of tasks and learners' outcomes;**
> - **integration of additional languages;**
> - **(self-)assessment of the outcomes.**

his/her agency in strategically employing all resources available – linguistic and non-linguistic, implying a variety of languages and codes – to solve a problem, to accomplish a mission" (Piccardo, 2016: 9). Considering interconnections across languages, rather

than pursuing a 'target language only' approach, is what has guided mediation task development throughout this project.

Summarising, the underlying rationale of the tasks presented in this Guide is to encourage learners to:

- be aware of additional and/or foreign languages thus developing learners' plurilingual repertoires;

- recognise and actively create linguistic bridges;

- develop awareness of the similarities and differences across languages;

- be able to use different languages and semiotic resources (gestures, drawings, etc.) for different communicative purposes;

- be able to participate in language negotiation and to alternate between languages;

- understand and appreciate the perspectives and world view of others;

- engage in open, respectful, appropriate, and effective interactions across languages and cultures;

- adopt a positive attitude towards linguistic and cultural diversity.

METLA tasks should be regarded as examples of mediation. Teachers are strongly encouraged to *adapt* the materials according to the different teaching contexts in which they will be used.

The guiding principles behind the construction of METLA mediation tasks were to develop students' plurilingual competence through mediation (making use of varied linguistic resources) while creatively exploiting students' linguistic resources, and guiding students and teachers to see linguistic, cultural and social difference as an asset rather than a barrier.

3.3. Methodology and piloting

In producing the tasks, the METLA team followed a number of stages. Team members focused on different languages which they felt confident working with. First, the team collected source materials in different languages to be incorporated in the tasks. The first draft of the task description template was then produced (see final version in Section 3.6 below). Tasks were designed with the team also producing different versions of the tasks incorporating different language combinations (usually two, sometimes three). The tasks were evaluated by more than 30 experts (i.e. teacher educators, teachers, researchers, textbook authors, ECML project coordinators). The revised tasks were then evaluated and/or piloted by means of an online questionnaire completed by approximately fifty

(50) foreign language teachers of primary and secondary education around Europe on the basis of specific criteria, such as language combinations, task content, presentation and structure, layout, difficulty, level of proficiency of the students in the languages involved.

3.4. Aims of METLA tasks

METLA tasks have been developed with the following aims in mind:

- developing learners' plurilingual and pluricultural competence;

- developing learners' mediation strategies;

- improving learners' communicative language skills in the foreign language;

- fostering learner autonomy, i.e. the ability to work independently, to take initiatives and make their own choices;

- developing intercultural competence and promoting positive attitudes towards other languages and cultures;

- developing learners' transversal and 21st century competences and skills (e.g. digital competences, critical thinking, collaborative skills, among others).

3.5. Main characteristics of METLA tasks

Mediation tasks proposed within the framework of this project are presented in the form of lesson plans (accompanied by students' worksheet), which may require one or more teaching hours. Tasks:

- are *thematically organised* (each scenario is organised around a specific topic, e.g. Travel, Health etc.),

- are aligned with the *pluralistic approaches* of learning foreign languages as learners are asked to engage their full linguistic repertoire and productively transfer information across languages (Candelier et al., 2012);

- can be either *collaborative* (involving pair or group work) or *individual*;

- are *context-oriented* and *purpose-related*, which means that an attempt was made to present authentic tasks relevant to students' everyday communicative needs;

- are in line with the new CEFR-CV descriptors on linguistic mediation;

- consider the *social and cultural dimensions of language learning* thus reflecting the link between language and culture;

- are *learner-centred* catering for learners' needs and relating to their personal, social and emotional experiences;

- leave room for *creativity;*

- are *strategies-based*, which means that in each activity a number of mediation strategies are being developed;

- often include suggestions for formative assessment.

3.6. METLA task description template

This Guide also includes a template which assists teachers in designing mediation tasks. The template consists of two parts: a first part for the teacher and a second part for the student (see Figure 5). These two parts are further explained below.

For the teacher

The teacher is provided with information (in the two working languages of this project – English and French) about the lesson or task, and specifically about:

  i. The type of task (e.g. role play, project);

 ii. The CEFR language proficiency level (A1-C2) for which it is designed (task description may include ideas of how to differentiate tasks for varied learner groups at different language proficiency levels);

iii. The aim(s) of the task (e.g. to develop students' written mediation strategies);

 iv. Useful background information about the topic;

  v. The CEFR-CV mediation scales and descriptors for mediating a text and mediation strategies with which each lesson has been aligned (see Figure 3 in Chapter 1 and Tables 3 and 4 in Chapter 6 for an overview of the descriptors; Chapter 6 provides further information on how to align the CEFR-CV descriptors with the activities);

 vi. The languages involved (more than two languages are used in some cases): these are indicated as Language A, Language B, Language C or Any Language, which means that the language may be chosen by the teacher or student/s;

vii. The linguistic (or language-related) objectives referring to the specific objectives of the task – what the learner will be able to do after completing the task. The following are some examples of language-related objectives:

- Students will be able to use vocabulary related to the topic of animals (e.g. body parts, etc.) (taken from Task 2);

- Students will be able to describe places using adjectives (taken from Task 10);

viii. Other competences that are of relevance. The task-designers here refer to those non-language competences (e.g. digital competences, intercultural understanding, organisational skills, different attitudes and values, social skills, teamwork and collaboration) which may come into play These are sometimes referred to as transversal competences (see ECML Think tank website).

ix. The time or number of lessons required to complete all tasks;

x. The resources that accompany the tasks – these may be video links, audio links, photographs, etc.;

xi. A suggested step-by-step procedure. Here the teacher is provided with detailed guidance on how to conduct the lesson (e.g. how certain stages can be differentiated or adapted for different learner groups or different ages, class organisation, etc.);

xii. Extra resources for the teacher – e.g. a list of vocabulary items, videos, ideas for flyer design;

xiii. Further tips and advice concerning the particular lesson;

xiv. Suggestions and ideas on how the lesson could be adapted to fit different teaching contexts.

Note that the way the lesson is presented is one possible approach. The lesson template is intended as a guideline for the teacher, who is encouraged to adapt it according to the learners' needs and teaching context.

For the student

The second part of the template refers to the actual texts and tasks included in the lesson and contains the worksheet for the student. There is no one pre-determined template here (as was the case with the Teacher's part) because the tasks and steps are different in each lesson. The task instructions are provided in the foreign languages taught although more languages could be incorporated. Grids for self-assessment and reflection are also included (see Chapter 4 and Chapter 7 for a presentation of self-assessment procedures).

FOR THE TEACHER: *ACTI...*

Type of task *(role play, project etc)*

Proficiency level *(A1-C2)*

Short description and aim of the activity:

Background information (if applicable):

CEFR-CV scales for mediating a text *(to which the activity refers)*:

CEFR-CV scales for mediation strategies:

Languages involved *(Language A – Language B – Language C etc)*

Linguistic objectives:
By the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:

Other competences involved: *(non language aspects of the lesson (e.g. digital competences, intercultural understanding, different attitudes and values, critical and innovative thinking, inter-personal skills (e.g. presentation and communication skills, organizational skills, teamwork, etc.), intra-personal skills (e.g. self-discipline, enthusiasm, perseverance, self-motivation, etc.)*

Time/lessons needed for the activity:

Resources required *(e.g. lyrics of songs, script of a text, flashcards, etc.)*

Procedure:

		Class organization (individual, pairs, gr...	Ideas for differentiation
Step 1			
Step 2			
Step 3			
Step 4			

Extra resources for the teacher (if applicable)

Further tips and guidance:

Suggestions and ideas for adapting/differentiating *(e.g. for different contexts/ learner groups, proficiency levels etc):*

Scales (and descriptors) for 'Mediating a text' (CEFR-CV pp. 90-108)

Scales (and descriptors) for mediation strategies (CEFR-CV pp. 117-122)

Step-by-step procedure in the two METLA working languages (EN-FR)

FOR THE STUDENT: ACTIVITY WORKSHEET

...vities, questions, photos, flashcards etc)

Mediating a text
- Relaying specific information
- Explaining data
- Processing text
- Translating a written text
- Note-taking
- Expressing a personal response to creative texts
- Analysis and criticism of creative texts

Mediation strategies
- **Strategies to explain a new concept**
  - Linking to previous knowledge
  - Adapting language
  - Breaking down complicated information
- **Strategies to simplify a text**
  - Amplifying a dense text
  - Streamlining a text

Figure 5: The METLA task description template with comments

CHAPTER 4

Designing mediation tasks

This chapter provides ideas for language educators on how to plan for mediation tasks and what steps to follow in the design process. The second part of this chapter focuses on how mediation can be taught and presents some important considerations in relation to:

- *Incorporating learners' home languages;*

- *Incorporating the (inter/pluri)cultural component;*

- *Incorporating multimodality and visuals;*

- *Ensuring authenticity;*

- *Developing learners' mediation strategies;*

- *Dealing with a variety of genres.*

4.1. Planning for mediation: key steps

I. Setting the aims, topics and task types of the lesson

In order for teachers to create their own mediation tasks, they might want to:

- set the aims and language objectives of the lesson;
- consider the learners' proficiency level(s) in different languages in general, and in the target language in particular;
- consider the specific characteristics of the learners (e.g. age, needs, interests, home languages, etc.);
- think of a possible situational context and decide on a meaningful task using the selected texts;
- whether mediation will be from the home or language of schooling into a foreign language or from a foreign language into the home or language of schooling;
- decide whether the focus of the lesson will be on oral or written mediation;
- decide whether the tasks will involve a) reading/listening to a text in the foreign language and performing a task in a home language or b) reading/listening to a text in a home language and producing a text in the foreign language;
- think of a possible situational context and decide on a meaningful task using the selected texts.

II. Selecting relevant CEFR-CV can-do statements

The CEFR and the CEFR-CV can provide a valuable support to learning by helping the teacher decide which descriptor scales can be useful for his/her students in connection with a specific task. For instance, if the teacher's goal is to teach summary writing in the target language through written mediation tasks, the set of CEFR-CV descriptors relating to 'Processing text in writing' could be useful in designing specific activities. An example of such a descriptor is: 'Can summarise in writing the main points made in straightforward informational texts regarding subjects that are of personal or current interest' (Council of Europe, 2020: 261). Chapter 6 provides more information on how the CEFR-CV descriptors not only those referring to 'Mediating a text' but also those relevant to plurilingual and pluricultural competence can be used.

III. Selecting source (Language A) texts

The selection of (authentic) source texts to inform the design of the activities is an important step since the whole mediation activity is based on these sources. Apart from authenticity of materials, relevance of the topic and learners' needs, age and interests, the teacher also needs to take into account:

- the genres of the source and the target texts: using genre-appropriate language is likely to be one of the goals of the activity. For instance, the language teacher may intend to help students practice writing an e-mail in the foreign language;

- the organisation or structure of the (oral or written) text. For instance, an article in a newspaper is very different from a brochure in terms of structure and organisation. The organisational features of an article are, mainly, a title at the beginning, an introduction and a conclusion. On the other hand, paragraphing does not usually appear in brochures, which however may contain further sub-sections and non-continuous texts such as bullet points or lists;

- the degree of formality;

- the language complexity in terms of grammar and syntax;

- vocabulary: the teacher needs to bear in mind that some texts may contain less frequently used vocabulary, which may pose additional difficulties to learners and is best used with higher level students.

Source texts characteristics that teachers need to consider when designing mediation tasks:
- **linguistic complexity**
- **cognitive complexity**
- **length**
- **organisation**
- **relevance in terms of content**

The teacher therefore needs to decide whether the text(s) is/are appropriate for his/her teaching context and learner group. The longer the source text, the harder for the learner to focus his/her attention on the key points in order to select the relevant information.

IV. Writing clear task instructions and creating a realistic context

Clear task instructions are a very important aspect of a mediation activity. The learner needs specific information about the context of mediation, the purpose of mediation and the addressee of the target text in order to relay the appropriate information to the target audience.

V. Using the METLA(or other) checklists for creating a task

The METLA team offers two checklists for teachers who wish to check whether they have considered the above-mentioned aspects of mediation task design. Checklist 1 is a short version, containing the most essential information; Checklist 2 is longer and more detailed. The aim of Checklist 1 is to guide the teacher in all stages of implementing mediation. Checklist 2 shifts emphasis to the aspect of deciding on: a) the CEFR-CV scales for mediation performance and strategies when designing mediation tasks, and b) the content of the task. Both lists can be downloaded in the form of worksheets from the resource website, which can be used for different activities. The METLA team considers the use of self-assessment or reflection checklists crucial for the teacher who wishes to develop effective cross-linguistic mediation lessons.

Checklist 1 *(1- very satisfied, 2- neutral, 3- room for improvement)*

DEVELOPMENT STAGE	1	2	3
✓ My task is based on syllabus expectations.			
✓ My task is based on the needs and interests of my students.			
✓ My activity ensures that students develop their ability to work collaboratively in varied situations.			
✓ I have selected relevant and authentic texts in the source language (e.g. songs, videos, stories, news media).			
✓ I have written clear task instructions.			
TEACHING AND LEARNING STAGE			
✓ I explicitly teach mediation strategies.			
✓ I ensure tasks have a problem to resolve, or a concrete outcome.			
✓ I provide students with access to cultural elements.			
✓ I incorporate technology in my activity.			
REFLECTION STAGE			
✓ I provide opportunities for students to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement though self–assessment tasks.			
✓ I give my students opportunities for peer assessment.			
✓ I provide specific descriptive feedback.			

Checklist 2

MY TEACHING CONTEXT

In this part the teacher makes a quick brainstorming, which is related to his/her educational context.

My classroom setting:	Extra notes:
Class: .... Number of students: .... Foreign language level (based on CEFR):............ Online and/or in-class lesson: .... Languages involved: .... Topic: .... Type of task: .... Duration of task: .... Aims of the task/lesson:	

SCALES FOR MEDIATION PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

The teacher chooses the most appropriate CEFR-CV scales. Note that Chapter 6 offers detailed guidelines as to how the CEFR-CV scales can be exploited.

Choose the relevant scale taking into account the aim of the activity and choosing among the descriptors relevant to the students' proficiency level.	
CEFR-CV Mediation scales – Mediating a text*:(Circle your answer)*	Extra notes:
• Relaying specific information in speech / in writing • Explaining data (e.g. in graphs, diagrams, charts, etc.) in speech / in writing • Processing text in speech / in writing • Translating a written text in speech / in writing • Note taking (lectures, seminars, meetings, etc.) • Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature) • Analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature)	
CEFR-CV Mediation strategies: *(Circle your answer)*	Extra notes:
• **Linking to previous knowledge:** use questions to encourage people to activate prior knowledge; make comparisons and/or links between new and prior knowledge; provide examples and definitions • **Adapting language:** paraphrase (A2–B2); adapt speech / delivery (B2+); explain technical terminology (B2 + and C levels) • **Breaking down complicated information:** break a process into a series of steps; present ideas or instructions as bullet points; present separately the main points in a chain of argument • **Amplifying a dense text:** use repetition and redundancy, for example by paraphrase in different ways; modify style to explain things more explicitly; give examples • **Streamlining a text:** highlight key information; eliminate repetition/digressions; exclude what is not relevant for the audience	

TASK CONTENT

Task development	Extra notes:
- Tasks: .... - Source texts: .... - Reflection/self-assessment tasks:.. - Homework:	
Outputs of mediation *(Circle your answer or answers)*	Extra notes:
- Written/oral texts (letters, e-mails, articles, etc.) - Videos (joint) Projects - Other?	
Materials and Technology: What do I need? *(Circle your answer or answers)*	Extra notes:
- Tools/resources students can use to decode/use texts/words in languages other than the foreign language - Free online multilingual dictionaries (including picture dictionaries) relevant to the languages students bring into the classroom - Social media? (Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Tiktok) - Sites where students can share their products - Other?	
Additional considerations *(Circle your answer or answers)*	Extra notes:
- The topic is relevant to the students' age, culture, hobbies, interests, needs, etc. - I have considered the authenticity of the task: everyday examples in my immediate environment (e.g. asking for the meaning of signs/short texts in a foreign country, using a text in a source language in order to warn a friend about the dangers of smoking in a foreign language, etc.). - I have considered the authenticity of the texts: songs, picture books, comics, advertisements, messages on social media, etc. - I have considered possible problems that my students may encounter. - I have considered aspects such as gender equality, non-discrimination of minorities, supporting diversity. - I have taken into consideration learners with different abilities and/or learning difficulties. - I have considered a formative assessment task (self-assessment/ peer-feedback, etc.)	

Figure 6: Checklists for the teacher on designing mediation tasks

Before shifting emphasis to specific considerations when we design mediation tasks, it would be useful for the reader to skim through the following infographic entitled *Tools and tips for teachers*, which provides ideas on how mediation can be taught. It combines various ideas from members of the METLA network and can remind teachers of some important points when designing cross-linguistic mediation tasks. In the teacher's corner of the resource website, an additional infographic, entitled *Creating Mediation Activities: Tips* is provided in order to help the teacher in the design process.

Tools and Tips for the teacher!

"**C**onsider learners' difficulties in rephrasing or explaining ideas (from texts) to others. Then think of tasks that could help them in overcoming these difficulties. **Design small steps** within each task. **Monitor** the tasks. At the end **reflect** on the work done and **on the learning outcomes**."

"Make sure you **provide a context** for the mediation task (who is mediating, what, for whom, why, under what circumstances, etc.). Make sure your mediation task **provides students with a communicative purpose**."

"After the activity, make sure that there is room for **reflection** and **feedback**."

"Encourage your learners to **reflect on the strategies** they are using."

"**Familiarise yourself** with the **CEFR-CV mediation** categories and corresponding activities and descriptors."

"Find out **what languages are present** in their learners' repertoires and use that information."

"Make **mediation** an **integral part** of your classroom practices."

"**Select the relevant descriptors** from the CEFR-CV (not only those related to mediation) and adapt them if necessary. This process of using descriptors is two-way: descriptors can at times be used as a starting point to develop tasks, or after the construction of the task, when the teacher can match the descriptors with the task."

"**Providing a task rubric** is important. Students need to be aware of what ideas or information to look for in the source text, or else it can be very difficult to understand what should be transferred to the target text."

MEDIATION

"**Identify which mediation strategies are needed** by on the part of the students to carry out the task and **incorporate a 'practice stage' in your lesson**, where mediation strategies are practised."

"**Apply the "information-gap" principle** when developing mediation tasks: do not have students say things to each other that they already know about."

"**Pilot the task** and keep an eye on the process."

"**Collaborate** with other (language) teachers in the school."

"It is important that students have some **familiarity with the genre of the target text** before undertaking a mediation task. Otherwise, the students might successfully find and reformulate information or ideas from the source text, but find themselves unable to relay the information successfully in the target text."

"Avoid isolated role plays without any context where you impose a role on the learner (he or she might not like); remember that the **learners should act as social agents and should have a message and an objective** - they can only transmit a message if they are convinced about it."

4.2. The design process

In this second part of the chapter, we focus on some important considerations when designing mediation tasks by making use of examples taken from METLA tasks.

4.2.1. Incorporating learners' home languages

Language teachers very frequently wonder how to incorporate their students' home languages in their lessons since they do not speak or understand the languages themselves. Students might have very different and uneven competences in their home languages; for example, some may be more advanced in speaking the language and less advanced in reading and writing (see Schalley and Eisenchlas, 2020). Also, not all students have positive attitudes towards their home language with some simply not wishing to be regarded as different just because they speak a different language. The following are some ideas that can help encourage students to make use of their home languages in the classroom and to ensure that all languages in the class are respected:

- creating multilingual classroom charts or interactive word walls;

- asking students to find different texts in their home languages and bring them into class;

- encouraging students to read a book in one language (home language or any language) and relay its gist in another language;

- inviting multilingual speakers into the classroom, e.g. family members if students feel comfortable with this, and let them discuss in any language with the students;

- asking students to use the internet to search for information in different languages;

- asking students to compare a text in the foreign language and the same text translated into the students' home languages or to compare two different texts on the same topic, one in the foreign language and one in a student's home language;

- providing instructions in various languages including home languages.

METLA Tasks 16 and 26 include vocabulary activities relevant to the topic of the lesson (Internet and technology in the former and Literature in the latter) which encourage learners to use their home languages or any other language. Specifically, in the example from Task 16 learners have to look for words using the internet and note down similar meanings in different languages. Similarly, in the example taken from

learners are invited to make lists in different languages of common words in the three texts, which are included in the particular lesson (two English and one Greek). They can add columns in the table for additional languages. Note that the lesson has been initially designed for those learning Greek as a foreign language.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 16

2. Imagine que tu veux faire une recherche sur Internet sur des « fake news » en plusieurs langues. Quels mots-clés pourrais-tu rechercher ? Compare des mots-clés dans les plusieurs langues que tu as choisies.

🔍 Langue 1

🔍 langue 2

🔍 langue 3

🔍 langue 4

The mediation task from which this activity has been extracted (No 12) involves the following languages:
Language A: German
Language B: English (FL1)
Language C: French (FL2)
Language X: students' choice

NOTE: This task does not indicate which languages should be used in the search, **giving learners the possibility to make use of all linguistic repertoires** present in the classroom.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 26

Βήμα 4

Ποιες είναι οι κοινές λέξεις που εμφανίζονται και στα 3 κείμενα; Συμπλήρωσε τον παρακάτω πίνακα σε δυο γλώσσες. Πρόσθεσε αν θελεις και μια τρίτη γλώσσα και μετέφρασε τις ίδιες λέξεις.

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ	ENGLISH	LANGUAGE: _____
ιστοσελίδες	websites	

Practising vocabulary in different languages through multilingual word-tables

Other ideas for incorporating home languages are the following:

- teachers or learners themselves may explain the meaning of different words in the language of schooling when not all students share the same home language;

- learners may use multilingual dictionaries or other resources (both on-line and paper).

4.2.2. Incorporating the (inter/pluri)cultural component

Relaying information to someone with a different linguistic or/and cultural background is an activity that a plurilingual speaker performs in everyday communicative encounters. Providing information about traditions, customs, social habits, cultural experiences, etc. for listeners/readers who do not share the same language is an example of cross-linguistic as well as intercultural mediation. The ultimate aim for learners is to be prepared to participate in complex and unpredictable intercultural communicative encounters in a global world.

Incorporating activities which promote the (inter/pluri)cultural component is an important aspect of foreign language teaching and learning. Tasks with an intercultural component aim at making students go beyond cross-cultural boundaries and "gain an inside view of the other person's culture" (Byram, 1997). Students are given opportunities to engage with otherness in a relationship of equality (Byram, 2020) and use "knowledge, skills and attitudes for mediation between interlocutors of one's culture and another culture" (ibid, 2020: 66). METLA Task 14 is based on brief Spanish texts about different cultural experiences of Mexicans on a specific day of the year (i.e. *the día de los Muertos*).

Step 4

When Miguel is back in Mexico, he posts the following picture on his social media page. Your dad asks you if you know what this is all about. You remember having seen something about the *día de los Muertos* in a movie and decide to look for information about this tradition online.

A. You find the following article in Spanish: Read it and **explain** to your dad, who is English, what this tradition entails.

B. Send him a written text (private) on Facebook messenger.

> The learner becomes familiar with certain traditions through Spanish source texts (which are omitted here) and is asked to relay in writing some of this information in another language (English).

METLA Task 17 asks students to participate in a forum where people from around the world talk about their traditional dishes.

> A **real-life context** is provided through the Forum.

You participate in a *forum* where people from around the world talk about their traditional dishes. Choose a traditional Greek dish and briefly describe it in English.

UK		White fish fillets in batter (or egg-and-breadcrumbs), deep fried with potato chips.
Poland		Bigos often translated into English as hunter's stew, is a Polish dish of chopped meat of various kinds stewed with sauerkraut and shredded fresh cabbage. It is served hot and can be accompanied with vegetables, spices or wine.
Italy		Pasta alla carbonara, prepared with ingredients such as eggs, Pecorino cheese, guanciale (a type of Italian cured meat made from pork cheeks) and black pepper.
Greece		

> Dishes are seen here as **cultural elements** from different countries. Students can thus develop an interest in food habits of people from other countries.

4.2.3. Incorporating multimodality and different media

Multimodality refers to the transmission of knowledge using various modes of representation – written texts, visual representations, sound, etc. With multimodal representation, text, image, sound, etc. combine to create meaning that is the result of the interplay between them. Some mediation tasks ask students to draw information from texts that combine multiple modes, such as electronic posters, videos, blogs, etc. Others invite students to produce multimodal texts in the foreign language on various everyday topics, such as hobbies, family, technology, etc.

As for the use of visuals in mediation tasks, the learner may be asked to relay a message presented through a pie chart, graph, table, map, sketch, photograph, etc. to interlocutors who may not understand this visual. In this case the source text consists of visuals only. The target text consists of relayed verbal texts (either written or oral).

The following example of an activity (Step 2) taken from Task 17 refers to a YouTube video from which learners have to select certain messages and write them in note form (mediation across languages and across modes).

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 17

Step 1
Are you familiar with the health benefits of the Mediterranean diet? Briefly d
with your partner and come up with one reason each why you
Mediterranean diet is considered healthy.

Step 2
Watch the video on the Mediterranean diet and write down in note form the health benefits it offers: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5aof7UI3yg
Use either English or any other language for your notes.

Step 3
Your friend Brian from Switzerland has recently informed you that he intends
eating healthier food. Read the article below and send him an **email** (in Engli
words) **agreeing** with him and **presenting** the Greek salad as a healthy option.

> Incorporating **videos** ensure **multimodality** and **authenticity** and stimulate learners' interest.

> This can be an example of both intralinguistic mediation (within the same language – English) and cross-linguistic mediation.

Task 38 combines a song (Step 6) with a TEDex talk (Step 7). Specifically, learners have to listen to a song with a video which refers to the difficulties of learning Spanish and are asked to make a list of the aspects mentioned and write an article on the same topic (single mode text). Step 7 of the same activity asks learners to listen to a talk through video and relay its main ideas into a summary for a multilingual school project. The teacher here could alter the activity and instead of a summary (a single mode text), s/he could ask students to produce a video or an e-poster (multimodal text).

Step 6

Listen to a song by two Colombian brothers, Nicolás y Juan Andrés Ondina, (https://youtu.be/4LjDe4sLER0) who explain why it is difficult to speak Spanish. **Make a list** of the main reasons they refer to.

- ….
- ….
- ….

Using your notes (which you may also want to paraphrase) and on the basis of other sources which you can find on the Internet , write an **article in your school newspaper** on the reasons why it is difficult to learn Spanish.

Step 7

Listen to the TEDex talk by McWhorter (https://youtu.be/VQRjouwKDlU) and write a **summary** for the multilingual school project you are working on lately on the main reasons to learn a foreign language. Your summary should be in English, Spanish and any other languages you wish to use. The topic of this project is: LEARN LANGUAGES, PARTICIPATE

METLA tasks provide some ideas using various forms of digital media and online applications. For instance, in Task 4 Steps 4 and 5, learners have to produce a flyer about a lost dog. They could use a variety of applications in order to produce their flyers especially if the task is carried out during an online lesson.

Step 3	The teacher introduces the lost dog flyer and Instagram templates (Handout C/D).	plenary	
	students read Handout B (lost dog ...sage) and work in pairs and create ...r own flyer and Instagram post based ...he given scenario.	pairs	They could use the photo of Handout 3 to glue/copy-paste it into the Instagram post.
...ep 5	When the students are ready, they could compare their flyers and/or even display them on the wall.	pairs	In case this is an online lesson, the students could post the photos in Teams or Padlet.

Use of a variety of online applications for online lessons.

WhatsAPP Group
Handout A 1/2

Read these five messages written by residents living in a block of flats in your city.
Write an answer as a group to each message on a post-it note.
Put your message on the "WhatsApp group-Tower of Babel" poster.

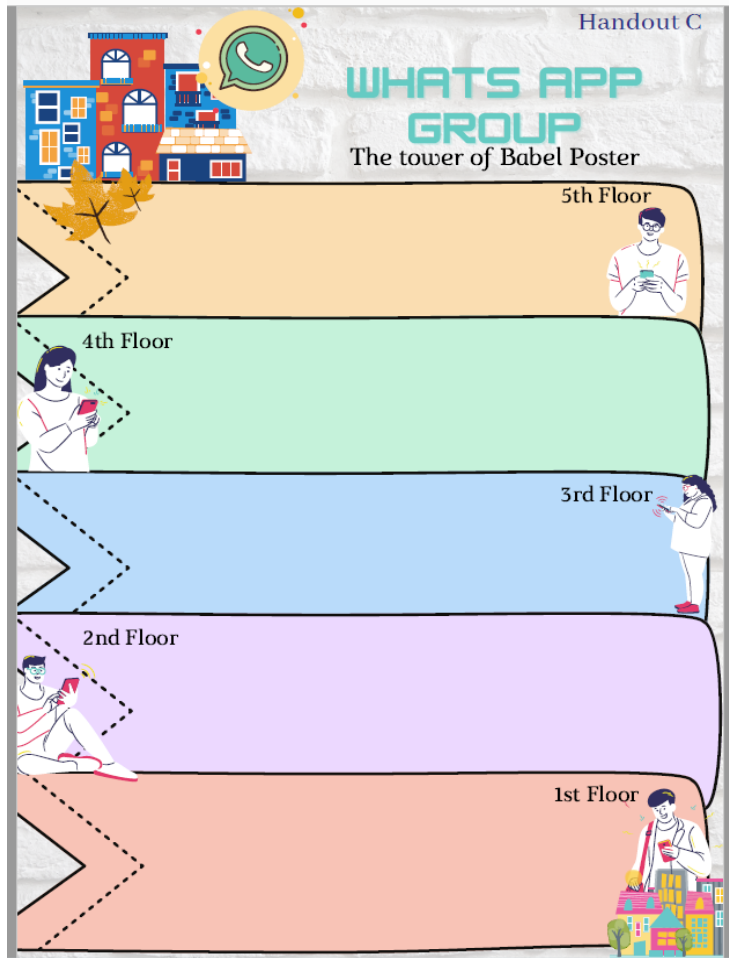The task provides the templates for the flyer and the Instagram post.

Teachers who piloted the METLA tasks have used different applications in their online classes. Following [Task 13](#) WhatsApp activity), after having students discuss the features of a particular electronic application (e.g. WhatsApp) and how messages can be sent using it, the teacher introduces the following scenario: *"You live in a block of flats where families with different cultural traditions and languages live in the same building. The residents have chosen to use a WhatsApp group as their way to communicate so they can deal quickly and efficiently with any problems that may arise"*. Students read five different WhatsApp messages in English (Languages B or C) and provide an answer in Language A and/or B (or C) depending on the instructions given on each message. Finally, they share their answers with the rest of the groups (see template). As a follow-up activity, students write their own message as part of their homework.

Following the discussion above, here are some additional ideas for teachers:

- design mediation tasks that invite students to produce multimodal texts in the foreign language, such as electronic posters, videos, blogs, etc. (see METLA tasks above);

- in order to do so, students are asked to find examples of specific text types in one language and analyse how they make use of different modes.

Handout C

WHATS APP GROUP
The tower of Babel Poster

5th Floor
4th Floor
3rd Floor
2nd Floor
1st Floor

4.2.4. Ensuring authenticity

Authenticity is of paramount importance when designing mediation tasks and a central concept in the action-oriented approach highlighted by the CEFR-CV, which states that "language learning should be directed towards enabling learners to act in real-life situations expressing themselves and accomplishing tasks of different natures" (Council of Europe, 2020: 29). An *authentic text* is one "created to fulfil some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced" (Little et al., 1988: 27). An *authentic task* links the language use in the classroom with the world outside; students are encouraged to produce language that they would use in real life situations. The examples already shown in this chapter thus echo the two types of authenticity:

 a)   Authenticity of *texts*, such as:

- visuals (photos, pictures, figures, charts, etc.);

- texts such as authentic videos, or texts taken from newspapers or magazines, posters, tickets, etc.

b) Authenticity of *tasks* through:

- realistic contexts and genuine purposes to communicate (e.g. explaining the meaning of a graffiti, reporting a physics experiment, etc.);

- everyday topics close to learners' life experiences and interests.

The following example focuses on a real poster announcing maths evening classes which are being held for students accompanied by their parents. It is written in English (Language A) and students have the task of relaying information and explaining data from the poster in Language B (Italian). Using posters in the classroom as source texts is an example of authenticity of text; involving students in creating their own posters during project work is an example of authenticity of task.

2. Vivi con i tuoi genitori a Malta. Tua nonna è italiana e viene a farvi visita durante l'estate. Sei in sala attesa al comune con la nonna che deve firmare alcune pratiche, quando vedi il seguente poster. **Spiega il contenuto del poster alla nonna in italiano.**

INTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH:

You migrated with your parents to Malta where you have been living for the past three years. Your Italian grandma comes to visit every summer. You happen to be with her at the local council office when you see the following poster. Explain in Italian the content of this poster to your grandma.

Integrating digital resources is another way to enhance authenticity of mediation tasks. Digital resources can be used as a source of (multilingual) information, as a means of communication, and as a resource of knowledge dissemination. Mediation tasks can make use of online media to enable students to search for information in different languages, to participate in multilingual communication activities, and to co-construct knowledge and disseminate work (see for example Task 29 below).

2.1. Vê o vídeo (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkOD2b6kR3E) e faz uma lista de ingredients para cozinhar "ovos moles".

2.2 Escreve uma mensagem de WhatsApp ao teu pai, a explicar o que são "ovos moles".

> In this task, digital resources are used in 2.1, as a source of information (understanding the content of a YouTube video), and in 2.2, as a means for communication (writing a WhatsApp message).

2.1. Vê o vídeo (Prove Portugal - Beira Litoral - Doces da Região: Ovos Moles de Aveiro, Mandala Sa : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkOD2b6kR3E) e faz uma lista de ingredients para cozinharovos moles.

WhatsApp

2.2 Escreve uma mensagem de WhatsApp ao teu pai, a explicar o que são ovos moles.

> In this task, digital resources are used in 2.1, as a source of information (understanding the content of a YouTube video), and in 2.2, as a means for communication (writing a WhatsApp message).

4.2.5. Collaborating to construct meaning and facilitating interaction

Drawing upon the action-oriented approach adopted in the CEFR-CV, which stresses the importance of collaborative interaction between learners while working on cross-linguistic mediation tasks, learners can be asked to share their views on the tasks, to share their resources, to collaboratively build up on them, or even to evaluate their achievements (see also Piccardo and North, 2019). Below we provide two examples of mediation tasks where collaboration is a prerequisite for the realisation of the tasks. Students in Task 17 are asked to produce a promotional leaflet about healthy diet (Step 6). However, first they need to watch a video on how to create such texts and decide together with their classmate what information to include in the leaflet (Step 5). In Task 1, learners work in pairs to create meaning. They depend on each other to complete the activity. Student A should relay information related to food and practice question forms in Language B using the Worksheet "Grocery List A" (Language A, English). Student B listens to the information introduced by Student A in Language B (Finnish), then selects the fruit and vegetables just mentioned by their partner who used the Worksheet "Grocery List B" and writes them down in Language B.

Step 5

Watch the video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlD4cWoVEPQ) on how to make a flyer and take notes with your partner with the main ideas which you will need in Step 6.

Step 6

You participate in a school competition where students around Europe publish their **promotional leaflets** about healthy diet in order to be distributed to European schools. You have chosen to produce a leaflet on a new, healthier and less fatty pita gyro*, the so-called "light version". Using information from the website text below, write your **promotional leaflet** of about 150 words, a) informing readers about what the new product consists of, b) presenting its benefits in comparison to the traditional pita gyro, and c) briefly presenting some healthy ingredients in it.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 1

ME.T.L.A TASK 1 - FOR THE STUDENT:
ACTIVITY WORKSHEET GROCERY LIST

GROCERY LIST   Name   Date

Work with a partner (B). Do not look at your partner's handout. This activity is a scenario. Read your scenario first and discuss it with your partner.

Scenario: You just came home and your fridge is empty. Ring up your cousin, who is in the shop now. Read the grocery list and ask your cousin (B) who only speaks Finnish to buy these things. Add at the end of the list (numbers 11/12) one fruit and vegetable that you like.

GROCERY LIST:
1. two loaves of rye bread
2. a kilo of cheese
3. half a kilo of ham
4. cherries
5. three bananas
6. six tomatoes
7. two cucumbers
8. a box of pasta
9. a box of rice
10. a package of butter
11. ..... (fruit)
12. ..... (vegetable)

Remember:
- Voisitko...?= Could you please... ?
- ostaa= buy
- Voisitko ostaa...;? Could you please buy...?

ME.T.L.A TASK 1 - FOR THE STUDENT:
ACTIVITY WORKSHEET GROCERY LIST

GROCERY LIST   Name   Date

Work with a partner (A). Do not look at your partner's handout. This activity is a scenario. Read your scenario first and discuss it with your partner.

Scenario: You are at the shop now. Your cousin (A) has created a grocery list and he/she is going to tell you in Finnish what you should buy. Listen carefully and circle only the fruit and vegetables your partner mentions, and write their names in Finnish. Finally, in the box below draw a picture of the last fruit and vegetable you have just heard and write their names in Finnish.
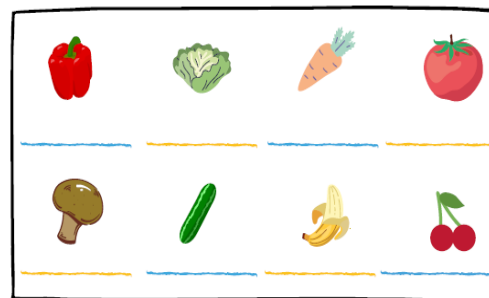
Draw the last fruit and vegetable you have just heard and write the words in Finnish

Remember:
- Voisitko...?= Could you please...?
- sanoa= say
- Voisitko sanoa...?=Could you please say it...?
- Voisitko sanoa uudelleen?= Could you please say it again?

The teacher can encourage students to **paraphrase** and /or describe the grocery item when their partner cannot understand the word.

Students have to accomplish several steps together, from watching a video to the creation of a visible product of their collaboration (a leaflet).

4.2.6. Developing learners' mediation strategies

Mediation strategies are used by the mediator in order to pass on information from one language to another (see Chapter 2). Strategies refer to how source content is handled, processed and ultimately incorporated into the target text. In order to develop learners' mediation strategies, the language teacher can consider building on the strategies which students are already familiar with when reading or writing texts – for example, skimming for gist, guessing vocabulary from context, paraphrasing, etc. The teaching of strategies could be explicit; for example, the teacher could link specific types of tasks to specific strategies making students aware of the interrelationship between tasks and mediation strategy use.

The following activities, which combine Greek (as Language A) and English (as Language B), are examples of how we could provide learners with practice in specific mediation strategies. The general goal of the lesson (Task 15) is to help learners become acquainted with different mediation strategies. In the first activity (Task 15 – Activity 1) students are asked to summarise signs and notices in English. Following this first activity is another activity (Task 15 – Activity 3), which aims at raising learners' awareness of a variety of strategies that are used in cross-linguistic mediation.

ACTIVITY 1: Your English friend has just arrived In Athens from London and you are going for a walk in your neighbourhood. Athens is full of signs and notices that s/he cannot understand. S/he asks you to explain what they mean. Try to *summarise orally* the content of each of the signs below in one sentence.

Strategies of distinguishing minor from major information, providing synonyms, paraphrasing, expanding or condensing.

This is also an example of how **visuals** could be used as source texts! **Authenticity** is also ensured.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 15

A C T I V I T Y 3: *Mediation Matrix*
What are the do's and don'ts of mediation? Fill in the following table. Work in pairs.

✦ add information not included in the Greek text
✦ translate word-for-word
✦ copy whole phrases form the original text
✦ paraphrase

✦ use synonyms
✦ use Greek words in my English text
✦ select what information to include in my text
✦ transfer all the information of the Greek text
✦ reorder and group information

☺ Do's	☹ Don'ts
♣	♣ *word-for-word translation*

Explicit teaching of mediation strategies

The teacher can explain here that word-for-word translation of the whole (source) text does not lead to successful mediation products. The selection of relevant information is the only thing that matters in mediation.

4.2.7. Dealing with a variety of genres

Source and output texts can be of different text types (genres) and should cover a wide variety of genres (articles, letters and e-mails, leaflets, instruction-manual texts, maps, poems, book announcements, etc.). The style and register of the learners' output texts should be appropriate for the context and follow the conventions of the genre (for example, newspaper articles follow a specific structure with a title, paragraphs etc.). One of the most challenging aspects of mediation is for learners to take into account target text generic conventions and produce appropriate texts; the genre of the original text does not always coincide with that of the output text, while the mediator needs to coordinate the generic conventions of two different texts. This is an aspect that needs to be taught explicitly, especially to higher level learners. Below is an idea for a task which aims at making learners aware of different genre conventions and helps them to adapt their style and language on the basis of the target text type:

One Language A text, three Language B texts

1) Learners are provided with a Language A text of a specific genre (e.g. newspaper article on a specific topic). They are divided into groups. Each group is given a different task in the target language based on the same source (Language A) text. Each group is asked to produce a text of a particular genre. For instance, one group may write an informative article, another may write an e-mail to a friend giving advice and a third one a report to promote the organisation's work.

2) In the above activity, in order to achieve their communicative goal, each group needs to be aware of the conventions of each genre. The style and register of the learners' texts should be appropriate for the context and should be organised in a way which is appropriate for the genre (newspaper articles follow a specific structure with a title, etc.).

3) After the completion of the task, learners could present and share their texts to raise awareness of the differences among the different text types. Peer-feedback may follow.

METLA Task 8 is an example of a lesson which can be used by the teacher to familiarise learners with how we write e-mails. As a follow-up to this task, students are given the task of writing an e-mail using the information from a leaflet taken from the official website of Helsinki airport. This activity is a good opportunity for students to learn more about writing e-mails. It includes a template (see below) which contains tips for learners. These tips intend to raise their awareness on the main features of an e-mail.
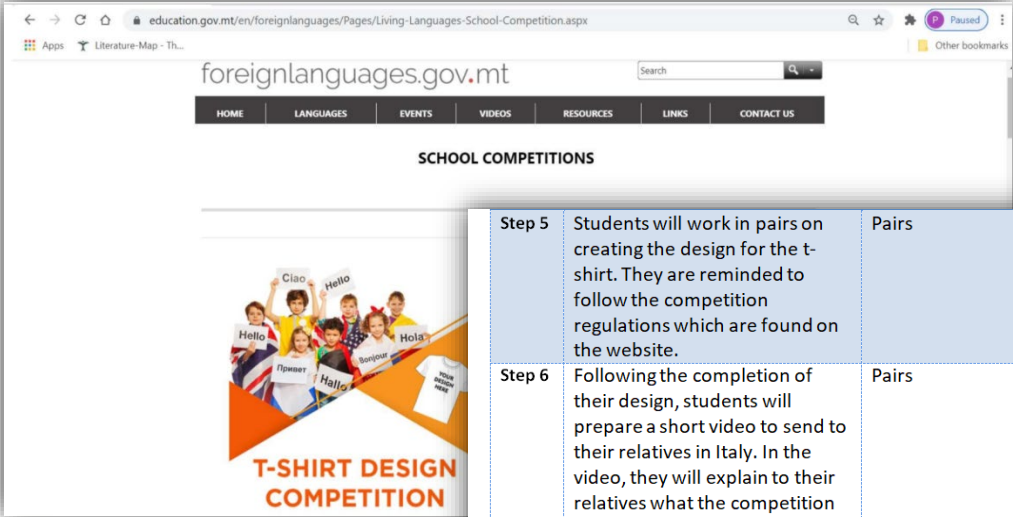
4.2.8. Incorporating mediation tasks into project work

Project work involves a lot of resources – time, people and materials – while learners are involved in a creative process of searching for information and producing language. Project-based learning encourages autonomous learning since students learn by actively engaging in real-world and meaningful projects. Given that many classes are increasingly multilingual, project work can offer opportunities for using different languages for the achievement of a final output. Project outputs could be multilingual or the process of collecting materials may be done in different languages. Here are some ideas for organising project-based lessons which combine different languages (languages of schooling, home languages and foreign languages):

- produce multilingual mind maps with your students;

- allow students to create a multilingual word wall with different home languages;

- group students according to home language to facilitate collaboration;

- allow students to present the project outputs in any language.

In Task 12 students are asked to carry out a number of mediation activities as they go through the process of getting to know about a language t-shirt design competition, designing and finally presenting their work. Task 12 aims at developing learners' skills in selecting information from source texts (English) and relaying it into a target text in another language (Italian in this case) in order to produce a video.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 12

Step 5	Students will work in pairs on creating the design for the t-shirt. They are reminded to follow the competition regulations which are found on the website.	Pairs	
Step 6	Following the completion of their design, students will prepare a short video to send to their relatives in Italy. In the video, they will explain to their relatives what the competition required them to do, and will present the design which they plan to submit.	Pairs	The teacher may wish to provide students with a clearer idea of what needs to be selected from the source text and relayed to their relatives by asking them to include Languages A, B and C in the video. This would make the task easier for the students to carry out and also make it easier to assess.

Some more examples below (Task 16 and Task 22 show how project work involving different languages could be incorporated. In Task 16 a billboard is collaboratively created after different phases of collecting information in different languages.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 16

Hot topics and digital media

Type of task: Research project intended to produce a billboard for the school

Educational level: Primary and/or secondary education

Proficiency level: B2

Short description and aim of the activity:

Engaging students in the crisscrossing of information available in several media in different languages, this task aims at developing their critical thinking and skills of relating and interpreting. Because young people consume information in several languages, this task intends to bring their multiliteracy skills to the foreign language classroom. The tasks, even if classroom-specific, are oriented towards students' authentic, every day needs as consumers and producers of media.

5. En petits groupes, créez une affiche pour informer les élèves de votre école sur le danger des « fake news », en prenant en compte les informations que vous avez recueillies. Un vote sera effectué en cours pour déterminer la meilleure et celle-ci sera affichée à l'école.

Task 22 is a project activity that focuses on first-aid instructions. Students create informative posters and present them in front of a small group of students. In the extract below, learners watch YouTube videos (Step 1) and read a text in Language A (Finnish) (Step 2). They are asked to produce an informative poster about heat exhaustion in Language B (English) (Step 3).

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 22

Task 22 could be transformed into a wider project integrated with other subjects, e.g. health education, biology, etc. The topic of the task (first-aid) is relevant to students' lifestyle and the country they are living in. For example, "heat exhaustion" is a common phenomenon in Greece and Finland during the summer; in Greece, because of the high temperatures and in Finland because of the constant sunlight.
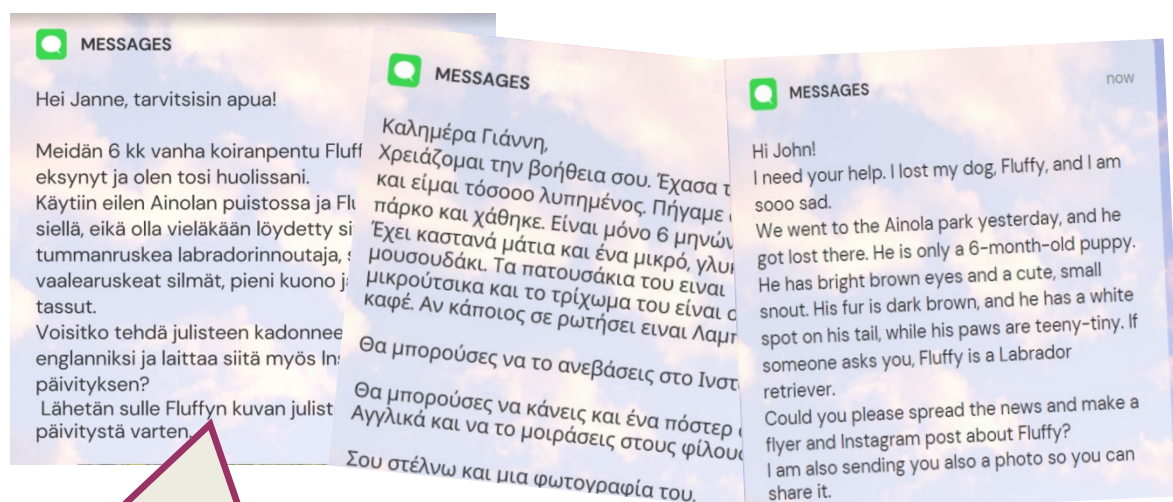
CHAPTER 5

Adapting mediation tasks

This chapter helps teachers familiarise themselves with different types of mediation tasks and provides insights on how METLA tasks can be adapted in order to cater for different teaching and learning contexts. A number of ideas offer possibilities for differentiation across languages, CEFR language proficiency levels, or teaching contexts.

5.1. Adaptation across languages

In this section we will show how METLA tasks can be adapted to incorporate various languages. In Task 4 below, learners are asked to read a text message from their friend who has lost his dog and then create a flyer for a missing dog. The METLA team has provided different language versions of the source text in Finnish, Greek and English. Teachers can either select the appropriate source text for their context or produce their own text in a different language. Having the source texts presented in different languages accompanied by the task instructions in the foreign language is an example of how mediation tasks allow for differentiation across languages depending on the teaching context.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 4

MESSAGES

Hei Janne, tarvitsisin apua!

Meidän 6 kk vanha koiranpentu Fluff
eksynyt ja olen tosi huolissani.
Käytiin eilen Ainolan puistossa ja Flu
siellä, eikä olla vieläkään löydetty si
tummanruskea labradorinnoutaja, s
vaalearuskeat silmät, pieni kuono j
tassut.
Voisitko tehdä julisteen kadonnee
englanniksi ja laittaa siitä myös In:
päivityksen?
Lähetän sulle Fluffyn kuvan julist
päivitystä varten.

MESSAGES

Καλημέρα Γιάννη,
Χρειάζομαι την βοήθεια σου. Έχασα τ
και είμαι τόσοοο λυπημένος. Πήγαμε
πάρκο και χάθηκε. Είναι μόνο 6 μηνών
Έχει καστανά μάτια και ένα μικρό, γλυ
μουσουδάκι. Τα πατουσάκια του ειναι
μικρούτσικα και το τρίχωμα του είναι
καφέ. Αν κάποιος σε ρωτήσει ειναι Λαμ

Θα μπορούσες να το ανεβάσεις στο Ινστ

Θα μπορούσες να κάνεις και ένα πόστερ
Αγγλικά και να το μοιράσεις στους φίλου

Σου στέλνω και μια φωτογραφία του.

MESSAGES   now

Hi John!
I need your help. I lost my dog, Fluffy, and I am
sooo sad.
We went to the Ainola park yesterday, and he
got lost there. He is only a 6-month-old puppy.
He has bright brown eyes and a cute, small
snout. His fur is dark brown, and he has a white
spot on his tail, while his paws are teeny-tiny. If
someone asks you, Fluffy is a Labrador
retriever.
Could you please spread the news and make a
flyer and Instagram post about Fluffy?
I am also sending you also a photo so you can
share it.

> The source text can be **translated** by the teacher into any language according to his/her teaching context.

Similarly, in Task 6, the teacher provides students in a multilingual class with a template (in this case a leaflet) which defines the text type to be produced. On the basis of this template students can insert information in their home languages. This information is extracted from a Maltese text (Language A). This task was initially developed with Maltese as the source language (Language A) and English as the foreign language (Language B) and makes use of CEFR-CV descriptors that are relevant to translation of a written text across languages. Remember that according to the CEFR-CV translation is considered as an instance of mediation.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 6

You attend a multilingual school and the school principal has asked the older students to translate the content of the leaflet into as many languages as possible so that all learners, including those who do not speak English yet, can understand it. The principal will then hang up the translated posters on the school notice board. Complete the poster below with the necessary information in your home language.

Another idea to incorporate different languages in mediation tasks could be an open task where students are asked to gather information in any language they wish for a delineated purpose and relay it in a written/oral text. Students could also be given a vocabulary activity not focusing on a single language, as in Task 27 below.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 27

1.·Lis·le·synopsis·du·roman·«°Une·année·chez·les·Français°»,·de·l'auteur·Fouad· Laroui.·¶

1969°:·les·Américains·marchent·sur·la·Lune.↵
Mehdi,·10·ans,·débarque·au·lycée·Lyautey·de·Casablanca· où·son·instituteur,·impressionné·par·son·intelligence·et·sa· boulimie·de·lecture·lui·a·obtenu·une·bourse.·Loin·de·son· village·de·l'Atlas,·Mehdi·pense·être·un·membre·de· l'équipage·d'Apollo·découvrant·une·planète·inconnue°:· qui·sont·ces·Français·qui·vivent·dans·le·luxe,·adorent·les· choses·immangeables,·parlent·sans·pudeur·et·lui· manifestent·un·tel·intérêt°?·Durant·une·année·scolaire· animée·par·une·galerie·de·personnages·surprenants,· l'histoire·émouvante·d'un·enfant·propulsé·dans·un· univers·aux·antipodes·de·celui·de·sa·famille.¶

> Students can **write down** the unknown words they think are important and **translate them in any language** they want.

Mots·utiles°:·¶

¶ ¤	¤	¤	¤
¶ ¤	¤	¤	¤
¶ ¤	¤	¤	¤

¶
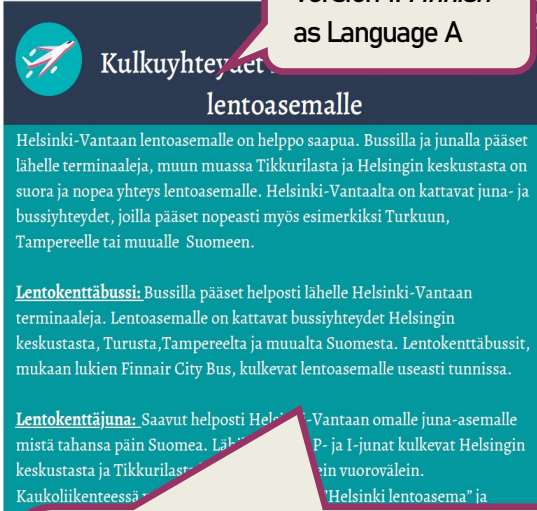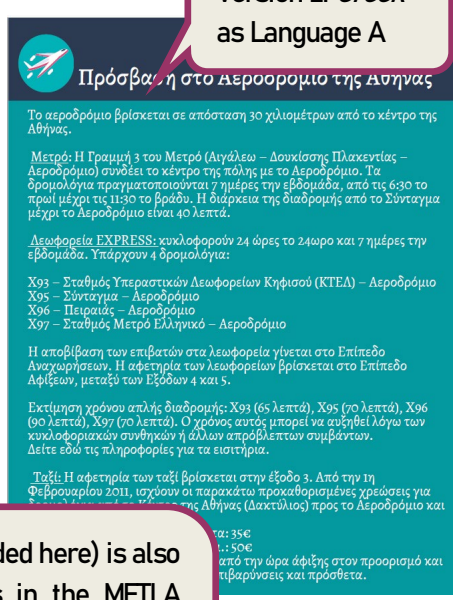
As a final point, we also suggest different versions of the same activities. Here is an example (already presented in the previous chapter): two different versions, Tasks 8 and 9: a) *Finnish* as Language A and *English* as Language B (foreign language) and b) *Greek* as Language A and *English* as Language B (foreign language).

EXAMPLE FROM TASKS 8 and 9

Using information from a leaflet which is in Language A (see above), students have to respond to some text messages (see below) and complete the dialogue with an exchange student in Language B (in this example, English). The teacher is free to adapt this task by incorporating any language that fits his/her purposes.

Handout B 1/2

Scenario: "Eve, an exchange student from England, is coming to your school for a semester. You had met Eve during a previous project, and you became friends. For that reason, your family suggested that she could stay in your home. However, you cannot pick her up from the airport. Text Eve and help her find her way safely to Helsinki based on the Airport leaflet you have. Complete the dialogue."

Hi Eve! Unfortunately, mum said that she has to be at work at 09:00, so she can't come to pick you up. 😑

Eve: Oh no! Is there a fast way to come to Athens? Could we meet at the city centre? 🙂

Eve: I think taxi might be too expensive... Is there any other way?

Eve: My flight arrives at 9:10. Can you check the bus/metro timetable?

Eve: Well, I have to pick up my luggage... So, I suppose I will be ready at 9:30. What would be the best option for me?

Handout B 2/2

Eve: Thank you so much! Does it happen to say, in which, terminal I should be? 😊

Eve: Is the terminal far away from the airport?

Eve: Shoot! I forgot! Do I have euros with me?

Eve: CU o Kiitos (rig

> Students are encouraged to use abbreviations, emojis or other means to make their texts as authentic as possible.

5.2. Differentiating across (CEFR) language proficiency levels

When referring to the CEFR language proficiency level in the METLA mediation tasks, we refer to the output text(s) (Language B). In this section we provide ideas on how tasks can be adapted so that they can be used for different proficiency levels. While the same source text may be used, different tasks can be assigned which are suitable for lower or higher levels of learning. One way of doing this relates to the text type or genre of the target text: whereas students at lower levels might be required to produce a simpler genre, such as an e-mail to a friend, students at a more advanced level may be asked to produce in the foreign language more complex text types, such as a newspaper article or a report. A wider variety of text genres is expected at higher levels while learners at lower levels can only be expected to produce a limited range of text types. To illustrate this, below are two examples of tasks, a B1 and a B2 level task, both of which mediate the same source text. While in the first case the demands are limited to *writing an e-mail to a friend* (an informal situation using language of advice), in the second case, the genre is more demanding since a *newspaper article* with higher linguistic demands and a more formal register is requested. The topic has also slightly changed.

B1 Written mediation task: Your friend, Alex, has been complaining about feeling down and asks you for help. Using information from the text below, send her an *e-mail* and give some tips as to what she can do, so as to feel better.

B2 Written mediation task: Imagine you are writing for your school newspaper. Using information from the text below, write an *article* in which you present the dos and don'ts for physical and mental health when attending school from home.

Below are more ideas for differentiating across CEFR language proficiency levels:

- The teacher can use source materials with varying degrees of complexity.

- At higher levels, learners may be asked to select information not from one text but from different resources (texts, visuals, audios, or videos) in order to carry out a project in the target language (e.g. producing a school newspaper or a poster).

- At lower levels it is important to present new knowledge and ideas through visual means or illustrations to accompany the texts. This may not be necessary for higher level students working on the same, or a similar, task.

- For less advanced learners, the teacher can provide scaffolding support materials to help learners deal with source texts or plan target texts.

- The teacher could distinguish between mediation which is limited to *reception* and mediation which also requires *production* (see Chapter 3). To illustrate this distinction, two examples follow; the former is more appropriate for lower levels, while the latter for higher levels.

Task 11 suggests the incorporation of two languages mainly for classroom assessment purposes given its closed response nature. Learners are asked to read an English text (Language A, which is the foreign language here) and respond to True/False questions in Language B, which is Italian. This is a task for lower levels (A2-B1). However, if the teacher wishes to use the same text for higher level students even in the same class, the same text can be used but with a different task which may involve production. For example, instead of a True/False activity (which does not require production), at higher levels the teacher could ask students to talk or to write a text in Italian using information from the English text.

For lower levels:

Leggi il seguente testo e rispondi *Vero* o *Falso*
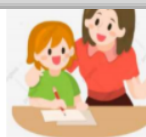
The **Maths Family Connect** sessions engage students accompanied by a parent/guardian in exciting hands-on maths learning puzzles, games and activities. The sessions are held in the evening and promote skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making. Furthermore, students are challenged to explore a range of different strategies to solve difficulties while learning from mistakes. This invitation is open to all Year 5 and Year 6 students attending any state, church and independent school in Malta and Gozo and is not exclusive for students of the hosting schools. All sessions will be different so parents/guardians may choose to attend as many sessions as they wish. All interested participants are requested to register for each session separately. Online registrations are to be submitted by parents/guardians two weeks prior to each session. Participation is free but spaces are limited so bookings will be accepted on first come first served basis.

Registrations for the first session, which is taking place at Safi Primary, are accepted as from Friday 28th February 2020 through the following link: mathsconnect_registrations

a) Le lezioni si svolgono di sera.   V   F
b) Possono parteciparvi gli studenti che frequentano scuole statali,
   cattoliche o private.   V   F
c) Ogni lezione sarà diversa dall'altra.   V   F
d) Per poter partecipare alle lezioni bisogna prima iscriversi online.   V   F
e) Le lezioni sono a pagamento.   V   F

> Learners are asked to produce a message on the basis of the source input.

For higher levels (using the same source text):

Your best friend has been living in Malta for two years and attends the same school. S/He is not very good at Maths either, so you think it would be a good idea to ask if s/he would like to attend these lessons with his/her parents. Send an SMS (text message) to your friend in Italian in which you inform him/her about these classes and you invite him/her to register online.

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CHAPTER 6

Guidelines for using the CEFR-CV descriptors in designing cross-linguistic mediation tasks

This chapter gives additional ideas on how CEFR-CV descriptors relating to cross-linguistic mediation can be put into pedagogical practice with the ultimate aim of developing learners' plurilingual and pluricultural competence. The discussion is organised around the following sets of descriptors:

- *Relaying information, (re)formulating texts and (re)constructing meanings: the scales for relaying and processing*
- *Dealing with Otherness: facilitating pluricultural space*
- *(Re)negotiating cultural boundaries: acting as intermediary in informal situations*
- *Exploiting different linguistic resources and making information available: the 'pluri'-scales*

In addition, teachers are provided with guidelines on how to find the right scale from the CEFR-CV according to their teaching aims.

6.1. Choosing the appropriate CEFR-CV scale(s) and descriptors

The CEFR-CV (2020) adds on, extends and updates the CEFR (2001) by providing a number of new scales which can help teachers when designing cross-linguistic mediation tasks. This section provides suggestions on how the teacher can select the appropriate CEFR-CV descriptors relating to cross-linguistic mediation.

6.1.1. 'Mediation activities' and 'Mediation strategies'

In the CEFR-CV, three main categories define Mediation activities as indicated in Figure 7: a) *Mediating a text* b) *Mediating concepts* and c) *Mediating communication*. In Chapter 1 (Section 1.4) we have already discussed the content of these three categories.

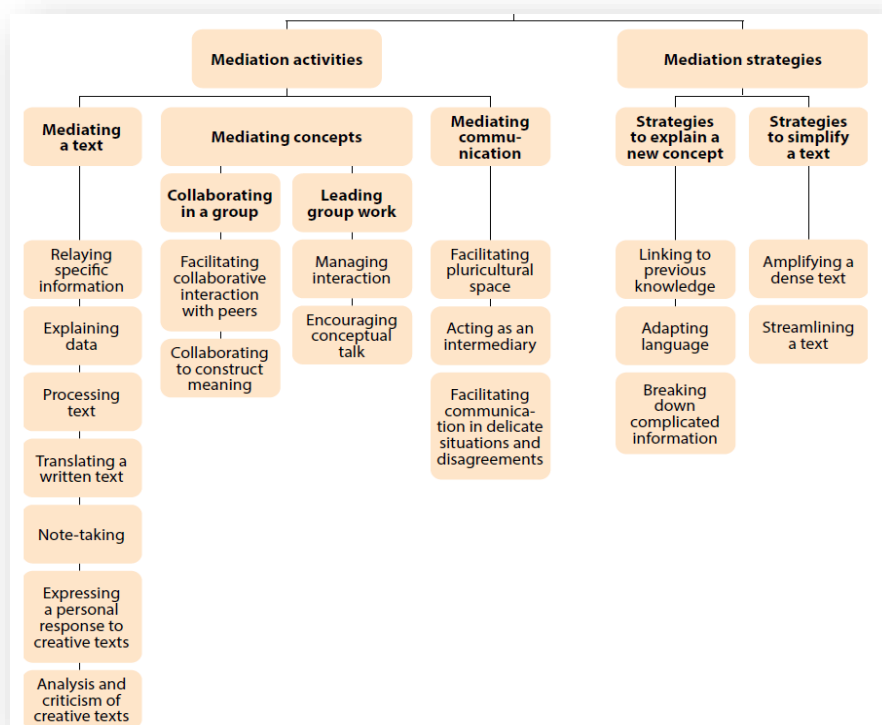**Figure 7:** **CEFR-CV categories for which various scales have been provided**

Each category includes a number of scales which are further reviewed below. To illustrate the form and content of a mediation descriptor, here is an example of a scale taken from the CEFR-CV (Council of Europe, 2020: 99-100) with descriptors relating to the scale 'Processing text in speech or sign'. Two descriptors at the levels C2 and B2 are included.

Table 2: An example of a scale from the mediating a text category

Scale under 'Mediating a text'

PROCESSING TEXT IN SPEECH OR SIGN	
C2.	Can explain (in Language B) inferences when links or implications are not made explicit (in Language A), and point out the sociocultural implications of the form of expression (e.g. understatement, irony, sarcasm).
B2.	Can summarise (in Language B) a wide range of factual and imaginative texts (in Language A), commenting on and discussing contrasting points of view and the main themes.

CEFR language proficiency level

Descriptor or 'can-do statement'

Each METLA task provides information about the specific scales and descriptors that each task is linked to as can be seen in the extract from Task 15 below. It is important to reiterate that this Guide focuses on the first set of CEFR-CV scales for Mediation activities, i.e. 'Mediating a text'. The METLA project also makes use of scales under the category 'Mediation strategies', namely, 'Strategies to explain a new concept' and 'Strategies to simplify a text'.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 15

FOR THE TEACHER

A Londoner in Greece!

Type of task: Practicing written mediation strategies

Educational level: Primary and/or secondary education

Proficiency level: B2

Short description and aim of the activity:
This lesson focuses on written mediation. The main tasks included aim at developing learners' skills in selecting information from source texts of different genres, summarizing messages into a target language and developing the mediation strategies of paraphrasing, providing synonyms, distinguishing major from minor information.

Background information (if applicable): Source texts are all in the source language (G_____ summer (holidays, dangers from

'Mediating a text' scales and descriptors which are relevant to the specific task

_____vity refers):
_____G
C_____s) contained in propositionally
c_____A) within his/her fields of
professional, academic and personal interest

▪ NOTE-TAKING (LECTURES, SEMINARS, MEETINGS ETC.)
Can make accurate notes in meetings and seminars on most matters likely to arise within his/her field of interest.

'Mediation strategies' scales and descriptors

C_____ spoken or written text on a
s_____ presentation) by paraphrasing
in simpler language

▪ AMPLIFYING A DENSE TEXT
Can make concepts on subjects in his/her fields of interest more accessible by giving concrete examples, recapitulating step by step and repeating the main points

▪ STREAMLINING A TEXT
Can simplify a source text by excluding non-relevant or repetitive information and taking into consideration the intended audience

'Mediating a text' involves relaying information to a person with no access to the original text due to linguistic, cultural or social barriers. 'Passing on' to another person messages from a text is the key practice here. However, the learner needs to be able to use the appropriate mediation strategies in order to be successful in his/her task. "Mediation strategies are the techniques employed to clarify meaning and facilitate understanding. As a mediator, the user/learner may need to shuttle between people, between texts, between types of discourse and between languages, varieties or modalities, depending on the mediation context." (Council of Europe, 2020: 117).

Although METLA tasks make use predominantly of 'Mediating a text' scales, the two other categories listed under 'Mediation activities' are relevant to the design and evaluation of METLA tasks. The activity of 'Mediating concepts' is particularly important in educational domains and refers, for example, to the role teachers play in managing classroom interaction and collaboration among learners to "facilitate the development of new knowledge" (Council of Europe, 2020: 108). 'Mediating communication' scales are of great relevance to the role played by the mediator; for example, when facilitating understanding between participants in tensions, disputes or disagreements.

Given the focus of the METLA project, we start by giving an overview of scales under the headings 'Mediating a text', 'Strategies to explain a new concept' and 'Strategies to simplify a text' (Tables 4 and 5). This overview will help teachers understand the main differences across scales and choose those most appropriate to them when designing mediation activities.

Table 3: CEFR-CV scales for 'Mediating a text'

	MEDIATION ACTIVITIES SCALES	EXPLANATION
MEDIATING A TEXT		
1.	**Relaying specific information in speech or sign**	The extraction of pieces of information from a source text in order to produce another text in speech (or sign). Here, the emphasis is on the specific content that is relevant, rather than the main ideas presented in the original text.
2.	**Relaying specific information in writing**	The extraction of some information from a source text, which is relayed by the mediator in order to produce another (written) text. Again, the emphasis is on specific details of the original text, which are relevant.
3.	**Explaining data in speech or sign**	The use and transformation of information presented in diagrams, charts, figures, and other images into an oral text.

4.	**Explaining data in writing (e.g. in graphs, diagrams, charts etc.)**	The use and transformation of information presented in diagrams, charts, figures, and other images into a written text.
5.	**Processing text in speech or sign**	Involves understanding the information included in a source text and then transferring orally relevant information (in another language), in a more condensed form, in a way that is appropriate to the context of situation.
6.	**Processing text in writing**	The reformulation of the original text focusing on the main source points and ideas leading to the writing of a target text in a summarised form.
7.	**Translating a written text in speech or sign**	The process of spontaneously giving an oral translation of a written text.
8.	**Translating a written text in writing**	The process of giving a written translation of a written text.
9.	**Note-taking (lectures, seminars, meetings etc.)**	The ability to write coherent notes, which is a valuable skill both in academic and professional life.
10.	**Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature)**	The expression of how a work of literature affects the user/learner as an individual. The key activities related to this scale are: explaining what he/she liked, what interested him/her about the work, describing characters, saying which he/she identified with, relating aspects of the work to his/her own experience, and relating feelings and emotions.
11.	**Analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature)**	Involves comparing different works, giving a reasoned opinion of a work, and critically evaluating features of the work, including the effectiveness of techniques used.

Table 4: CEFR-CV scales for 'Strategies to explain a new concept' and 'Strategies to simplify a text'

	MEDIATION STRATEGIES SCALES	EXPLANATION
STRATEGIES TO EXPLAIN A NEW CONCEPT		
1.	**Linking to previous knowledge**	Explaining new information by making comparisons, by describing how it relates to something the recipient already knows or by helping recipients activate previous knowledge relating new information and concepts to previous material.
2.	**Adapting language**	Paraphrasing in order to incorporate the content of a text into a new text of a different genre and register. Inclusion of synonyms, similes, or simplification.
3.	**Breaking down complicated information**	Breaking down complicated information into constituent parts, and showing how these parts fit together to give the whole picture.

STRATEGIES TO SIMPLIFY A TEXT		
4.	**Amplifying a dense text**	Expanding source input through the inclusion of additional information, examples, details, background information, explanations, and comments.
5.	**Streamlining a text**	Excluding non-relevant information; Eliminating repetitions; Regrouping the source ideas in order to highlight important points, to draw conclusions or to compare and contrast them.

In the CEFR-CV, the reader will find that each one of the scales (1-11 for mediation activities and 1-5 for mediation strategies in Tables 3 and 4) includes a specific number of descriptors or can-do statements for each proficiency level (from Pre-A1 to C2). As explained in Chapter 4, the scales and descriptors are an important tool for teachers since they guide the process of task design (see also the METLA template in Chapter 3, which includes a specific section for CEFR-CV mediation scales and descriptors). For instance, if the teacher's goal is to teach summary writing as part of written mediation tasks at B1, the descriptors included in the scale 'Processing text in writing' could be useful in helping him/her design specific activities with this goal in mind. An example of such a B1 level descriptor is:

> *'Can summarise in writing (in Language B) the main points made in straightforward, informational texts (in Language A) on subjects that are of personal or current interest, provided oral texts are clearly articulated.'*

With this descriptor as a starting point, the teacher is guided into creating a relevant activity and to:

- choose a topic of immediate interest to the learner;
- design a task which will require the production of a (Language B) text with informative language (as opposed to figurative or emotional language);
- choose a Language A text from which learners will relay information (if oral, it has to be simple or clearly articulated).

6.1.2. Using descriptors in task design

As becomes evident from the above, together with determining the goal of an activity, selecting descriptors is a crucial phase for task design (Piccardo and North, 2019). The following two routes are proposed by the METLA team as an aid in creating mediation tasks. By following either route, teachers can choose a specific scale and focus on specific descriptors relevant to the goals of the lesson (see Figure 8):
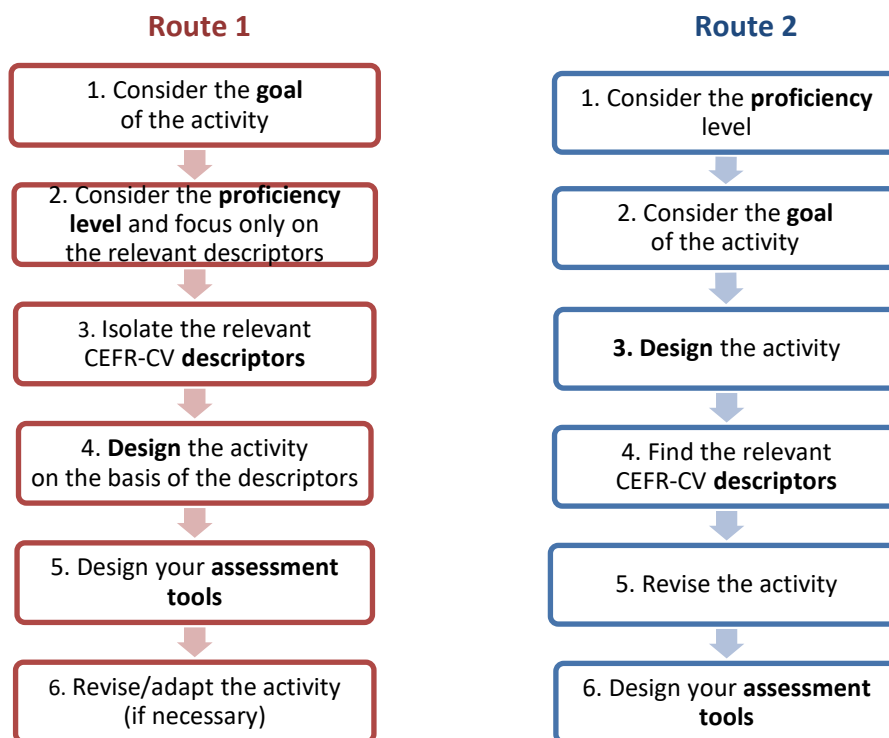
Route 1	Route 2
1. Consider the **goal** of the activity	1. Consider the **proficiency** level
2. Consider the **proficiency level** and focus only on the relevant descriptors	2. Consider the **goal** of the activity
3. Isolate the relevant CEFR-CV **descriptors**	**3. Design** the activity
4. **Design** the activity on the basis of the descriptors	4. Find the relevant CEFR-CV **descriptors**
5. Design your **assessment tools**	5. Revise the activity
6. Revise/adapt the activity (if necessary)	6. Design your **assessment tools**

Figure 8: Steps for designing mediation activities using the CEFR-CV

While in the first route, the goal of the activity along with the learners' CEFR language proficiency level, guides the process of finding the most relevant descriptors. In the second route the teacher already has an idea of a specific activity and may want to link or align the activity with the descriptors, on the basis of which the initially set objectives may be revised. The descriptors that will be used will ultimately reflect the overall objectives of the activity. After completing the activity, the teacher can make adaptations to the initial version of the activity. At this stage, the use of data taken from a student-oriented checklist and teacher-oriented checklist (see Chapter 4) will help the teacher (re)create his/her activity for future use. Below you will find an example and further guidelines on the steps to follow. Note that in explaining this example we have opted to follow Route 1.

Example: following Route 1

TASK DESIGN (Steps 1–4)

Let's imagine that the goal of the teacher is to provide practice in **summary writing across languages** (Step 1) to a class of B1 level students (Step 2). S/he chooses to make use of the descriptors taken from the 'Processing text in writing' scale and in particular B1 level descriptors (Step 3):

– '*Can summarise in writing (in Language B) the main points made in straightforward, informational texts (in Language A) on subjects that are of personal or current interest, provided oral texts are clearly articulated.'*

– *'Can paraphrase short passages in a simple fashion, using the original text wording and ordering.'*

On the basis of these two descriptors, s/he creates a new mediation activity (Step 4) which may involve a simple short source text of immediate interest from which learners have to select specific information and summarise in the foreign language.

REFLECTION (Step 5)

➡ **Before the completion of the task** by the students, the teacher himself/herself can use a checklist (Step 5) (see Section 4.1), created by the METLA team, in order to provide guidance at all stages of the design procedure.

➡ **Following task completion**, the teacher can ask students to fill in a reflection form, like the one presented in Table 6 (Chapter 7) (Step 5). The particular form asks students to reflect on: a) the strategies they used when mediating; b) how they dealt with the source text (selecting information, distinguishing major from minor information etc.); c) to what extent the task/lesson has helped him/her and in what areas; d) the difficulties they faced.

REVISION (if necessary) (Step 6)

The process of reflection and particularly learners' reactions may lead to a revised version of the activity. The activity can also be adapted by the teacher to another class with different interests or needs.

6.1.3. Which scales and descriptors to use?

Choosing the appropriate and most relevant scales and descriptors is not an easy procedure. For this reason, the METLA team provides a **table** with examples of METLA tasks aligned with CEFR-CV descriptors (see Table 5). For the teacher to be aware of the rationale behind METLA activities and to create similar ones for his/her own purposes, it is important to understand the way we have linked our activities to the CEFR-CV scales and descriptors. The first column provides the scales, the second column the proficiency level as well as the descriptors in the particular scale. The third column presents selected steps from METLA activities, which relate to the specific descriptors.

Table 5: Examples of tasks aligned with CEFR-CV scales and descriptors for mediating a text

CEFR-CV mediation scales	CEFR language proficiency level and descriptors	Selected steps extracted from METLA activities
Explaining data in speech and writing Learners will: list/relay/interpret/describe information from graphs, bar charts, flowcharts, etc.	Explaining data in speech *A2+ Level:* Can interpret and describe (in Language B) simple visuals on familiar topics (with text in Language A), even though pauses, false starts and reformulation may be very evident in speech.	Task 6 Face masks This is a role-play activity. Learners orally explain the content of the poster "Użutajjebtal-maskri" (Proper use of Face masks) in Maltese (LA) to their parent in their home language (in Language B, e.g. Italian or any other language).
Processing text in speech and writing Learners will: summarise/synthesise/ report information	Processing text in speech: *C1 Level:* Can explain (in Language A) subtle distinctions in the presentation of facts and arguments (in Language B).	Task 27 Literature The activity is based on the literary work "Une année chez les Français", by Fouad Laroui (2010). This task aims at developing learners' ability to reflect on the use of mediation strategies in daily situations. By means of analysing a cross-linguistic (Arabic-French) and intercultural situation, as depicted in a literary work, learners are able to discuss how intercultural differences, linguistic competence, and power structures impact the outcomes of mediation in daily interaction.
	Processing text in speech *B2 level*: Can summarise (in Language B) the important points made in longer, spoken and written complex texts (in Language A) on subjects of current interest, including his/her fields of special interest.	Task 24 First-aid telephone This is a project activity that focuses on life skills and specifically how to give first-aid instructions. Learners read a text in Language A about fainting, and they have to role-play a phone-call scenario in pairs (student- parent's assistant). One of the learners describes the symptoms while the other gives a summary of first-aid instructions based on the text they have read.
	Processing text in writing *A2 Level:* Can use simple language to render in (Language B) very short texts written in (Language A) on familiar and everyday themes that contain highest frequency vocabulary; despite errors, the text remains comprehensible. Can copy out short texts in printed or clearly hand-written format.	Task 4 Lost dog Activity Learners read a message in Language A written by someone who has lost his dog and asks for his friend to spread the news by making a 'Lost dog' flyer and an Instagram post. They work in pairs and create in Language B their own flyer and Instagram post by processing the information offered in the 'Lost dog' original message.
	Processing text in writing *B1 Level:* Can summarise in writing the main points made in straightforward information written texts on subjects that are of personal or current interest.	Task 7 Film-Making Competition A film-making competition is being organised where learners are invited to script, act, and direct their own film illustrating the benefits of learning foreign languages. Learners are asked to create in Language B a group on WhatsApp to inform their friends about this competition.

Relaying specific information in speech and writing Learners will: list/relay/explain specific relevant information	Relaying specific information in writing *A2 Level:* Can list (in Language B) specific information contained in simple texts (written in Language A) on everyday subjects of immediate interest or need.	Task 1 Grocery list activity Learners are given the name and the description of five popular dishes from around the world (e.g. carbonara, paella, etc.) and are asked to choose one. They have to search for information in Language A and then, make a drawing as part of their homework and write all the ingredients of the dish in Language B.
	Relaying specific information in writing *B1 Level:* Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific information points contained in texts (spoken in Language A) on familiar subjects (e.g. telephone calls, announcements and instructions).	Task 8 Airport activity This project activity focuses on cross-cultural communication and the way we communicate parts of this information to different people. First, the learners read a Language A text regarding airport transportation, and then, they write informal short messages as part of Language B written text communication with an exchange student. This output is later used in order to write a formal e-mail to the student's parents.
	Relaying specific information in speech *B1 Level:* Can relay (in Language B) specific information given in straightforward informational texts (such as leaflet, brochure entries, notices and letters or e-mails) (written in LA).	Task 11 Maths family connect This is a role-play activity. Learners are presented with a poster, "Maths Family Connect" in Language A. They are to select and orally explain the content of the poster to their grandma (a classmate plays the role of grandma) in Language B.
Translating a written text in speech and writing Learners will: produce clear to rough translations	Translating a written text in writing *B1 Level:* Can produce approximate translations from Language A into Language B of information contained in short, factual texts written in uncomplicated, standard Language; despite errors, the translation remains comprehensible.	Task 13 What's App activity As part of this project activity, learners are provided with the following text in Language A:*"Hey guys! We've checked the weather forecast and it seems that next Saturday is going to be really warm! I was thinking that it would be nice to have a party in the backyard at 08:00 pm. I hope there won't be any complaints about the music. Would you like to join us? Could you pass this information to John in Finnish (Language B) so everyone could enjoy the nice weather and have a good time? Thanks a lot, and see you on Saturday!"* Learners work in pairs and create a rough translation in Language B.
Note-taking (lectures, seminars, meetings) Learners will: understand and then take notes during various occasions	*B2 Level:* Can make accurate notes in meetings and seminars on most matters likely to arise within his/her field of interest.	Task 10 Students' housing problems Learners are asked to watch a video in English on how to make a flyer and then take notes (in any language) with the main ideas which they will need in order to do the following task which involves the production of a promotional flyer.
		Task 15 A Londoner in Greece! Learners are asked to read a Greek text (Language A) relevant to the Greek summer (holidays, dangers from the sun or fires) and take some notes to be used in a telephone conversation with their friend in Language B. They are trained in the use of various mediation strategies (e.g. paraphrasing, providing synonyms etc.). The CEFR-CV mainly links note-taking with listening rather than reading and taking notes as in this activity. However, we believe that taking notes from a reading text, as is the case in Task 15 is equally important.

6.2. Using 'plurilingual and pluricultural' scales

So far, this Guide has focused on the scales for 'Mediating a text'. However, the CEFR-CV offers a wide range of other useful scales relevant to the development of learners' plurilingual and pluricultural competence, which can be exploited by teachers in order to develop their own cross-linguistic mediation tasks. Some of these scales are listed under the general heading 'Mediating communication', since considering cultural aspects is often an important part of effective mediation. Two examples of scales related to cultural aspects of mediating communication are shown below.

6.2.1. 'Facilitating pluricultural space'

'Facilitating pluricultural space' descriptors reflect the idea of respecting different cultures and creating a culture of inclusion in the classroom, or as stated in the CEFR-CV, "a space of mutual understanding" (Council of Europe, 2020: 122). These descriptors are of relevance for teachers, teacher trainers and material developers aiming at the linguistic integration of students from different cultural backgrounds. The mediator aims to facilitate intercultural understanding between participants in order to overcome any potential communication difficulties arising from contrasting cultural viewpoints (ibid). Two examples of descriptors from the CEFR-CV are:

1. Can act as mediator in intercultural encounters, contributing to a shared communication culture by managing ambiguity offering advice and support, and heading off misunderstandings (C1) ['Facilitating Pluricultural Space'];

2. Can support communication across cultures by initiating conversation, showing interest and empathy by asking and answering simple questions, and expressing agreement and understanding (B1) ['Facilitating Pluricultural Space'].

The following METLA task makes use of this scale since it focuses on communicating tourist information to people in another language. According to the given scenario, the learner has to assume the role of the intercultural mediator and help the visitor from Mexico by looking for information which will be helpful for his stay.

Step 2

Your parents' friend from Mexico, Miguel, is staying with your family in Spain for two weeks. He wants to go sightseeing. Since your mom, who speaks Spanish, is at work, you try to help Miguel by searching on the Internet for information about popular places to visit in the area where you live, Valencia.

You found the texts below about two interesting places and want to tell Miguel about them.

A. Before you start talking, write down in note form the adjectives that you are going to use to describe the places.

B. Orally **describe** them in English to Miguel, and say **why you think** he should visit them.

1. Las plazas del casco antiguo

Como en todas las ciudades, las plazas de Valencia son lugares de encuentro, repletas de terrazas, árboles y fuentes para escapar del calor del verano. Conectando cada plaza, discurren un sinfín de callejuelas, repletas de tiendas, restaurantes y cafeterías, a través de las que descubriremos más plazas y patios privados.
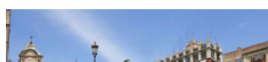
Una de las plazas más bonitas de Valencia es la **Plaza de la Reina**, situada en el corazón del casco antiguo.

6.2.2. 'Acting as an intermediary in informal situations'

Students in school settings are frequently called upon to act as linguistic and cultural mediators. Teachers may want to exploit descriptors from the scale 'Acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues)' in order to create materials which help students to renegotiate cultural boundaries and cultivate a culture of inclusion. As the CEFR-CV informs us (Council of Europe, 2020: 115), "this scale is intended for situations in which the user/learner as a plurilingual individual mediates across languages and cultures to the best of his/her ability in an informal situation in the public, private, occupational or educational domain". The descriptors below are indicative of this scale:

3. Can communicate fluently in (Language B) the sense of what is said in (Language A) on a wide range of subjects of personal, academic and professional interest, conveying significant information clearly and concisely as well as explaining cultural references (C1) ['**Acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues)**'];

4. Can communicate in (Language B) the sense of what is said in a welcome address, anecdote or presentation in his/her field given in (Language A), interpreting cultural cues appropriately and giving additional explanations when necessary, provided that the speaker stops frequently in order to allow time for him/her to do so (B2) ['**Acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues)**'].

6.2.3 More about the 'pluri' scales...

Other scales provided by the CEFR-CV fall within categories specifically related to plurilingual and pluricultural competence. The CEFR-CV lists three categories of Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence. These are: a) Building on pluricultural repertoire; b) Plurilingual comprehension, and c) Building on plurilingual repertoire (see Figure 9 below). Descriptive scales within each category are provided.
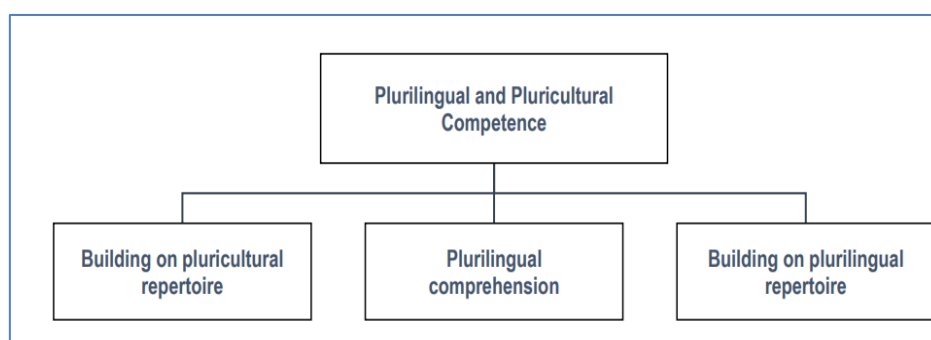

Figure 9: Plurilingual and pluricultural competence in the CEFR-CV: scales

According to the CEFR-CV (Council of Europe, 2020: 124), the descriptors relating to plurilingual and pluricultural competence reflect, among others:

- the need for understanding that different cultures may have different practices and norms, and that actions may be perceived differently by people identifying with other cultures;

- the need to take into consideration differences in behaviours (including gestures, tones and attitudes), discussing over-generalisations and stereotypes;

- the need to recognise similarities and differences and use them as a basis to improve communication;

- willingness to show sensitivity to differences.

Examples of descriptors relating to each of the three categories of plurilingual and pluricultural competence are shown below. The teacher can make use of a particular scale to develop the learners' intercultural competence through cross-linguistic mediation tasks that do not only focus only on linguistic aspects but also on cultural ones.

5. Can, in an intercultural encounter, recognise that what one normally takes for granted in a particular situation is not necessarily shared by others, and can react and express him/herself appropriately [B2, from the scale **'Building on Pluricultural Repertoire'**];

6. Can extract information from documents written in different languages in his/her field, e.g. to include in a presentation [B1, from the scale **'Plurilingual Comprehension'**];

7. Can alternate efficiently between languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire in order to facilitate comprehension with and between third parties who lack a common language [B2, from the scale **'Building on plurilingual repertoire'**].
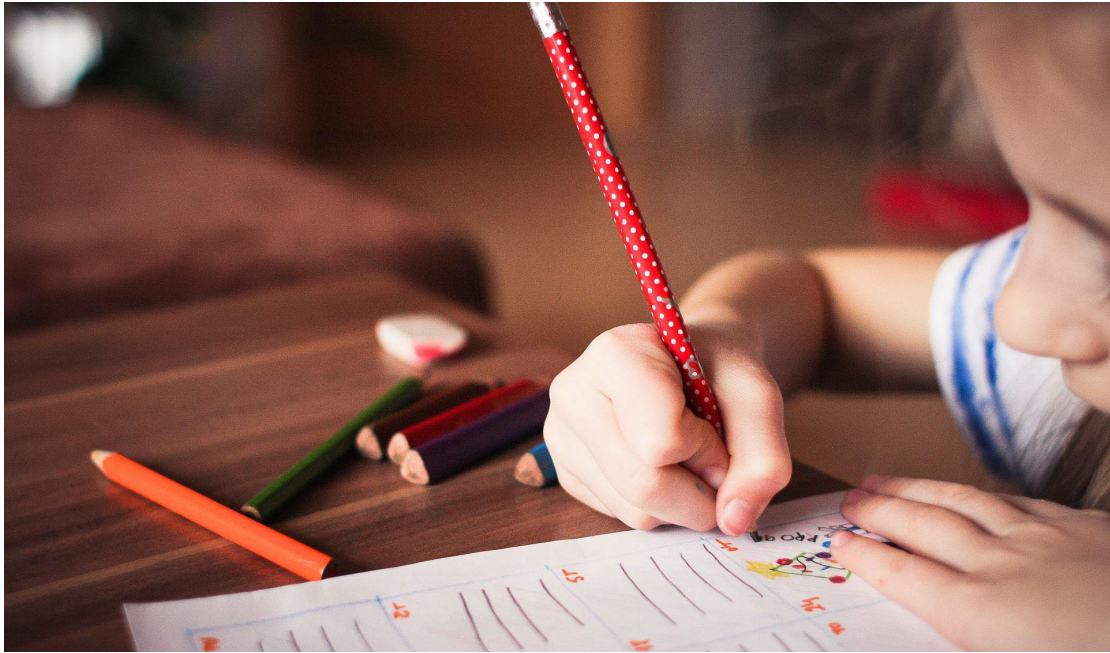
CHAPTER 7

Assessing cross-linguistic mediation

This chapter focuses on assessing mediation. It suggests ways of incorporating formative assessment for developing learners' mediation skills and strategies in everyday teaching practices, and highlights the importance of using portfolios, learning journals and self- or peer-assessment tasks. The second part of this chapter focuses on producing test-tasks to assess mediation. A set of criteria for evaluating mediation performance is presented at the end of the chapter.

7.1. Assessing cross-linguistic mediation: preliminary considerations

This chapter presents some considerations for assessing cross-linguistic mediation and for constructing assessment mediation tasks.

The need for assessing cross-linguistic mediation is relevant to the needs of any modern plurilingual society. Incorporating pluralistic approaches in language teaching naturally requires changes in assessment practices as well (Dendrinos, 2019, Stathopoulou, 2019, 2020). Just like teaching tasks, assessment tasks should also match the everyday language practices of speakers who make use of their entire linguistic repertoire.

Assessment tools can be constructed in order to assess learners' ability to move between languages and relay information from one text into another. This needs to take place on the basis of the new CEFR-CV scales, and according to the specific cultural and linguistic needs of the local teaching context, i.e. languages used in a context, the needs and interests of learners, etc. In a classroom environment, assessment informs both teacher and students of the next action steps in achieving learning objectives. Assessing mediation through specific tasks, some of which are discussed in this section, can be an on-going learning experience for students (formative assessment or assessment for learning). Teachers should provide learners with opportunities to reflect on and assess their mediation skills and strategies as an integral part of life-long learning.

METLA tasks can be used for both formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment entails "activities undertaken by teachers – and by their students in assessing themselves – that provide information to be used as feedback to modify teaching and learning activities" (Black and Wiliam, 2010: 82). Summative assessment, on the other hand, calls for assessments of how much learning has taken place – that is, how much the student knows (Gardner, 2010 found in Dixson and Worrell, 2016: 156). Examples of summative assessments are final exams, university entrance exams, and term papers, as well as classroom tests. The METLA project mostly emphasises formative assessment (discussed in 7.2). However, later in the

> **Formative assessment** should be used during instruction to help students learn material initially and throughout the learning process.
>
> **Summative assessments** can be used at the end of a unit, chapter, quarter, or semester to assess and evaluate how much learning students have gained and retained (Dixson and Worrell 2016: 157)

chapter we will also briefly consider summative assessment and using METLA tasks for testing purposes.

7.2. Formative assessment: designing reflection tasks

Many METLA tasks contain activities which encourage learners to reflect on their performance and progress and/or to carry out a self-assessment task. In this section, we provide examples of how different means of formative assessment can help teachers support the learning process. We then discuss forms of evaluation which provide ongoing information on how students are progressing. Together, these assessment activities enable teachers and students to interact in the teaching and learning process (Barootchi and Keshvarz, 2002) while collaborative work among students and/or between students and teachers is facilitated. Some commonly used types of formative assessment for student self-assessment or peer-assessment among students, are:

- **Portfolios:** collection of students' works (mainly written but a portfolio could also include drawings, videos, etc.). They demonstrate the evolution of students' work;

- **Diaries/Journals/Logs:** students are encouraged to make daily entries in a diary or journal referring to their progress; teachers may or may not add their comments to the diary;

- **Feedback:** teachers provides structured feedback to students on their strengths and weaknesses in written or oral performance; feedback may also be provided by the student's peers;

- **Conferences:** a peer conference is composed of a group of students who meet together to assess the written work of group members (Roberts and Kellough, 1996);

- **Self-assessment or reflection sheets**: often given to students at the end of a task, lesson or unit. For example, a list of 'I can' descriptors relating to the aims of the lesson to evaluate their own knowledge or skills.

Below, we provide suggestions regarding four of these forms of formative assessment by making use of examples taken from METLA tasks. These are self-assessment or reflection tasks, peer-assessment or peer-feedback, portfolios, learning journals or logs.

➡ <u>Self-assessment or reflection tasks</u>

'Self-assessment', as a form of formative assessment, gets learners to *reflect* on their own performance on the basis of a set of criteria. In this Guide, reflection tasks are those tasks which ask learners to:

- track their learning progress;

- identify areas of strengths and weaknesses;

- reflect on strategies used in order to carry out the mediation task;

- act on feedback to improve performance.

Such tasks aim to:

- increase learners' responsibility and autonomy;

- involve them in critical reflection.

Reflection worksheets can be used in the final stages of a classroom activity and can be designed to reflect on the mediation skills developed during the tasks. A great number of METLA activities (e.g. Tasks 8, 13, 18, 22) incorporate a reflection component at the end. The reflection activity for Task 8 for instance, focuses on the different characteristics of the text types which the students have worked on (informal text messages and formal e-mails). Students are asked to reflect on them and compare their characteristics. In addition, a list is provided to prompt them to reflect on some of the variables they should be aware of when writing a message. This template can be adapted for use with different text types.

REFLECTION

Student_____   Class:_____

WRITE DOWN THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF TEXT MESSAGES

WRITE DOWN THREE PHRASES YOU FOUND EASY TO TRANSFER FROM _____ (LA) TO _____(LB) AND THREE DIFFICULT ONES. WHY?

WRITE DOWN THREE CHARACTERISTICS OF E-MAILS

WHEN YOU WROTE YOUR TEXT MESSAGES, DID YOU CONSIDER ANY OF THE FOLLOWING (AND WHY/HOW?):

__ the recipient's culture
__ the recipient's age
__ the form of the text (e.g. online)
__ the purpose of your text (e.g. to explain/inform/complain)
__ the level of politeness
__ the languages involved
__ the way we text in_____ (LA)
__ the way we text in_____ (LB)

Task 22 (project activity) requires students to select information from various sources in Language A (video and texts) and create an informative poster which will provide first-aid instructions about heat exhaustion in Greece and Finland. Students then present their work to a small group of students. Below is the reflection task provided at the end of the lesson which includes questions about the strategies students used to create their own poster. The questions encourage them to reflect on the steps they followed in order to carry out Task 22 as a whole.

In [Task 18](#) a reflection grid about writing an e-mail is provided at the end of the task. Students have to take into consideration the context (e.g. purpose, addressee, language etc.) in which communication occurs. Similarly, in [Task 29](#) at the end of the lesson, students have to reflect on their own motivation regarding the theme and the tasks, and on their use of previously acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge. Then, they have to summarise what they have learnt.

Handout E

EMAILS

Self-assessment email list

Based on what you have written, mark the right answer:

I have included:	I am not sure	Yes	No	not applicable
an informative subject line				
opening greeting/salutation (e.g. Dear Ms. Smith)				
background information (e.g. the purpose of my email/ name of the lesson/ date/ time etc.)				
specific request				
polite forms (e.g. modal verbs: I would / I should /shall etc.)				
a complimentary close (Yours faithfully, Yours sincerely...)				
attachments				

I have :	I am not sure	Yes	No	not applicable
taken into account a specific audience (age/ethnicity/culture)				
used headings when appropriate				
stated the main point early				
effectively used transitions between ideas and paragraphs				
avoided slang				

Now, pass your email and your self-assessment list to your partner.

> This grid was provided in three different languages (English, Finnish and Greek).

Ficha de trabalho 2 / Worksheet 2

Nome: _____ Turma: _____

1. Avalia a tua aprendizagem e o teu envolvimento nas tarefas desta unidade.

Durante esta unidade	🤩	😎	🤔	😕	🤬
Senti-me motivado(a) em relação ao tema.					
Senti-me motivado(a) em relação às tarefas.					
Compreendi os objetivos das tarefas.					
Desenvolvi as minhas competências em português.					
...us conhecimentos de					
...nformações do texto					
...nformações do vídeo em					
...gem Whatsapp.					
Gostei de utilizar diferentes línguas que conheço durante a realização das tarefas.					
Senti-me à vontade durante a realização das tarefas.					
Gostei do trabalho de pares/em grupo.					
Gostei do trabalho individual.					
Gostava de ter feito mais atividades sozinho.					
As atividades foram muito fáceis para mim.					
Outra informação:					

> A **reflection grid** in **Portuguese** at the end of the lesson

Mediation strategies to explain a new concept in a target language, strategies to simplify a text, etc., form the basis of one more reflection grid entitled 'Are you a good mediator'? This reflection grid is a more generic one, in the sense that it can be used for *all* tasks in the Guide (see Table 6).

Table 6: Extract from the METLA reflection grid for the student

Name:	3	2	1
ARE YOU A GOOD MEDIATOR?	😎	😐	😤
GENERAL			
I know what a mediation activity involving different languages is.			
I know that I should pay attention to the instructions of the activity.			
I know that mediation activities ask me to transfer information from one language to another.			
DEALING WITH THE SOURCE TEXT			
I read the source text carefully and more than once.			
I can distinguish relevant from less relevant information from the original text.			
I can identify and select the information needed to accomplish the mediation task.			
I consider the purpose of the text (why it has been written, where it appears and by whom).			
TRANSFERRING INFORMATION IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE			
I can transfer information from the original text in another language (Specify the language(s) _____)			
I can paraphrase source information and use it into another language.			
I can evaluate and correct the final outcome.			
I can use pictures, tables, and other visual material in order to better understand the text.			
THIS TASK/LESSON HAS HELPED ME... (put one or more tick(s) and add your own ideas if you wish)			
☐ realise that a speaker of more than one language may have a role as a mediator ☐ be sensitive to differences and similarities among different languages and cultures ☐ be curious to find out about other languages, cultures and peoples ☐ be willing to share my linguistic and cultural knowledge with others ☐ use my knowledge and skills in different languages to understand or communicate in a multilingual setting ☐ ……..			
IN THIS TASK/LESSON I FOUND DIFFICULTY IN..(add your own ideas)			
☐ ……..			

The grid is divided into five parts with the first three parts dealing with **mediation strategies** and the last two with **what students have achieved and the difficulties** they experienced.

➥ **Peer-assessment or peer-feedback**

Peer assessment is the assessment by students of someone else's work on the basis of given criteria. Students can be taught how to provide feedback to their classmates. Well-designed peer-assessment tools can activate reflection, negotiation and collaboration strategies. Students learn to identify potential areas of improvement and identify blind spots of their own performance. In Task 18 students learn how to communicate with their teacher via e-mail. As part of this activity, they compare e-mails in Language A and Language B, evaluate the performances of their peers and finally write their own text. In the final stage, students evaluate their own work (self-assessment) and are evaluated by others (peer-assessment). This comparison between their own viewpoint and their classmates can give them an insight of how others perceive their work as well as provide opportunities to explain their choices.

EXAMPLE FROM TASK 18

| Step 7 | The students have to check the self-assessment list (Handout E) and decide if they have written their email according to it. (5 min) | individual | |
| Step 8 | Finally, the students have to pass their email and assessment list to their partner so they can discuss their performance together. (5-10 min) | pairs | Online lesson: The teacher could post all their answers to a ... (the writer could develop) and post their answer under the email examples. |

> Students discuss each other's performance on e-mail writing.

Task 15 also provides students with an opportunity to assess their peers' presentation on a poster they had previously created.

➡ **Portfolios**

Barootchi and Keshvarz (2002: 280-281) define portfolio as "a purposeful collection of materials assembled over a period of time by a learner to provide evidence of skills, abilities and dispositions as they relate to the learners' field of interest". Students collect pieces of their work and record it in a structured way (e.g. in a folder with pre-determined sections and clear aims) in order to present and discuss what they have learnt throughout the year or the course. With regards to mediation, students can present materials categorised according to the different text types they have dealt with and/or for the different purposes of their mediation, e.g. relaying information from Language A to Language B in order to create a flyer (text type) to inform (purpose of their text), etc. Drawing upon Hamp-Lyons (1996), portfolio assessment focusing on cross-linguistic mediation can:

- allow learners to display their overall performance on a series of mediation tasks rather than their performance at a particular time on a particular day;

- increase student involvement in assessing their own work and progress, especially through discussion of their achievements not only with the teacher but also with their peers. Interactions may take place in any language and the results of the discussions can be presented in class in the target language.

The first step in creating a portfolio is the collection of students' work, which can be their performance in cross-linguistic mediation tasks. The second step involves reflecting on the collected work (Mokhtaria, 2015). Students have to think about whether and how these items made them a more successful mediator. The learner has then to evaluate the quality of his/her work by determining its strengths and weaknesses (e.g. use of mediation strategies, ability to move from one language to another without making grammar mistakes or syntax errors, following genre conventions when producing in the target language, etc). The teacher can have regular sessions with the student to discuss and monitor the student's progress. The student can then present his/her portfolio and refer to the criteria used for the evaluation of his/her work. In addition to this, students might want to exchange their portfolios and receive comments from their peers. Portfolio assessment can also be done either in the foreign language or in any language brought into the classroom thus adopting pluralistic approaches to the teaching of languages. Last but not least, the teacher should bear in mind that s/he can exploit technology and involve students in making their e-portfolio, i.e. an electronic version of a portfolio to record and share their work, reflect on their learning and receive feedback.

➡ **Learning journals or logs**

Learning journals are similar to portfolios; however, a portfolio tends to focus on the product while a learning journal focuses more on the process. By keeping a learning journal, students can reflect on their work, evaluate their performance, or write down important information. The nature of a learning journal provides the students with the opportunity to reflect on the strategies used to mediate. In the following example, questions are extracted from the final activity of METLA Task 4 in which students compare two genres, i.e. flyers and social media posts, both containing information about a missing dog:

1. How often do you see a flyer nowadays? Why do you think this happens?
2. Which one of the two options would you choose? Which one is safer?

Time for reflection could be given at the end of the lesson or as a small homework task that could be discussed during the next lesson. Drawing upon the work by Genese and Upshur's (1996), here are some statements to help students when writing in their learning logs which focus on mediation:

• Through this task, I learned …

• I am good at/ I can ……

• My difficulties are……/

• I have difficulty in……

• I have managed to ….

• I can understand …

• I would like to know more…

• I would like help with … etc.

Table 7 below provides an example of a log that can be used by students. The teacher can adapt these ideas by changing or adding more statements according to the teaching context and the type of the mediation activity.

Table 7: **Learning to mediate: my log**

Date from _____ to _____

In the past week/month (etc.) _____ I have done (*how many*) _____ mediation tasks:

On (*topics*):

_____

I **selected** information from (*what sort of texts, e.g. e-mails reports, brochures*)

_____

I **produced** (*what sort of texts*)

_____

I **selected** information from texts in (*which language(s)*) _____

I **produced** texts in (*using which language(s)*) _____

I found difficulty in: _____

I need to work more on (which aspects of mediation): _____

_____

Place: _____

Date: _____

7.3. Summative assessment: from classroom tests to standardised examinations

Summative assessment is a particular kind of measurement that focuses on eliciting a specific sample of performance. In this section, we will discuss how mediation tasks can be used in summative assessment ranging from classroom tests to standardised examinations.

Having developed tasks to teach mediation skills in the classroom, we also need to focus our attention on providing tests which assess these skills and reflect the aims of such teaching tasks. Given that teaching and testing support one another, they are to be considered as two sides of the same coin. Dunlea and Erickson (2018: 21) claim that although we want to encourage the development of plurilingual competence, "measuring it is a challenge that has not been resolved". Learners' plurilingual competence can be tested through cross-linguistic mediation test tasks which may involve the similar aims, tasks and categories as those in teaching tasks. Assessing mediation through tests, or multilingual testing, is an area that has been given increasing focus in recent years (see for example, De Backer et al., 2019; Shohamy, 2011; Stathopoulou, 2018). Mediation can be assessed in classroom tests as well as in standardised examinations. An innovative example of the latter is the Greek national foreign language examinations system known as KPG exams, which offers exams in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Turkish. The KPG exam is a high-stakes exam battery which focuses on the use of language in different contexts and measures candidates' ability to mediate by including written and oral mediation tasks involving Greek and the foreign language that is assessed.

Many learning activities can also be used in testing. However, since learners will be graded on the basis of a test, certain considerations related to reliability and the scoring of the test, might constrain the format and conditions under which the task is carried out. Moreover, teachers need to take into account students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds and assess mediation by designing appropriate test tasks which would work for a specific group of learners. Here are some key questions to consider when creating cross-linguistic mediation test tasks:

1. **Who is the test for? What are the characteristics of test takers?** (age, educational level etc.)

2. **What is the proficiency level of the learners that are taking the test?**

3. **What languages to include?** (Language A – Source text and Language B – Target text or other languages)

4. **What CEFR scales are relevant? Does the task design take into consideration the CEFR can-do statements that specify language use?** Depending on the test purpose, certain CEFR-CV scales can be aligned with the mediation test tasks. For instance, if a test needs to be constructed to assess written mediation and summarising across languages at B2 level, the CEFR-CV provides numerous useful descriptors which could be exploited for the design of mediation test-tasks (see Chapter 6).

5. **Are we assessing written or oral mediation?**

6. **What will the test layout be?** For instance, will the test papers be graphically designed in order to reveal the source or the genre of the texts included?

7. **What types of source texts (genres) are suitable for the particular groups of learners?**

8. **What marking scheme or evaluation criteria will be used?**

With respect to the evaluation criteria when grading a test, we propose the following set of criteria that can be applied for the assessment of cross-linguistic mediation (teachers may wish to supplement this with their own criteria).

1. **Is the target text appropriate for the situational context** (i.e. appropriate genre and style)**?**

2. **Does the target text contain pertinent information from the source text? Has the learner selected the most relevant information on the basis of the situational context?**

3. **Has source information been relayed appropriately into the target text** (i.e. does it take into account the target text type conventions)**?**

4. **Has source information been relayed accurately?**

5. **Is the target text structured and effectively organised for the purposes of the communicative situation?** (For instance, the structure and organisation of a leaflet text is different from that of a formal e-mail to the editor of a newspaper – see Chapter 2).

6. **Have mediation strategies been used effectively?** (For instance, by comparing the target text against the source text, the teacher could easily spot the strategy of paraphrasing in learners' text and evaluate the degree to which this is done effectively).

Below is an example of a description of a test-task created by the METLA team adapting Task 18 which was originally constructed for teaching purposes and whose purpose was to familiarise students with different text types and to practice their skills in comprehending texts in Language A and producing (both oral and written texts) in Language B. The particular test task aims at assessing oral cross-linguistic mediation at

B1 level. We have included it to help teachers familiarise themselves with the different categories and help them design their own mediation test tasks:

Test aims	Assessing written cross-linguistic mediation (task based on production)
Test format	1 speaking activity (oral mediation task). Learners orally exchange information on a topic in Language B. They are asked to use information found in Language A texts.
Time	1 hour
LEARNERS	
Educational level	Secondary education
Proficiency level	B1
Languages	German (Language A) and Spanish (Language B, language tested)
Mediation specific CEFR scales and descriptors	RELAYING SPECIFIC INFORMATION IN SPEECH ● Can relay (in Language B) specific information given in straightforward informational texts (such as leaflets, brochure entries, notices and letters or e-mails) (written in Language A)
TASKS	
Texts	Authentic texts extracted from the Internet
Source texts	German (Language A) texts with touristic information
Target texts	Students transfer information from the two texts into Spanish (Language B)
Marking scheme and evaluation criteria	Marking focusing on the degree to which learner's oral production: a) is relevant in terms of content b) includes the appropriate information from the source text *(the learner has selected only the source information that serves his/her purpose thus distinguishing between major and minor information)* c) is grammatically and syntactically accurate d) is fluent
Score	Grades: A, B or C *(The teacher should provide a description of what each score entails taking into account the above criteria)*

Conclusion

Cross-linguistic mediation is a relatively new concept which so far has been rarely implemented by foreign language teachers. The introduction of cross-linguistic mediation can nevertheless offer several opportunities in teaching and learning contexts for the development of plurilingual and intercultural competence. It is our hope that this Guide will be useful in inspiring teachers to integrate mediation in their teaching practices.

As we saw throughout the Guide, cross-linguistic mediation legitimises the use of several languages in the classroom, including the learners' home languages. It gives the opportunity for tasks which require students to accomplish communicative goals and shift between languages of reception (reading and listening) and of production (writing and speaking). In cross-linguistic mediation tasks, students acquire a number of skills such as evaluating, selecting and relaying information, and become aware of contextual aspects of communication, namely: Who is interacting? In which languages? What is the purpose of this interaction? What kind of text is being used? Cross-linguistic mediation tasks provide a means to develop competences that are not specific to a particular target language but can be taught in different languages and across the curriculum.

We hope this Guide will foster the use and expansion of cross-linguistic mediation at a larger European level by providing teachers with an array of examples which should be seen not just as models, but as an inspiration for the creation of teachers' own tasks to suit their own specific teaching contexts.

As authors of this Guide, we believe that it can be used not only to develop innovative and original tasks but also to describe and evaluate cross-linguistic competences, inspire students' and teachers' self-assessment and guide the development of mediation test-tasks. We hope that this Guide may contribute positively towards an effective integration of cross-linguistic mediation practices in schools, curricula and language textbooks.

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This Guide on mediation in teaching, learning and assessment is targeted at foreign language teachers in primary and secondary education wishing to include (cross)linguistic mediation into their teaching practices. It will assist teachers in incorporating the diverse languages that students bring into the classroom, and in creating materials geared towards cultivating and assessing learners' mediation skills and strategies.

The comprehensive Guide both explores the theory and practice of mediation and provides practical examples of mediation tasks across various languages. These examples draw upon the *Companion Volume of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR-CV). Furthermore, the Guide offers valuable tips and suggestions to empower teachers in designing their own mediation tasks.

The Guide not only serves as a valuable resource for teachers but also for teacher educators seeking to integrate mediation into their programmes. Decision makers, such as school principals, curriculum planners or material developers are also likely find this resource very relevant to their work.

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