

# MEDIATION IN TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT (METLA)

## A TEACHING GUIDE FOR LANGUAGE EDUCATORS

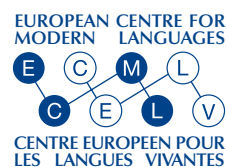
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Maria STATHOPOULOU

Phyllisienne GAUCI

Magdalini LIONTOU

Sílvia MELO-PFEIFER





# **MEDIATION IN TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT (METLA)**

## **A teaching guide for language educators**

Maria STATHOPOULOU

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Magdalini LIONTOU

Sílvia MELO-PFEIFER

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# Preface with acknowledgements

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Phyllisienne Gauci (Malta)

Magdalini Liontou (Finland)

Silvia Melo-Pfeifer (Germany)

The project team has worked in close collaboration with the following associate partners:

Eva Braidwood (Finland)

Bessie Dendrinou (Greece)

Katerina Krimpogianni (Greece)

Maria Dolors Masats Viladoms (Spain)

Centre for Excellence for Multilingualism and Language Policy of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Greece)

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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 have difficulty understanding oral or written language in a particular situation. We may have to explain part of what was said or written or 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 in (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 fully 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), which this Guide draws upon.

# The METLA project (2020-2022)

The METLA (Mediation in 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 in primary and secondary education who want to include linguistic mediation in their teaching practices. The Guide 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 Companion Volume of the CEFR (CEFR-CV) (Council of Europe, 2020). The Guide also provides tips and suggestions for teachers on how they can design their own mediation tasks.

The METLA project has also developed a database with additional sample cross-linguistic mediation tasks in different languages for different contexts. This database is available through the 'teaching materials' [webpage](#), where teachers can familiarise themselves with the notion of mediation by means of practical examples. The [project website](#) also identifies and explains the key concepts in the Guide.

There are clear synergies between this Guide and other resources published by the ECML. Among other resources, METLA complements the tools developed within the framework of the projects "[CEFR Companion Volume implementation toolbox](#)", "[Developing teacher competences for pluralistic approaches: tools for teacher education](#)" 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 proposed 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 their learners' needs.



# Guide: contents and structure

This Guide is written for the use of teachers who intend to incorporate cross-linguistic mediation in their practice. It provides 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 and 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 and respect towards other cultures;
- assess learners' mediation performance by providing ideas for alternative assessment.

This publication is accompanied by a series of twenty mediation tasks (which can be downloaded from the project 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 4. Chapter 5 provides helpful insights on how METLA tasks can be adapted 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 learners.

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 available in the database.

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 understand 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. In addition, the [METLA Glossary](#) provides definitions for the main terms used in the Guide.

# Who is the Guide for?

This Teaching Guide is addressed to teachers of foreign languages in primary and secondary education. With the help of the Guide, teachers will be able to introduce different languages that learners may bring into the classroom. They will gain awareness of how to design materials aimed at developing and assessing learners' mediation skills. While most cross-linguistic mediation tasks focus on foreign languages taught in schools, examples which incorporate additional languages (such as learners' home languages) are also given. Apart from 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 project team makes the distinction between Language A, i.e. the language of the source text(s), and Language B, i.e. the language of the output of mediation. Of course, teachers are free to add any additional language that their 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) (Language B), the complexity of source texts (Language A), 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 **skill to be learnt** within the framework of foreign language teaching and learning.*

*This chapter thus addresses questions such as: How is mediation defined in relevant 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 a 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 understanding this information due to linguistic and/or cultural differences. As indicated in the CEFR-CV (2020, p. 90), “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 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, or to sum up what a text says for one or more persons, for an audience or for a group of readers, etc., bearing in mind the addressee(s) and the aim of the task.

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 the construction of meaning. In today's globalised world, we often find ourselves in situations in which we have to mediate across languages and between interlocutors in order to ensure understanding.



## LET'S IMAGINE REAL-LIFE SITUATIONS IN WHICH WE MIGHT MEDIATE ACROSS LANGUAGES...

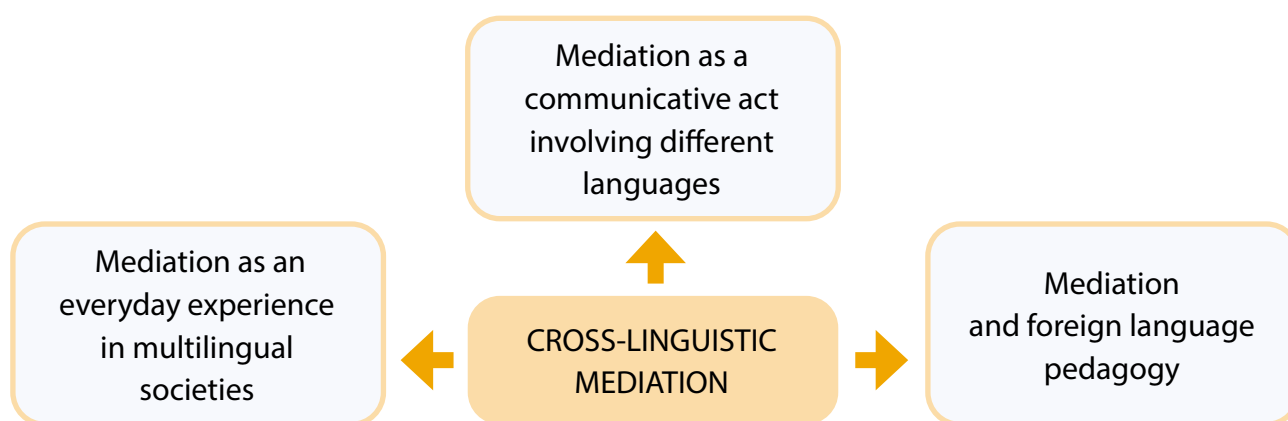
- A tourist in our city stops and asks about a concert that is advertised through a poster in the local language. We read the poster and give information to the tourist about when and where the concert is taking place and other details he or she wants to know.
- A friend relays information in a foreign language magazine article 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 do not buy a new car that runs on petrol yet.
- We have watched a video in a 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 friends are looking at a comic in one language and disagree about 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 on our weather app in one language and advise our sister in another language what kind of clothing she should take on a trip.
- A classmate has discovered a new song in her language and, knowing I would like the song, shares its meaning with me in our common 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 need 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 purposeful selection of information by the mediator from a source text in one language and relaying this information in 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 readers or listeners from a different linguistic or cultural background;
- involves a variety of skills: reception (listening and reading), production (writing and speaking), and interaction, as well as para-linguistic resources, such as body language and gestures;
- is directly linked to the development 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;
- requires competence in two (or more) languages, involving the selection of meanings from a repertoire and the ability to move seamlessly between languages based on the rules and possibilities of the communicative encounter. Mediation strategies are thus used by the mediator in order to achieve specific 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 material 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 informants' answers, which reflect the diverse understandings of mediation.



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

### 1.3. The role of the mediator

As a term, 'mediation' has a long history and many uses in different contexts. The term implies some sort of intervention by 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 blurred figures clearly through "mediation lenses". In this way, the unknown is no longer blurry or far away. Linguistic and cultural differences, influencing behaviours, perceptions or limiting one's ability to access knowledge and interpret the world, are minimised as access is facilitated through the role of a mediator. The task of mediators is to bridge communication gaps between languages and users of different languages. They operate as **facilitators**, **meaning negotiators**, or **meaning-making agents** (Dendrinos, 2006), especially when they intervene in situations which require linguistic and intercultural reconciliation.

## Mediators:

- create meanings for someone who is unable to (fully) understand a text in one language and with whom they may or may not share the same cultural or social experiences;
- help other people understand information, written, spoken or signed, in a language, register or modality that interlocutors do not speak or understand;
- are a kind of a 'go-between' or intermediary between cultures, languages, discourses and texts;
- are not neutral third parties; rather they are social actors co-responsible for the construction and negotiation of meaning and active participants in communicative encounters, 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)"; 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);
- have 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 he or she moves between texts and languages, interprets source information, selects what to relay, and uses his or her own means of communication (e.g. paraphrasing, summarising, etc.) in order to make messages understood.

Functioning as "social agents", i.e. members of society who have tasks (which are 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), mediators need 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 the **competences** which are needed when there are linguistic and cultural gaps. An effective mediator is one who is able and trained to activate a range of **strategies** in order to process, interpret and generally deal with information in a source language and convey meanings and messages in the target language. The second chapter of the Guide further elaborates on the competences and strategies needed by mediators to be successful in their 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 competence 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 and paraphrasing. However, mediation in the CEFR (2001) was not complemented with can-do statements as was the case with other competences – reading and listening comprehension, writing and speaking. Although the CEFR included mediation as a communicative competence, 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 CEFR Companion Volume (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 *this* 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 conveying 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

The METLA project focuses on the scales relevant to **‘Mediating a text’, particularly across languages.**

text is the key activity here. The METLA project focuses specifically on this particular set of scales in the CEFR CV, providing guidelines to teachers as to how these can be exploited when introducing cross-linguistic mediation tasks in their classrooms.

- **‘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, for instance, in tense situations, 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 learners and what competences and strategies they 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 between 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 flow of refugees and migrants, as well as the fluid language practices typical of the world today, have led to the need for educational reforms in the teaching of languages in Europe. In the context of increasingly multilingual and multicultural spaces both inside and outside the classroom, teachers need to develop pedagogies which emphasise the relationships between languages – foreign languages, the language of schooling and home languages, thus creating linguistic bridges. Respecting learners’ 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.

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.

Cross-linguistic mediation can be taught and assessed through mediation tasks which require the use of different languages (i.e. passing on information in one language via another), bridging linguistic and cultural gaps in the process.

The notion of plurilingualism came to prominence following the publication of the CEFR. It 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. It refers to language users’ varied communicative resources, which include different languages and cultures (see [Glossary](#)). The practice of mediation fosters 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 creative movement across languages, 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 agency in strategically employing all resources available to accomplish a mission (Piccardo, 2016).

## 1.6. Teaching and assessing mediation

When carrying out cross-linguistic mediation tasks, 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 via (an)other language(s). Throughout this process, learners make use of their 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 the 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 places particular emphasis on formative aspects of assessment (such as reflection, self-assessment, etc.).

# CHAPTER 2

## The learner as mediator

*This chapter focuses on learners and the competences and strategies which they need to mobilise in order to be successful in cross-linguistic mediation. We will address questions such as: What must learners as mediators do to transfer information from one language to another? What mediation strategies do they 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 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 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.

Given the task requirements and constraints, learners as mediators need to purposefully select information, ideas and messages from the source text in order to relay them 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 content but only some specific ideas of the source text.

The types of strategies 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 of the play, whereas in the latter task, they 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.) by which to relay the source messages.

## WHAT DOES A MEDIATOR NEED TO CONSIDER?

- **The people involved:** who are the interlocutors? What is the relationship between them? Given the audience, what is the appropriate level of formality?
- **The goal of the communicative event:** given the context, what is the communicative purpose of the mediation? The mediator produces a text which may: inform, clarify, explain, analyse in detail, present, promote, urge, suggest, etc.
- **The source and target language(s)/cultures:** what are the languages involved?
- The way we express politeness, irritation, friendliness, formality, discomfort, etc. might vary significantly from one language to another.
- The way people deal with different concepts and what is considered acceptable (or not) differs from one language or (inter)cultural situation to another. The mediator should also be aware of the socio-cultural characteristics of participating sub-groups, e.g. their use of language in social media.
- **The source and target text:** what type of texts are involved? For example, what are the characteristics of a radio show, and how can one transfer information from a radio show to a newspaper article? How can the information taken from a poster be presented in an e-mail or the content of a movie become a podcast discussion?

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 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. Learners 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 first they will produce a leaflet, while in the second they will write a letter. Thus two different genres (or text types) are involved. 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 is 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.

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

		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

**Table 1:** Task requirements

## 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 Culture](#), 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 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 carry out 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(s)) and create a message suitable for the situational context is equally important (e.g. using a 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 doing it in an appropriate way. 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 in one language via 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 strategies generally involve:

- 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 a patient who is unable to understand this particular text type and what it implies as far as their 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 need to process information presented in a text (either verbal or visual) in Language A and then transfer some of its messages into Language B (or other languages, i.e. Language C or D, etc.) in a way that is appropriate to the context of the situation. More than two languages may be involved both 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 involve different skills, for instance:

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

- 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 or using multimodal resources in another language.

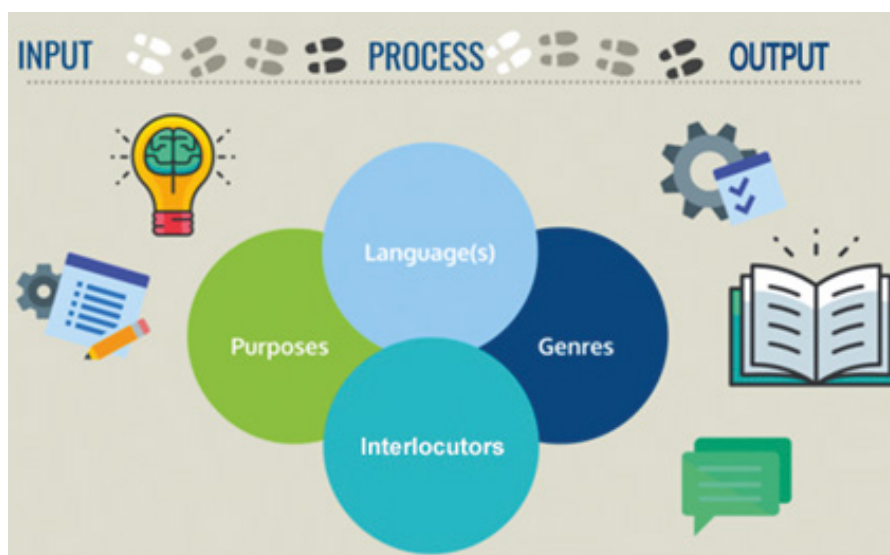
Depending on the task at hand, the learners may:

- either use their 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 their 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 learners 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 points in Language B.
3. Writing a report/summary of the foreign language lesson in other languages, i.e. home or school languages, for learners who missed the class.
4. Helping a newly-arrived learner with whom they do not share a common language by using their 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, democratic culture and cooperation. The tasks illustrate some pathways of teaching and assessing cross-linguistic mediation by putting the aforementioned principles into practice in order to ensure high quality education.

Some of the main concepts of the CEFR, such as: pluralistic approaches in 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 for democratic values (Council of Europe, 2016), and the non-separation of languages in 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 competences. Specifically, the idea of the learner as *social agent* and generally the action-oriented approach (cf. Piccardo and North, 2019) as highlighted through the CEFR-CV are 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 to foster individual agency.

From a plurilingual perspective, "the learner engages *collaboratively* in real-life tasks that require 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.

The principles of **action-oriented teaching** are manifest in the METLA educational materials. Specifically, these include the concepts of:

- the social agency of learners;
- collaborative tasks and
- co-construction of meaning;
- learning by doing (through action);
- the authenticity of tasks and learners' outcomes;
- integration of additional languages;
- (self-)assessment of outcomes.

**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 their 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.

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

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

### **3.3. Methodology and piloting**

When 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 in primary and secondary education around Europe on the basis of specific criteria, such as language combinations, task content, presentation and structure, layout, difficulty, and learners' level of proficiency in the languages involved.

## 3.4. Aims of METLA tasks

METLA tasks have been developed with the following aims:

- 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 (for example, digital competences, critical thinking, and collaborative skills, etc.).

## 3.5. Main characteristics of METLA tasks

The mediation tasks proposed within the framework of this project are presented in the form of lesson plans (accompanied by a learners' 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 *pluralistic approaches* to learning foreign languages as learners are asked to engage their full linguistic repertoires 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 learners' everyday communicative needs;
- are in line with the CEFR-CV descriptors relating to linguistic mediation;
- consider the *social and cultural dimensions of language learning*, thus reflecting the link between language and culture;
- are *learner-centred* in 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 learners (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 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 (the task description may include ideas on how to differentiate tasks for varied learner groups at different language proficiency levels);
- iii. The aim(s) of the task (e.g. to develop learners' 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 activities with the CEFR-CV descriptors );
- 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 learner/s;
- vii. The linguistic (or language-related) objectives referring to the specific objectives of the task – what learners will be able to do after completing the task. The following are some examples of language-related objectives:
  - Learners will be able to use vocabulary related to the topic of animals (e.g. body parts, etc.) (taken from [Task 2](#));
  - Learners 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 each task;
- x. The resources that accompany the task – 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 organise the task (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 task;
- xiv. Suggestions and ideas on how the task could be adapted to fit different teaching contexts.

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

## **For learners**

The second part of the template refers to the actual texts and tasks included in the task and contains the worksheet for learners. There is no one pre-determined template here (as is the case with the teacher's part) because the steps are different in each task. The task instructions are provided in the foreign languages being 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).





# CHAPTER 4

## Designing mediation tasks

*This chapter provides ideas for language educators on how to plan 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. Planning aims, topics and task types

In order to create their own mediation tasks, teachers may want to:

- set the aims and language objectives of each mediation task;
- 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. their age, needs, interests, home languages, etc.);
- think of a possible situational context and decide on a meaningful task using selected texts;
- whether mediation will be from the home language or the language of schooling into a foreign language, or from a foreign language into the home language or the language of schooling;
- decide whether the focus of the task 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.

### II. Selecting relevant CEFR-CV can-do statements

The CEFR and the CEFR-CV can provide valuable support by helping teachers decide which descriptor scales may be useful in planning a specific task for their learners. 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 task activities is an important step since the whole mediation task is based on these sources. Apart from the authenticity of materials, the relevance of the topic and learners' needs, age and interests, teachers also need 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 task. For instance, language teachers may intend to help learners 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;
- language complexity in terms of grammar and syntax;
- vocabulary: teachers needs to bear in mind that some texts may contain less frequently used vocabulary, which may pose additional difficulties for learners and is more useful with higher level learners.

Source text characteristics that teachers need to consider when designing mediation tasks:

- linguistic complexity
- cognitive complexity
- length
- organisation
- relevance in terms of content

Teachers therefore need to decide whether the text(s) is/are appropriate for their teaching context and learner group. The longer the source text, the harder it is for learners to focus their attention on the key points in order to select relevant information.

#### **IV. Writing clear task instructions and creating a realistic context**

Clear task instructions are a very important feature of a good mediation task. Learners need specific information about the context of mediation, the purpose of mediation and the audience in order to relay the appropriate information in the target text.

#### **V. Using the METLA 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 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 from the [resource website](#) in the form of worksheets, which can be used for different task activities. The METLA team considers the use of self-assessment or reflection checklists crucial for the teacher who wishes to design effective cross-linguistic mediation tasks.

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

<b>DEVELOPMENT STAGE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
√ My task is based on syllabus expectations.			
√ My task is based on the needs and interests of my learners.			
√ My activity ensures that learners 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.			
<b>TEACHING AND LEARNING STAGE</b>			
I explicitly teach mediation strategies.			
I ensure that tasks include a problem to resolve or a concrete outcome.			
I provide learners with access to cultural elements.			
I incorporate technology in my task activities.			
<b>REFLECTION STAGE</b>			
I provide opportunities for learners to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement through self-assessment activities.			
I give my learners opportunities for peer assessment.			
I provide specific descriptive feedback.			

**Checklist 2**

**MY TEACHING CONTEXT**

In this part the teacher conducts a quick brainstorming session related to his/her educational context.

<b>MY CLASSROOM SETTING:</b>	<b>EXTRA NOTES:</b>
Class: _____	
Number of learners: _____	
Foreign language level (based on CEFR): _____	
Online and/or in-class lesson: _____	
Languages involved: _____	
Topic: _____	
Type of task: _____	
Duration of task: _____	
Aims of task: _____	

## SCALES FOR MEDIATION PERFORMANCE AND STRATEGIES

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

<i>Choose the relevant scale for the learners' proficiency level, taking into account the aim of the task</i>	
<b>CEFR-CV Mediation scales</b> – Mediating a text ( <i>Circle your answer</i> )	Extra notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relaying specific information in speech / in writing</li> <li>• Explaining data (e.g. in graphs, diagrams, charts, etc.) in speech / in writing</li> <li>• Processing text in speech / in writing</li> <li>• Translating a written text in speech / in writing</li> <li>• Note taking (lectures, seminars, meetings, etc.)</li> <li>• Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature)</li> <li>• Analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature)</li> </ul>	
<b>CEFR-CV Mediation strategies:</b> ( <i>Circle your answer</i> )	Extra notes:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Linking to previous knowledge:</b> use questions to encourage people to activate prior knowledge; make comparisons and/or links between new and prior knowledge; provide examples and definitions</li> <li>• <b>Adapting language:</b> paraphrase (A2-B2); adapt speech / delivery (B2+); explain technical terminology (B2 + and C levels)</li> <li>• <b>Breaking down complicated information:</b> 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</li> <li>• <b>Amplifying a dense text:</b> use repetition and redundancy, for example by paraphrase in different ways; modify style to explain things more explicitly; give examples</li> <li>• <b>Streamlining a text:</b> highlight key information; eliminate repetition/digressions; exclude what is not relevant for the audience</li> </ul>	

## TASK CONTENT

<p><b>Task development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities: _____</li> <li>• Source texts: _____</li> <li>• Reflection/self-assessment activities: _____</li> <li>• Homework: _____</li> </ul>	<p>Extra notes:</p>
<p><b>Outputs of mediation</b> (<i>Circle your answer or answers</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written/oral texts (letters, e-mails, articles, etc.)</li> <li>• Videos</li> <li>• (Joint) Projects</li> <li>• Other? _____</li> </ul>	<p>Extra notes:</p>
<p><b>Materials and technology: what do I need?</b> (<i>Circle your answer or answers</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tools/resources which learners can use to decode/use texts/words in languages other than the foreign language</li> <li>• Free online multilingual dictionaries (including picture dictionaries) relevant to the languages which learners bring into the classroom</li> <li>• Social media? (Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok)</li> <li>• Sites where learners can share their products</li> <li>• Other? _____</li> </ul>	<p>Extra notes:</p>
<p><b>Additional considerations</b> (<i>Circle your answer or answers</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The topic is relevant to the learners' age, culture, hobbies, interests, needs, etc.</li> <li>• 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.).</li> <li>• I have considered the authenticity of the texts: songs, picture books, comics, advertisements, messages on social media, etc.</li> <li>• I have considered possible problems that my learners may encounter.</li> <li>• I have considered aspects such as gender equality, non-discrimination of minorities, supporting diversity.</li> <li>• I have taken into consideration learners with different abilities and/or learning difficulties.</li> <li>• I have included a formative assessment task (self-assessment/peer-feedback, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p>Extra notes:</p>

**Figure 6:** Checklists for the teacher on designing mediation tasks

Before shifting emphasis to specific considerations when designing 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 reminds teachers of some important points when designing cross-linguistic mediation tasks. In the teacher's corner of the resources website an additional infographic entitled [Creating Mediation Tasks: Tips](#) is provided in order to help the teacher in the design process.

## Tools and tips for teachers

We would like to thank the following people for contributing their ideas to this infographic: Franziska Gerwers, Maria de Lurdes Gonçalves, Dina Tsagari, Kia Karavas, Johann Fischer, Brigitte Gerber, Dolors Masats, Marisa Cavalli, Ailín Ní Chonchúir, Monica Hutanu, Isabelle Audras, Katerina Krimpogianni, Adolfo Sánchez, Belinda Steinhuber, Victoria Safonova, Riccardo Chiappini and Ethan Mensur.

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## 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 the METLA database.

### 4.2.1. Incorporating learners' home languages

Language teachers very frequently wonder how to incorporate their learners' home languages in their lessons since they do not speak or understand the languages themselves. Learners 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 Eisenclas, 2020). Also, not all learners have positive attitudes towards their home language, and some simply do not wish to be regarded as different just because they speak a different language. The following are some ideas that can help encourage learners 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 learners to find different texts in their home languages and bring them into class;
- encouraging learners 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 learners feel comfortable with this, and letting them talk to learners in any language;
- asking learners to use the internet to search for information in different languages;
- asking learners to compare a text in the foreign language and the same text translated into the learners' home languages or to compare two different texts on the same topic, one in the foreign language and one in a learner'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 task (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 [Task 26](#) learners are invited to make lists in different languages of common words in the three texts, which are included in the particular task (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.

Q Langue 1

Q langue 2

Q langue 3

Q langue 4

The mediation task from which this activity has been extracted (No. 16) 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. Προσθέσε αν θέλεις και μια τρίτη γλώσσα και μετέφρασε τις ίδιες λέξεις.

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΑ	ENGLISH	1. LANGUAGE: _____
ιστοσελίδες	websites	

Practising vocabulary in different languages through multilingual word-tables

Other ideas for incorporating home languages include the following:

- teachers or learners themselves may explain the meaning of different words in the language of schooling when not all learners share the same home language;
- learners may use multilingual dictionaries or other resources (both on-line and printed).

## 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 task activities which promote the (inter/pluri)cultural component is an important aspect of foreign language teaching and learning. Tasks with an intercultural component encourage learners to go beyond cross-cultural boundaries and “gain an inside view of the other person’s culture” (Byram, 1997). Learners 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 the various cultural experiences of Mexicans on a specific day of the year (i.e. *día de los Muertos*).

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 14

#### 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 learners 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.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 17

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



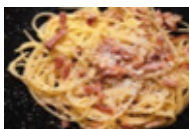
White fish fillets in batter (or egg-and-breadcrumbs), deep fried with potato chips.

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 learners to draw information from texts that combine multiple modes, such as electronic posters, videos, blogs, etc. Others invite learners 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, learners 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 discuss with your partner and come up with one reason each why you think the 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 is eating healthier food. Read the article below and send him an email (in words) agreeing with him and presenting the Greek salad as a healthy option.

**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), learners could be asked to produce a video or an e-poster (multimodal text).

## EXAMPLE FROM TASK 14

### 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/VQRjouwKDIU>) 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 to produce their flyers especially if the task is carried out during an online lesson.

## EXAMPLE FROM TASK 4

Step 3	The teacher introduces the lost dog flyer and Instagram templates (Handout C/D).	plenary	
Step 4	The students read Handout B (lost dog message) and work in pairs and create their own flyer and Instagram post based on the given scenario.	pairs	They could use the photo of Handout 3 to glue/copy-paste it into the Instagram post.
Step 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

Use of a variety of online applications for online lessons.

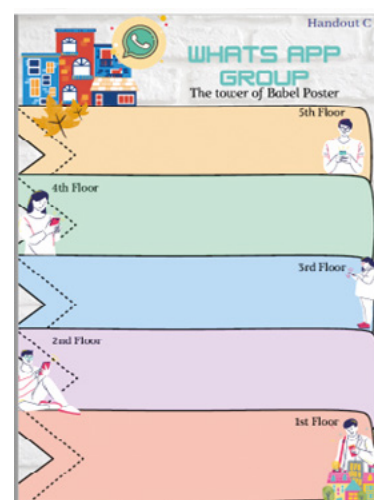


The task provides the templates for the flyer and the Instagram post.

Teachers who piloted the METLA tasks have used different applications in their online classes. Following [Task 13](#) WhatsApp activity after having learners 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. 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". Learners 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, learners 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 learners to produce multimodal texts in the foreign language, such as electronic posters, videos, blogs, etc. (see METLA tasks above);
- in order to do so, learners are asked to find examples of specific text types in one language and analyse how they make use of different modes.



## 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 language use in the classroom with the world outside; learners 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.);
- media such as authentic videos, or texts taken from newspapers or magazines, posters, tickets, etc.

b) Authenticity of *tasks* through:

- realistic contexts and genuine purposes of communication (e.g. explaining the meaning of graffiti, reporting a physics experiment, etc.);
- everyday topics close to learners’ life experiences and interests.

The following example from Task 11 focuses on a real poster announcing maths evening classes which are being organised for learners accompanied by their parents. It is written in English (Language A), and learners 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 learners in creating their own posters during project work is an example of authenticity of task.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 11

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.**



INSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH:

You migrated with your parents to Malta where you have been living for the past three years. [not in the Italian version] 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 the authenticity of mediation tasks. Digital resources can be used as a source of (multilingual) information, as a means of communication, and as a resource for knowledge dissemination. Mediation tasks can make use of online media to enable learners 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).

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 29

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".

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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 - Doce: Aveiro, Mandala Sa: <https://www.youtube.com/wat> lista de ingredients para cozinhar ovos moles.



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

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## 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 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 task. Learners in [Task 17](#) are asked to produce a promotional leaflet about healthy eating (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. Learner A should relay information related to food and practice question forms in Language B using the Worksheet "Grocery List A" (Language A, English). Learner B listens to the information introduced by Learner 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.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 17

#### Step 5

Watch the video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zID4cWoVEPQ>) 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

**Worksheet A (Left):** ME.T.L.A TASK 1 - FOR THE STUDENT: ACTIVITY WORKSHEET GROCERY LIST. Includes a shopping cart icon and a person icon with 'A'. The 'GROCERY LIST' form has fields for Name and Date. The scenario reads: "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." The grocery list items are: 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). Below the list is a drawing box and a 'Remember:' section with Finnish questions.

**Worksheet B (Right):** ME.T.L.A TASK 1 - FOR THE STUDENT: ACTIVITY WORKSHEET GROCERY LIST. Includes a shopping cart icon and a person icon with 'B'. The 'GROCERY LIST' form has fields for Name and Date. The scenario reads: "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." The grocery list items are: 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). Below the list is a grid of food images (pepper, broccoli, carrot, tomato, mushroom, cucumber, banana, cherry) and a drawing box. Below the drawing box is a 'Remember:' section with Finnish questions.

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

Students have to accomplish several steps together, from watching a video to the collaborative creation of a visible product (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). These 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 learners 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 learners 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) learners 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.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 15

**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.

**ACTIVITY 1:**  
Your English friend has just arrived from London. Athens is full of signs that he cannot understand. S/he asks you to explain what they mean. Try to **summarize** the content of each of the signs below in one sentence and send him/her a personal message on Facebook.



**Strategies** for 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

**ACTIVITY 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
- ✦ use synonyms
- ✦ translate word-for-word
- ✦ use Greek words in my English text
- ✦ copy whole phrases from the original text
- ✦ select what information to include in my text
- ✦ paraphrase
- ✦ 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 explains 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, learners are given the task of writing an e-mail using the information from a leaflet taken from the Helsinki airport official website. This activity is a good opportunity for learners to learn more about writing e-mails. It includes a template (see below) which contains tips for learners. The aim of these tips is to raise their awareness of the main features of an e-mail.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 8

**Handout C**

Based on the messages you have exchanged with Eve and the information you have from the "Kulkuyhteydet Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalle" leaflet, write an e-mail to Eve's mother, *Mary Brown*. Introduce yourself, inform her about the situation and what you have agreed with Eve, and give your parents' details (names and phone numbers).

**Think**

1. an informative subject line
2. opening greeting (e.g. Dear Ms. Smith)
3. background information
4. polite forms (I would / I should / shall etc.)
5. a complimentary close ( Best Regards...)

The handout also shows a screenshot of an email composition window with fields for 'To' (Mary Brown), 'Cc', and 'Add a subject'. At the bottom, there is an illustration of a person sitting at a desk with a laptop.

This template is included in order to promote authenticity.

If the teacher changes the language of the instructions, the template can be used for different language combinations.

## 4.2.8. Incorporating mediation tasks into project work

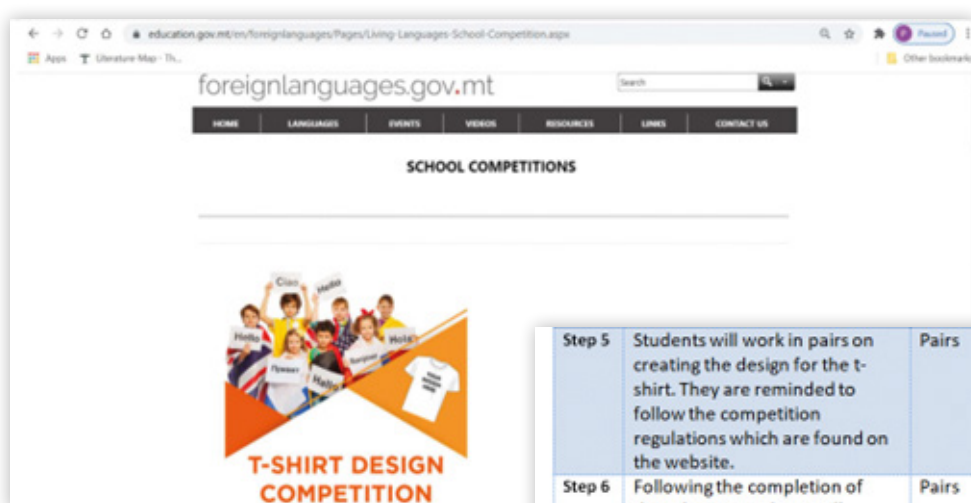
Project work involves a lot of resources – time, people and materials – while learners are involved in a creative process of searching for information and producing language. Project-based learning encourages autonomous learning since learners learn by actively engaging in real-world and meaningful projects. 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 can 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 learners;
- allow learners to create a multilingual word wall with different home languages;
- group learners according to home language to facilitate collaboration;
- allow learners to present the project outputs in any language.

In [Task 12](#) learners 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, then 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 following 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. Learners create informative posters and present them in front of a small group of other learners. 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

**Group 1** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Instructions**

### ENSIAPU/LÄMPÖHALVAUS (FIRST AID/HEAT EXHAUSTION)

**Step 1**  
Firstly, watch the YouTube video and take some notes regarding overheating.  
How To Treat Heat Exhaustion, Signs & Symptoms - First Aid Training - St John Ambulance  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8E6vdvVt4Z8c>

**Step 2**  
Then, read the following text about heat exhaustion taken from the webpage:  
Extracted from <https://www.mehilainen.fi/lempohalvaus-ensiaaputo>

**Auringonpistoksen oireet ja hoito**  
Auringonpistös aiheuttaa päänsärkyä, ärtyneitä, pahoinvointia, huimausta ja väsymystä. Oire voi olla joko vain tunne, mutta oireet menevät tyypillisesti katoiksi, eikä oire ole vaarallinen. Auringonpistoksen jälkeen kannattaa levätä viileässä ja juoda runsaasti. Auringonpistoksen voi saada, jos aurinko pääsee pörröttämään suojamattoman päähän kuumalla ilmalla.

**Kuinka estää auringonpistös?**  
Pää aurinkoa ja lämpimää ilmaa päästä ja riittää suojaa tavallisten päähineiden ja aurinkolasien rinnalla vettä ja pöytä tauluja ulkoilla. Kuumalla ilmalla sopivimmat vaatteet ovat kevyitä, vaaleita ja peittäviä.

**Lämpöhalvauksen oireet ja hoito**  
Lämpöhalvaus tarkoittaa elimistön liiallista lämpenemistä. Lämpöhalvauksessa ruumiinlämpö on yleensä yli 39 astetta, joskus jopa 45 astetta.

Oireina ovat heikkous, pahoinvointi, sekavuus, äkillinen tajunnanmenetyksi eli pyörtäminen, ripuli, vieroittaminen laisku ja sykkeen nopeutuminen. Fyysisen rasituksen liittyvässä lämpöhalvauksessa potilas hikoilee alkuunsa runsaasti. Elimistön kuumuudesta hikoilu lakkaa, iho muuttuu karmehalle ja potilas alkaa painella. Näitä ovat vakavien lämpöhalvauksen oireiden merkkejä. Kuumuuden merkkejä ovat kuumaa ihoa ja liimakalvat. Lämpöhalvauksen hoitossa viilenys tärkeintä. Lämpöhalvauksen hoitossa nestä ja kuumalle altistuminen pitää keskeyttää välittömästi. Potilasta kannattaa riisua ylimääräiset vaatteet, viilä hänet viileään tilaan, ruokkua ja hoitaa viileä vettä ja hoiduttaa nestettä hitaasti suustaan. Perusterveen alkuun voi upottaa kaulasta eteenpäin viileään veteen muutaman minuutin, mutta lapselle ja vanhukselle viileään veteen upottaminen on liian raju hoitokeino. Päästä ja riisua voi viilentää kylmällä pyyhkeillä ja kamalohin ja nukkautumin voi laittaa kylmäpaikat. Jos potilas voi huonosti, hänen pitää päästä heti sairaalahoitoon.

**Step 3**  
Create an informative poster about heat exhaustion in English based on the information you have just heard and read. The poster is addressed to students of your school and you should focus on what someone should do in case of emergency.  
(2 A5 pages: You can use your own photos or find online photos)

**Think of the following questions**

- What are the most important features of a poster?
- What is the title of your poster?
- What information are you going to include?
- How many sections are you going to include?
- Who is your audience?
- Have you thought of the design of your poster? Any visual elements?
- Are you going to create an online or a paper poster?

**Websites to help you create a poster:**

- (Free poster templates) <https://www.canva.com>
- (Free online photos) <https://www.dreamstime.com/>
- <https://www.pexels.com/>
- <https://unsplash.com/>
- <https://pixabay.com/en/users/free-photos-242387/>

[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 learners' 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

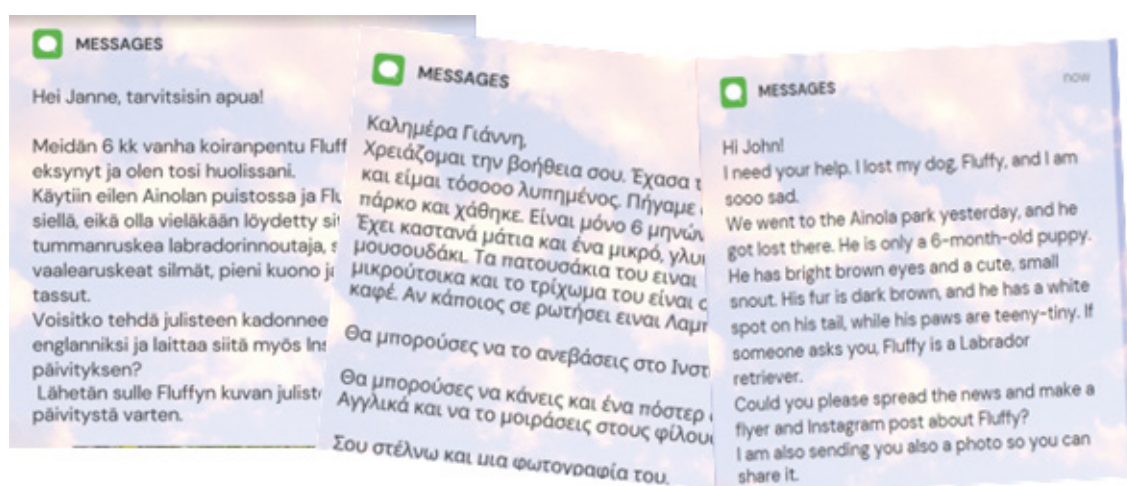
## Adapting mediation tasks

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

## 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



The source text can be **translated** by the teacher into any language relevant to their teaching context.

Similarly, in [Task 6](#), the teacher provides learners in a multilingual class with a template (in this case a leaflet) which defines the text type to be produced. Using this template learners can insert information in their home languages. The information provided 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 learners to translate the content of the leaflet into as many languages as possible so that all learners, including those who do not yet speak English, can understand it. The principal will then display the translated posters on the school notice board. Complete the poster below with the necessary information in your home language.

The image shows two versions of a COVID-19 leaflet. The left version is the original in Maltese, and the right version is a template for translation with empty boxes for text.

**Original Maltese text:**

**COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS** Maskri tal-wiċċ

**Użu tajjeb tal-maskri tal-wiċċ huwa l-qofol għall-effettività s-sigurtà tagħhom!**

**Kun ċert li l-maskra tgħattilek wiċċek kompletament minn fuq imniehrek sa taht geddumek.**

**Meta tneħhi l-maskra neħhiha minn wara. Kun ċert li ma tmissx il-parti ta' quddiem tagħha.**

**Qabel tilbes jew tneħhi l-maskra aħsel idejg bis-sapun u l-ilma jew b'fond sanitizzanti li jkun alkoħol-based.**

**Jekk il-maskra tiegħek tintuża darba biss iddisponi minnha b'mod sigur.**

**TMISSX wiċċek jew il-maskra waqt li tkun qed tużaha.**

**Jekk il-maskra tiegħek tista' terġa' tużaha, aħsilha kemm jista' jkun malajr wara li tużaha b'deterġent komuni b'temperatura ta' 60°C.**

**COVID-19 HELPLINE 111**

The right version is a template for translation with empty boxes for text.

**COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS**

**Użu tajjeb tal-maskri tal-wiċċ huwa l-qofol għall-effettività s-sigurtà tagħhom!**

**Kun ċert li l-maskra tgħattilek wiċċek kompletament minn fuq imniehrek sa taht geddumek.**

**Meta tneħhi l-maskra neħhiha minn wara. Kun ċert li ma tmissx il-parti ta' quddiem tagħha.**

**Qabel tilbes jew tneħhi l-maskra aħsel idejg bis-sapun u l-ilma jew b'fond sanitizzanti li jkun alkoħol-based.**

**Jekk il-maskra tiegħek tintuża darba biss iddisponi minnha b'mod sigur.**

**TMISSX wiċċek jew il-maskra waqt li tkun qed tużaha.**

**Jekk il-maskra tiegħek tista' terġa' tużaha, aħsilha kemm jista' jkun malajr wara li tużaha b'deterġent komuni b'temperatura ta' 60°C.**

**COVID-19 HELPLINE 111**

Another idea for incorporating different languages in mediation tasks is an open task where learners are asked to gather information in any language they wish for a delineated purpose and relay it in a written/oral text. Learners could also be given a vocabulary activity that does not focus on a single language, as in [Task 27](#) below.

## EXAMPLE FROM TASK 27

### Fiche de travail 1 / Worksheet 1

Nom : \_\_\_\_\_ Prénom : \_\_\_\_\_ Classe : \_\_\_\_\_

#### 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.



Mots utiles :


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

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

**Handout A 1/2**

**Kulkuyhteydet Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalle**

Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalle on helppo saapua. Bussilla pääset lähelle terminaaleja, muun muassa Tikkurilasta ja Vantaan keskustasta suora ja nopea yhteys lentoasemalle. Helsinki-Vantaan bussiyhteydet, joilla pääset nopeasti myös esimerkiksi Turkuun, Tampereelle tai muualle Suomeen.

**Lentokenttäbussi:** Bussilla pääset helposti lähelle Helsinki-Vantaan terminaaleja. Lentoasemalle on kattavat bussiyhteydet Helsingin keskustasta, Turusta, Tampereelta ja muualta Suomesta. Lentokenttäbussit, mukaan lukien Finnair City Bus, kulkevat lentoasemalle useasti päivittäin.

**Lentokenttäjuna:** Saat helposti Helsinki-Vantaan lentoasemalle junalla Vantaan keskustasta ja Tikkurilasta lentoasemalle tiheinä vuorokausina. Kaukoliikenteessä voit valita määrääsämäksi Helsinki-Vantaan matkustaa samalla lipulla lähiliikenteen junalla Tikkurilasta Vantaalle.

**Taksi:** Helsingin keskustasta tai muista lähikaupungista...

**Handout A**

**Πρόσβαση στο Αεροδρόμιο της Αθήνας**

Το αεροδρόμιο βρίσκεται σε απόσταση 30 χιλιομέτρων από το κέντρο της πόλης με το Αεροδρόμιο Express να πραγματοποιεί 7 πτήσεις την ημέρα ανά 15-20 λεπτά. Η διάρκεια της διαδρομής από το κέντρο της πόλης στο αεροδρόμιο είναι 40 λεπτά.

**Διαφορετικά EXPRESS:** κυκλοφορούν 24 ώρες το 24ωρο και 7 πτήσεις την εβδομάδα. Υπάρχουν 4 δρομολόγια:

X91 - Σταθμός Υπεραστικών Διαφορετικών Κινησού (ΚΤΕΛ) - Αεροδρόμιο  
X95 - Συντάγμα - Αεροδρόμιο  
X96 - Πικραδής - Αεροδρόμιο  
X97 - Σταθμός Μετρό Ελληνικό - Αεροδρόμιο

Η απόβραση των επιβατών στα λεωφορεία γίνεται στο Επίπεδο Αναχωρήσεων. Η αφετηρία των λεωφορείων βρίσκεται στο Επίπεδο Αφίξης, μεταξύ των Εξόδων 4 και 5.

Εκτίμηση χρόνου από τις διαδρομές: X91 (65 λεπτά), X95 (70 λεπτά), X96

Version 1: Finnish as Language A

Version 2: Greek as Language A

An English version of the text (not included here) is also added in the relevant task which appears in the METLA database (Task 15) in case teachers who are not familiar with Finnish or Greek would like to create a similar activity, or their own version of this activity, in their preferred language.

Using information from a leaflet which is in Language A (see above), learners have to respond to some text messages (see below) and complete the dialogue with an exchange learner in Language B (in this example, English). Teachers are free to adapt this task by incorporating any language that fits their 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 9:30. 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 to have euros with me?

Eve: CU on Friday! Kudos (right?) 😊

Yes! 😎😎😎

Learners 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 proficiency. One way of doing this relates to the text type or genre of the target text: whereas learners at lower levels might be required to produce a simple genre, such as an e-mail to a friend, learners at a more advanced level may be asked to produce more complex text types in the foreign language, 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 the 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 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 of physical and mental wellbeing.

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 that accompany the texts. This may not be necessary for higher level learners 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 can distinguish between mediation which is limited to reception and mediation which also requires production (see Chapter 3). The two examples below illustrate this distinction; the first is more appropriate for lower levels, while the second is suitable for higher levels.

**Task 11** suggests the incorporation of two languages mainly for classroom assessment purposes, given the type of closed response requested. 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 learners 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 learners to talk or to write a text in Italian using information from the English text.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 11

#### 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, 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.

# 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 competences. The discussion is organised around the following sets of CEFR-CV 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.*

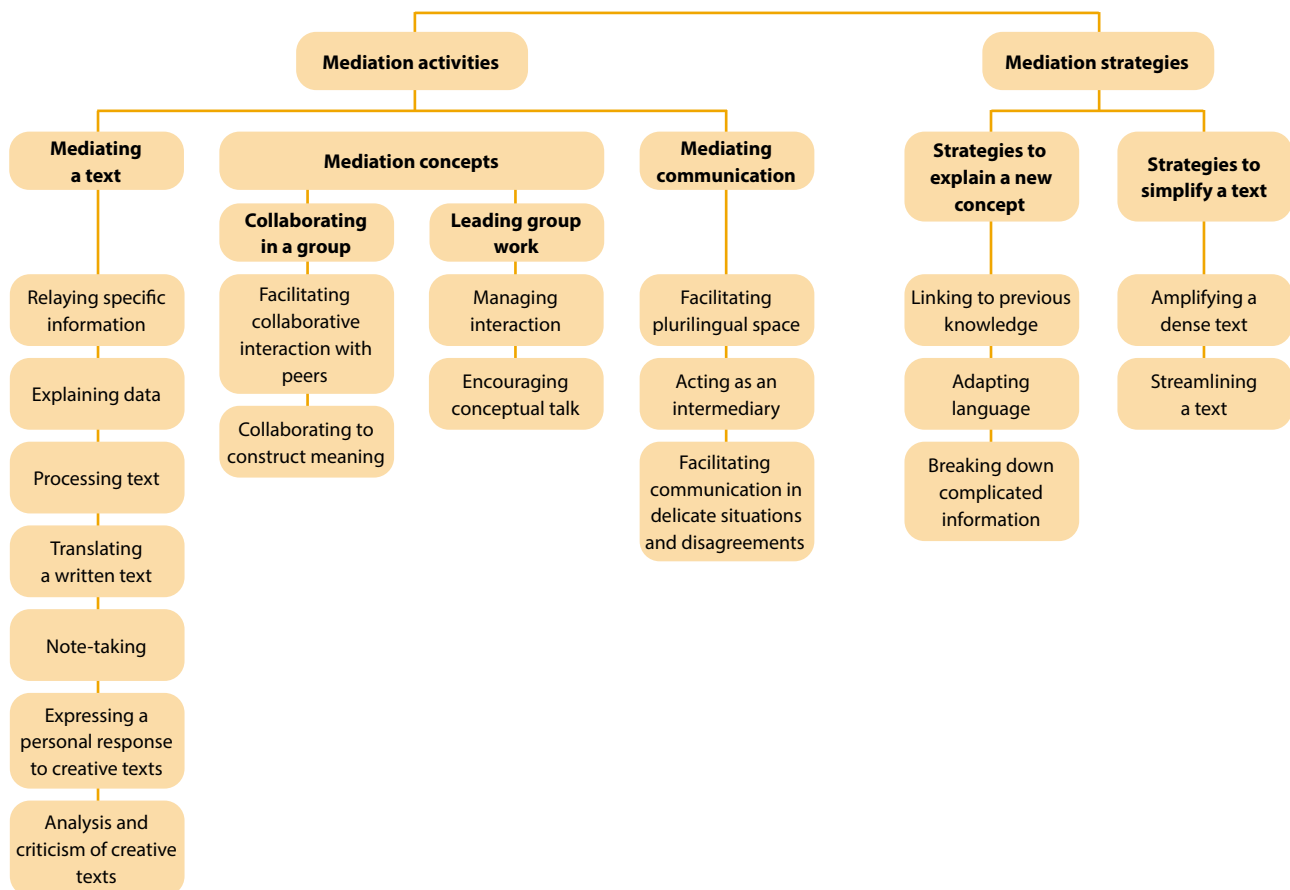
*In addition, teachers are provided with guidelines on how to find the right scale from the CEFR-CV to match their teaching aims.*

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

The CEFR-CV (2020) adds to, 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 below: a) *Mediating a text* b) *Mediating concepts* and c) *Mediating communication*. In Chapter 1 (Section 1.4) we discussed the contents 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 mediation descriptors, below is an example of a scale taken from the CEFR-CV (Council of Europe, 2020: 99-100) with descriptors relating to 'Processing text in speech or sign'. Two descriptors at the levels C2 and B2 are included.

Scale under 'Mediating a text'

PROCESSING TEXT IN SPEECH OR SIGN	
<b>C2.</b>	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).
<b>B2.</b>	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'

**Table 2:** An example of a scale from the 'Mediating a text' category

Each METLA task provides information about the specific scales and descriptors which the 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 in the 'Mediation strategies' category, 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 (Greek) and all refer to topics relevant to the Greek summer (holidays, dangers from the sun or fires).

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

- RELAYING SPECIFIC INFORMATION IN WRITING  
*Can relay in writing (in Language B) the relevant point(s) contained in propositionally complex but well-structured texts (written Language 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 a within his/her field of interest.*

**CEFR-CV scales for mediation strategies:**

- ADAPTING LANGUAGE:  
*Can make accessible for others the main contents of a spoken or written text on a subject of interest (e.g. an essay, a forum discussion, a presentation) by presenting it 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' scales and descriptors which are relevant to the specific task

'Mediation strategies' scales and descriptors



'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 here. However, the learner needs to be able to use the appropriate mediation strategies in order to complete the task successfully. "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 the '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 very relevant 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 begin with an overview of scales under the headings 'Mediating a text', 'Strategies to explain a new concept' and 'Strategies to simplify a text' (Tables 3 and 4). This overview will help teachers understand the main differences between the scales and choose those that are most appropriate when designing mediation activities.

<b>MEDIATING A TEXT</b>		
<b>MEDIATION ACTIVITIES SCALES</b>		<b>EXPLANATION</b>
1.	<b>Relaying specific information in speech or sign</b>	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.	<b>Relaying specific information in writing</b>	The extraction of some information from a source text, which is used by the mediator to produce another (written) text. Again, the emphasis is on the specific details of the original text which are relevant.
3.	<b>Explaining data in speech or sign</b>	The use and transformation of information presented in diagrams, charts, figures, and other images in an oral text.

4.	<b>Explaining data in writing (e.g. in graphs, diagrams, charts, etc.)</b>	The use and transformation of information presented in diagrams, charts, figures, and other images in a written text.
5.	<b>Processing text in speech or sign</b>	Involves understanding the information included in a source text and then transferring relevant information orally (in another language) in a more condensed form, in a way that is appropriate to the context of situation.
6.	<b>Processing text in writing</b>	The reformulation of the original text focusing on the main points and ideas leading to the writing of a target text in a summarised form.
7.	<b>Translating a written text in speech or sign</b>	The process of spontaneously giving an oral translation of a written text.
8.	<b>Translating a written text in writing</b>	The process of giving a written translation of a written text.
9.	<b>Note-taking (lectures, seminars, meetings, etc.)</b>	The ability to write coherent notes, which is a valuable skill both in academic and professional life.
10.	<b>Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature)</b>	Expressing 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.	<b>Analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature)</b>	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 3:** CEFR-CV scales for 'Mediating a text'

STRATEGIES TO EXPLAIN A NEW CONCEPT		
MEDIATION STRATEGIES SCALES		EXPLANATION
1.	<b>Linking to previous knowledge</b>	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.	<b>Adapting language</b>	Paraphrasing in order to incorporate the content of a text in a new text of a different genre and register. Inclusion of synonyms, similes, or simplification.
3.	<b>Breaking down complicated information</b>	Breaking down complicated information into constituent parts and showing how these parts fit together to give the whole picture.

STRATEGIES TO SIMPLIFY A TEXT		
MEDIATION STRATEGIES SCALES		EXPLANATION
4.	<b>Amplifying a dense text</b>	Expanding source input by including additional information, examples, details, background information, explanations, and comments.
5.	<b>Streamlining a text</b>	Excluding irrelevant information; Eliminating repetition; Regrouping the source ideas in order to highlight important points, to draw conclusions or to compare and contrast them.

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

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 designing specific activities with this goal in mind. An example of such a B1 level descriptor is:

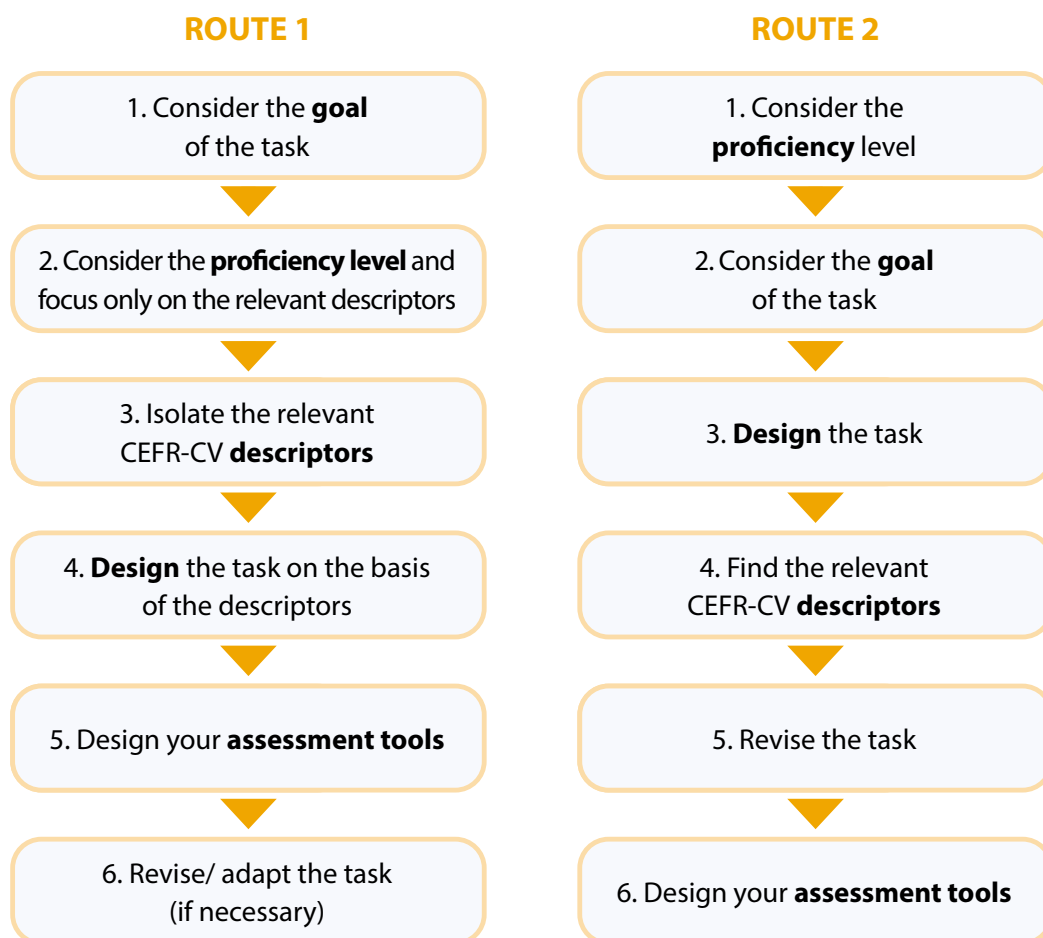
*'Can summarise in writing (in Language B) the main points made in straightforward, informational texts (in Language A) on subjects that are of personal or current interest, provided oral texts are clearly articulated.'*

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

- choose a topic of immediate interest to the learners;
- 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 is 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 in figure 8 below 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 task.



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

While in the first route, the goal of the task along with the learners' CEFR language proficiency level guide the process of finding the most relevant descriptors. In the second route the teacher already has an idea of a specific task and may want to link or align the task with the descriptors, on the basis of which the objectives initially set may be revised. The descriptors that will be used will ultimately reflect the overall objectives of the task. After completing the task, the teacher can make adaptations to the initial version. At this stage, the use of data taken from a learner-oriented checklist and teacher-oriented checklist (see Chapter 4) will help the teacher redesign the task 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 learners **(Step 2)**. The teacher 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, the teacher 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 learners, the teacher 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 learners to fill in a reflection form, like the one presented in Table 6 (Chapter 7) **(Step 5)**. The form asks learners 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 them, and in what areas; and d) what 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 easy. For this reason, the METLA team has provided a **table** with examples of METLA tasks aligned with CEFR-CV descriptors (see Table 5 below). For teachers to be aware of the rationale behind METLA activities and to be able to create similar ones for their own purposes, it is important that they understand the way the team has linked the activities to the CEFR-CV scales and descriptors. The first column provides the scales, while the second column indicates the proficiency level as well as the descriptors in the selected scale. The third column contains selected steps from METLA tasks which relate to the specific descriptors.

CEFR-CV mediation scales	CEFR language proficiency level and descriptors	Selected steps extracted from METLA tasktasks
<p><b><u>Explaining data in speech and writing</u></b> Learners will: list/relay/ interpret/ describe information from graphs, bar charts, flowcharts, etc.</p>	<p><b><u>Explaining data in speech</u></b> <i>A2+ Level:</i> 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.</p>	<p><b><u>Task 6 Face masks</u></b> 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).</p>
<p><b><u>Processing text in speech and writing</u></b> Learners will: summarise/ synthesise/ report information</p>	<p><b><u>Processing text in speech</u></b> <i>C1 Level:</i> Can explain (in Language A) subtle distinctions in the presentation of facts and arguments (in Language B).</p>	<p><b><u>Task 27 Literature</u></b> The activity is based on the literary work “Une année chez les Français”, by Fouad Laroui (2010). This task aims at developing the 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.</p>
	<p><b><u>Processing text in speech</u></b> <i>B2 Level:</i> 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.</p>	<p><b><u>Task 24 First-aid telephone</u></b> This is a project activity that focuses on life skills, and specifically on how to give first-aid instructions. Learners read a text in Language A about fainting, and they then role-play a phone-call scenario in pairs (learner and 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.</p>

	<p><b>Processing text in writing</b>  <i>A2 Level:</i> 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.</p>	<p><b>Task 4 Lost dog Activity</b>  Learners read a message in Language A written by someone who has lost their dog and asks a friend to spread the news by making a 'Lost dog' flyer and via an Instagram post. They work in pairs and create their own flyer and Instagram post in Language B by processing the information offered in the original 'Lost dog' message.</p>
	<p><b>Processing text in writing</b>  <i>B1 Level:</i> Can summarise in writing the main points made in straightforward information written texts on subjects that are of personal or current interest.</p>	<p><b>Task 7 Film-Making Competition</b>  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 a group on WhatsApp to inform their friends about this competition in Language B.</p>
<p><b>Relaying specific information in speech and writing</b>  Learners will: list/relay/explain specific relevant information</p>	<p><b>Relaying specific information in writing</b>  <i>A2 Level:</i> Can list (in Language B) specific information contained in simple texts (written in Language A) on everyday subjects of immediate interest or need.</p>	<p><b>Task 1 Grocery list activity</b>  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 search for information in Language A, and then make a drawing as part of their homework and list all the ingredients of the dish in Language B.</p>
	<p><b>Relaying specific information in writing</b>  <i>B1 Level:</i> 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).</p>	<p><b>Task 8 Airport activity</b>  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 text in Language A regarding airport transportation. Then they write informal short messages as part of written communication in Language B with an exchange student. This output is later used to write a formal e-mail to the student's parents.</p>
	<p><b>Relaying specific information in speech</b>  <i>B1 Level:</i> 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).</p>	<p><b>Task 11 Maths family connect</b>  This is a role-play activity. Learners are presented with a poster, "Maths Family Connect" in Language A. They explain orally selected content from the poster to their grandma (a classmate plays the role of grandma) in Language B.</p>

<p><b><u>Translating a written text in speech and writing</u></b> Learners will: produce clear to rough translations</p>	<p><b><u>Translating a written text in writing</u></b> <i>B1 Level:</i> 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.</p>	<p><b><u>Task 13 WhatsApp activity</u></b> 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 can 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.</p>
<p><b><u>Note-taking (lectures, seminars, meetings)</u></b> Learners will: understand and then take notes during various occasions</p>	<p><i>B2 Level:</i> Can make accurate notes in meetings and seminars on most matters likely to arise within his/her field of interest.</p>	<p><b><u>Task 10 Learners' housing problems</u></b> Learners are asked to watch a video in English on how to make a flyer and then take notes (in any language) on the main ideas which they will need for the following task, which involves the production of a promotional flyer.</p> <p><b><u>Task 15 A Londoner in Greece!</u></b> Learners are asked to read a text in Greek (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 links note-taking mainly 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 <a href="#">Task 15</a>, is equally important.</p>

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



## 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’

The ‘Facilitating pluricultural space’ descriptors focus on 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 concerned with the linguistic integration of learners 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. In the given scenario, the learner assumes the role of the intercultural mediator and helps the visitor from Mexico by looking for information which will be helpful during their stay.

## EXAMPLE FROM TASK 14

### 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'

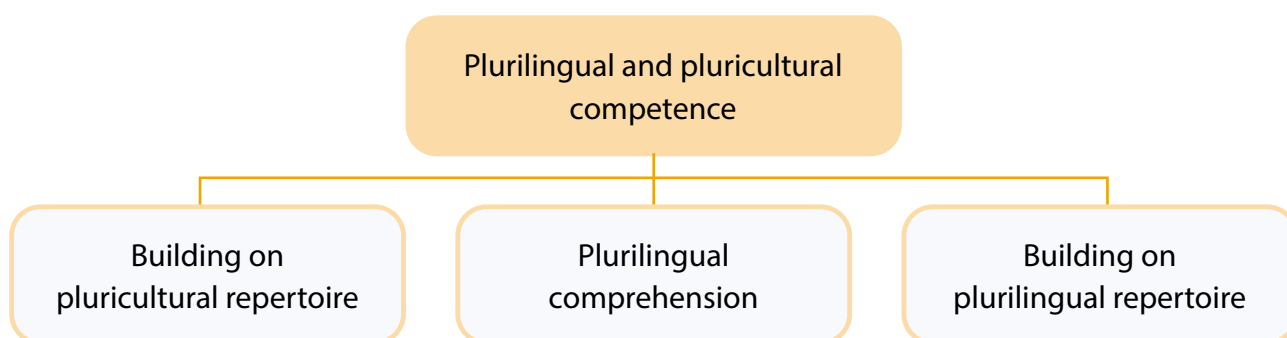
Learners in school settings are frequently called upon to act as linguistic and cultural mediators. Teachers may want to exploit descriptors from the scale 'Acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues)' when creating materials which help learners to renegotiate cultural 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 in 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 concern, for example:

- “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 their learners’ intercultural competence through cross-linguistic mediation tasks that do not focus only on linguistic aspects but also on cultural matters.

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 offers guidance on assessing cross-linguistic mediation and constructing assessment tasks focusing on mediation.

The need for assessing cross-linguistic mediation is relevant to the needs of any modern plurilingual society. Incorporating pluralistic approaches in language teaching naturally also requires changes in assessment practices (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 created to assess learners' ability to move between languages and relay information from one text into another. The tools need to be based on the new CEFR-CV scales, and take into account the specific cultural and linguistic needs of the local teaching context, i.e. the languages used in the context, the needs and interests of learners, etc. In a classroom environment, assessment informs both teacher and learners of the next 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 learners (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.

**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)

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, involves assessment of how much learning has taken place –

that is, how much the learner 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 focuses primarily on formative assessment (discussed in 7.2). However, later in the 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 to support the learning process. We then discuss forms of evaluation which provide ongoing information on how learners are progressing. Together, these assessment activities enable teachers and learners to interact in the teaching and learning process (Barootchi and Keshvarz, 2002) during collaborative work among learners and/or between learners and teachers. Some commonly used types of formative assessment for learner self-assessment or peer-assessment among learners are:

- **portfolios:** collection of learners' work (mainly written but a portfolio could also include drawings, videos, etc.). They demonstrate the evolution of learners' work;
- **diaries/journals/logs:** learners are encouraged to make daily entries in a diary or journal about their progress; teachers may or may not add their comments to the diary;
- **feedback:** teachers provide structured feedback to learners on their strengths and weaknesses in written or oral work; feedback may also be provided by the learner's peers;
- **conferences:** a peer conference involves a group of learners meeting together to assess the written work of group members (Roberts and Kellough, 1996);
- **self-assessment or reflection sheets:** often given to learners 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 learners' own knowledge or skills.

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

### Self-assessment or reflection tasks

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

- track their learning progress;
- identify strengths and weaknesses;
- reflect on the strategies they used to carry out the mediation task;
- act on feedback to improve their 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 task and can be designed to reflect on the mediation skills developed during the task. A large number of METLA tasks (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 learners have worked on (informal text messages and formal e-mails). Learners are asked to reflect on them and compare their characteristics. In addition, a template 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.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 8

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

## REFLECTION

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 learners 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. Learners then present their work to a small group of other learners. Below is the reflection activity provided at the end of the task, which includes questions about the strategies learners 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.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 22

D
PRESENTATION

GROUP:
TITLE:

**How strategic are you?**

Use these questions as a useful guide for your poster. These questions could help you provide an informative poster and presentation

Have you used strategies to explain a new concept such as first-aid instructions? For example, did you:

- link information to previous knowledge: use questions to remind students about concepts they already know e.g. from other courses?
- make comparisons between new information and things you already know?
- provide examples and definitions?
- adapted the language of your text based on your audience? How? (e.g. paraphrase, explain new terms etc.)

Provide some examples from your poster:

Have you used strategies to break down complicated information? How?  
(explain a process step-by-step, use bullet points, highlight the main points etc.)

Provide some examples from your poster:

Have you used strategies to simplify a text? For example, did you:


- use repetition or skipped information you didn't need e.g. paraphrase in different ways?
- change the style to explain things in more detail?

Provide some examples from your poster:

In the final activity on the first-aid poster, learners use a handout to reflect on the information presented on their poster.

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

## EXAMPLE FROM TASK 18



### EMAILS

Self-assessment email list

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

Handout E

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).

## EXAMPLE FROM TASK 29

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.					
Consegui relacionar os meus conhecimentos de português e de inglês.					
Consegui compreender as informações do texto escrito em português.					
Consegui compreender as informações do vídeo em português.					
Consegui escrever a mensagem 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 task

The mediation strategies used 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).

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

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.

**Table 6:** Extract from the METLA reflection grid for the learner

## Peer assessment or peer feedback

Peer assessment is the assessment by learners of someone else's work on the basis of given criteria. Learners can be taught how to provide feedback to their classmates. Well-designed peer assessment tools can activate reflection, negotiation and collaboration strategies. Learners learn to identify potential areas of improvement and identify blind spots of their own performance. In Task 18, learners 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, learners evaluate their own work (self-assessment) and are evaluated by others (peer-assessment). This comparison between their own viewpoint and their classmates' feedback can give them an insight into how others perceive their work and also provides opportunities to explain their choices.

### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 18

<b>Step 7</b>	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	
<b>Step 8</b>	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 forum/ <a href="#">Padlet</a> / <a href="#">Flinga</a> anonymously and ask the students to grade and provide a justification (what worked well/things the writer could develop) and post their answer under the email examples.

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

[Task 15](#) also provides learners with an opportunity to assess their peers' presentation on a poster they have previously created.

## EXAMPLE FROM TASK 22

**C** PRESENTATION  
PEER-FEEDBACK LIST:

GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENTERS: \_\_\_\_\_

I liked the design of the poster.

I could follow the presentation.

The presenters spoke mainly in English.

Both the symptoms and the treatment were included.

The presenters explained some difficult words.

Three new words I have learnt:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

<b>EVALUATION</b> 5 - Highest 3 - Average 1 - Lowest	<b>NAME THREE NEW WORDS YOU HAVE LEARNT</b>
<b>OVERALL GRADE:</b>	

Learners assess the content and the format of the poster, reflect on the languages used, and specify what they learnt.

## Portfolios

Barootchi and Keshvarz (2002: 280-281) define a 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”. Learners collect pieces of their work and organise them 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 regard to mediation, learners can present materials categorised according to the different text types they have dealt with and/or the different purposes of 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 across a series of mediation tasks rather than at a particular time on a particular day;
- increase learners’ 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 learners' work exemplifying their performance in cross-linguistic mediation tasks. The second step involves reflecting on the collected work (Mokhtaria, 2015). Learners think about whether and how the pieces of work made them more successful mediators. Learners then evaluate the quality of their 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 learners to discuss and monitor their progress. The learners can then present their portfolios and refer to the criteria used for the evaluation of their work. In addition, learners might want to exchange their portfolios and receive comments from their peers. Portfolio assessment can be done in the target foreign language or in any language brought into the classroom, thus adopting a pluralistic approach to the teaching of languages. Last but not least, teachers should bear in mind that they can exploit technology and involve learners in making e-portfolios, 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, learners can reflect on their work, evaluate their performance, or write down important information. The nature of a learning journal provides the learners 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 learners compare two genres, i.e. flyers and social media posts, both containing information about a missing dog:

#### EXAMPLE FROM TASK 4

1. How often do you see a flyer nowadays? Why do you think this is the case?
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 task or as a small homework activity that could be discussed during the next lesson. Drawing upon work by Genese and Upshur (1996), here are some statements to help learners when focusing on mediation in their learning logs:

- 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 learners. The teacher can adapt these ideas by changing or adding more statements according to the teaching context and the type of the mediation task.

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: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## 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, activities and categories as 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 being 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 learners' linguistic and cultural backgrounds into account and assess mediation by designing appropriate test activities which would work for their specific groups 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 purpose of the test, 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 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 to be used when grading a test, we propose the following set of criteria 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 given 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?** (or instance, the structure and organisation of a leaflet 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 with the source text, the teacher can easily spot the strategy of paraphrasing in the learners' texts 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 by adapting [Task 18](#), which was originally constructed for teaching purposes. The aim was to familiarise learners with different text types and to provide practice in the skills of comprehending texts in Language A and producing (both oral and written texts) in Language B. This 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 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
<b>LEARNERS</b>	
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 tourism information
Target texts	Learners transfer information from the two texts into Spanish (Language B)
Marking scheme and evaluation criteria	<p>Marking focusing on the degree to which the learner's oral production:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) is relevant in terms of content</li> <li>b) includes the appropriate information from the source text <i>(the learner has selected only the source information that serves his/her purpose thus distinguishing between major and minor information)</i></li> <li>c) is grammatically and syntactically accurate</li> <li>d) is fluent</li> </ul>
Score	<p>Grades: A, B or C</p> <p><i>(The teacher should provide a description of what each score means, taking into account the above criteria)</i></p>

# Conclusion

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

As has been pointed out throughout the Guide, cross-linguistic mediation legitimises the use of several languages in the classroom, including the learners' home languages. It offers the opportunity of providing tasks which require learners to accomplish communicative goals and shift between languages of reception (reading and listening) and of production (writing and speaking). In cross-linguistic mediation tasks, learners 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 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 learner and teacher 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 to find this resource very relevant to their work.

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