MEDIATION IN THE UPDATED COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES: BRIDGING LINGUISTIC GAPS

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What is mediation?

- Involves interplay of languages
- Involves a 'hybrid practice of *languaging*' (Garcia, 2011)
- is a form of **translanguaging**: Translanguaging makes it clear that there are no clear-cut boundaries between the languages employed (Stathopoulou, 2013, 2015)
- a **social activity**:
  - Its products cannot be seen in isolation from the situation in which they are produced.
When do we mediate?

- We mediate when there is need to make accessible information that a friend, a colleague, a family member, etc. does not grasp;
- it originates from the need to have something clarified, to interpret or reinterpret a message, to sum up what a text says for one or more persons, for an audience, for a group of readers, etc.
The CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) has constituted a step in the direction of promoting multilingualism, by stressing the necessity for language programmes to enhance the development of language users’ interlingual strategies and plurilingual competences (cf. Coste and Simon 2009).
Within this framework, the CEFR pioneered the introduction of mediation...

to indicate communicative language activities, which are not covered by reception and production
Reception
entails understanding language produced by others, whether in speech or in writing

Production
entails producing speech or writing

Interaction
refers to spoken or written exchanges between two or more individuals

Mediation
makes communication possible between individuals or groups who are unable to communicate directly
‘In both the receptive and productive modes, the written and/or oral activities of 
mediation make communication possible between persons who are unable, for whatever reason to 
communicate with each other directly.

Translation or interpretation, a paraphrase, summary or record, provides for a third party a (re)formulation of a source text to which this third party does not have direct access.

Mediation language activities, (re)processing an existing text, occupy an important place in the normal linguistic functioning of our societies.’

(CEFR Section 2.1.3: English p14, French p18)
In mediating activities, the language user is not concerned to express his/her own meanings, but simply to act as an intermediary between interlocutors who are unable to understand each other directly, normally (but not exclusively) speakers of different languages.

Examples of mediating activities include spoken interpretation and written translation as well as summarising and paraphrasing texts in the same language, when the language of the original text is not understandable to the intended recipient.
Mediation descriptors in CEFR (2001)?
From 2001 to 2018

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)

A transparent, coherent and comprehensive reference instrument

The result of over twenty years of research, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) is exactly what its title says it is: a framework of reference. It was designed to provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency. It is used in Europe but also in other continents.

The CEFR is available in 40 languages

New

The CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors (Provisional Edition) is now available. The French version will be published in late autumn.

It is intended as a complement to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR). It represents another important step in a process that has been pursued by the Council of Europe since 1971 and owes much to the contributions of members of the language teaching profession across Europe and beyond.

The “Companion Volume” is the Council of Europe’s response to requests that have been made by the groups involved in the field of language education to complement the original illustrative scales with more descriptors. In addition to the extended illustrative descriptors, it contains an introduction to the aims and main principles of the CEFR.

The CEFR online:
- Full 2001 English text
- Prefatory Note
- Notes for the User
- Synopsis
- CEFR 2017 Companion Volume
The *new* CEFR project (2013-2018)
The CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors

Just published on the Council of Europe’s website:

- It is the outcome of a project commissioned & coordinated by the Council of Europe from 2013 to 2017
- Final version published in 2018

Coordinator: Brian North
Authoring group: Enrica Piccardo, Tim Goodier, Maria Stathopoulou
## Summary of changes resulting from the project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is addressed in this publication</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-A1</td>
<td>Descriptors for this band of proficiency that is halfway to A1, mentioned at the beginning of CEFR Section 3.5, are provided for many scales, including for online interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to 2001 descriptors</td>
<td>A list of changes to existing 2001 descriptors appearing in CEFR Chapter 4 for communicative language activities &amp; strategies, and in CEFR Chapter 5 for aspects of communicative language is given in Appendix 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to C2 descriptors</td>
<td>Most of the changes proposed in the list in Appendix 7 concern C2 descriptors included in the 2001 set. Some instances of very absolute statements have been adjusted to better reflect the competence of C2 user/learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to A1-C1 descriptors</td>
<td>Very few changes are proposed to other descriptors. It was decided not to ‘update’ descriptors merely because of changes in technology (e.g. references to postcards or public telephones). The scale for Phonological control has been replaced (see below). Changes are also proposed to certain descriptors that refer to linguistic accommodation (or not) by ‘native speakers’, because this term has become controversial since the CEFR was published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus levels</td>
<td>The description for plus levels (=B1+; B1.2) has been strengthened. Please see Appendix 1 and CEFR Section 3.5 and 3.6 for discussion of the plus levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonology</td>
<td>The scale for Phonological control has been redeveloped, with a focus on Sound articulation and Prosodic features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>The approach taken to mediation is broader than that presented in the CEFR book. In addition to a focus on activities to mediate a text, scales are provided for mediating concepts and for mediating communication, giving a total of 19 scales for mediation activities. Mediation strategies (5 scales) are concerned with strategies employed during the mediation process, rather than in preparation for it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Summary of changes resulting from the project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pluricultural</td>
<td>The scale <em>Building on pluricultural repertoire</em> describes the use of pluricultural competences in a communicative situation. Thus, it is skills rather than knowledge or attitudes that are the focus. The scale shows a high degree of coherence with the existing CEFR scale Sociolinguistic appropriateness, although it was developed independently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plurilingual</td>
<td>The level of each descriptor in the scale <em>Building on plurilingual repertoire</em> is the functional level of the weaker language in the combination. Users may wish to indicate explicitly which languages are involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specification of languages involved</td>
<td>It is recommended that, as part of the adaptation of the descriptors for practical use in a particular context, the relevant languages should be specified in relation to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Cross-linguistic mediation (particularly scales for Mediating a text)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Plurilingual comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Building on plurilingual repertoire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>There are three new scales relevant to creative text and literature:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reading as a leisure activity (the purely receptive process; descriptors taken from other sets of CEFR-based descriptors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Expressing a personal response to creative texts (less intellectual, lower levels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Analysis and criticism of creative texts (more intellectual, higher levels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>There are two new scales for the following categories:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Online conversation and discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The new CEFR descriptors

- the new illustrative descriptors can be exploited for the development of appropriate pedagogies, language programmes, curricula and syllabi for refugees respecting the diverse linguistic resources
- becomes useful in bridging the linguistic gaps by proposing new descriptors related to:
  - the parallel use of languages
  - language users’ willingness to act as interlingual mediators and their capacity to purposefully blend, embed and alternate codes
The new CEFR project and aspects of importance for teaching and testing of mediation

Development and Validation
Phases

• **Intuitive phase**: collecting and reviewing relevant source material, drafting, editing and discussing descriptors through a series of meetings.

• **Qualitative phase**: workshops with teachers evaluating and judging descriptors, matching them to the category they were intended to describe, and proposing reformulations.

• **Quantitative phase**: calibration of the best descriptors on the basis of a Rasch model scaling analysis.
I. Intuitive phase

the vast majority of the mediation descriptors were inspired by reading relevant literature, rather than coming from existing scales from CEFR-related projects.
II. Qualitative Phase

• 137 workshops carried out at a distance, with the necessary materials being emailed to coordinators.
III. Quantitative Phase

• ask informants to match descriptors to levels, as is frequently in a standard-setting task with test items or in an assessment standardisation session with performance samples.

• 1,000 people took part in all validation phases
The development & validation of the scales for mediation is described in the report:

*Developing Illustrative Descriptors of Aspects of Mediation for the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (North and Piccardo, 2016)*

https://rm.coe.int/developing-illustrative-descriptors-of-aspects-of-mediation-for-the-co/1680713e2c
The new mediation descriptors

Whereas the original CEFR illustrative descriptors were clearly targeted at secondary school and adult learners of foreign languages, the new mediation descriptors have a broader application, particularly in relation to the teaching and learning of languages across the curriculum, including the language of schooling.

Expressions like *mother tongue, second language, source language, target language*, etc. are not used in the mediation descriptors.
The new CEFR project and aspects of importance for teaching and testing of mediation

Definitions
Defining mediation... (1)
(Coste and Cavali, 2015:12)

reducing the distance between two poles
Defining mediation... (2)
(CEFR Companion 2018: 103)

• “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).

• The focus is on the role of language in processes like creating the space and conditions for communicating and/or learning, collaborating to construct new meaning, encouraging others to construct or understand new meaning, and passing on new information in an appropriate form.

• The context can be social, pedagogic, cultural, linguistic or professional”
Defining mediation... (3)
(North and Piccardo, 2016: 9)

• Mediation concerns the facilitation of the communication itself and/or the (re)formulation of a text, the (re)construction of the meaning of a message.
Mediation and/ vs. Translation

Not only would it be reductionist to see mediation as solely interpretation and translation, but it would also be simplistic to limit it to one single dimension: that concerning the transfer of information from one language to another.

(North and Piccardo, 2016: 8)
The 4 types of mediation
North and Piccardo, 2016, p. 8:

- Linguistic
- Cultural
- Social
- Pedagogic
a. Linguistic mediation

- refers to (but is not restricted to) the **interlinguistic dimension**, particularly in the sense of transforming one kind of text into another.
- also includes the **intralinguistic dimension**, which could be in any language (e.g. summarise an L2 text in L2)
b. Cultural mediation

• A process of linguistic mediation that tries to facilitate understanding is also unavoidably a process of cultural mediation

• Passing from one language to another necessarily involves passing from one culture to another
c. Social mediation

- concerns a language user who plays the role of intermediary between different interlocutors
- tends to refer to the resolution of personal, commercial or international disputes
d. Pedagogic mediation

- Successful teaching is a form of mediation
- Teachers try to mediate knowledge, experiences
- Encompasses the following:
  - facilitating access to knowledge, encouraging other people to develop their thinking
  - collaboratively co-constructing meaning as a member of a group in a school, seminar, or workshop setting
The categorisation by Coste & Cavalli of cognitive mediation & relational mediation became instrumental in organising the categories for descriptor scales

• ‘[...] it may be postulated that the fundamental task of knowledge transmission and building and the appropriation of that which at first sight is perceived as otherness involves a series of operations that can be described as cognitive mediation. The management of interactions, relationships and even conflicts and, [...] , everything pertaining to a reduction of distances between individuals, facilitating encounters and cooperation and creating a climate conducive to understanding and to work falls within the scope of a form of mediation that can be described as relational mediation. [...] ’ (2015:28)
Cognitive mediation and vs Relational mediation

As the authors mention, the boundary between these two categories is fuzzy. They are frequently if not normally combined.
The *new* CEFR project and aspects of importance for teaching and testing of mediation

Scales
Mediating a text

- Relaying specific information – in speech and in writing
- Explaining data (e.g. in graphs, diagrams, charts etc.) – in speech and in writing
- Processing text – in speech and in writing
- Translating a written text – in speech and in writing
- Note-taking (lectures, seminars, meetings, etc.)
- Expressing a personal response to creative texts (including literature)
- Analysis and criticism of creative texts (including literature)

Mediating concepts

- Collaborating in a group
  - Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers
  - Collaborating to construct meaning
- Leading group work
  - Managing interaction
  - Encouraging conceptual talk

Mediating communication

- Facilitating pluricultural space
- Acting as intermediary in informal situations (with friends and colleagues)
- Facilitating communication in delicate situations and disagreements
The *new* CEFR project and aspects of importance for teaching and testing of mediation

Descriptors
OVERALL MEDIATION

C2
Can mediate effectively and naturally, taking on different roles according to the needs of the people and situation involved, identifying nuances and undercurrents and guiding a sensitive or delicate discussion. Can explain in clear, fluent, well-structured language the way facts and arguments are presented, conveying evaluative aspects and most nuances precisely, and pointing out sociocultural implications (e.g. use of register, understatement, irony and sarcasm).

C1
Can act effectively as a mediator, helping to maintain positive interaction by interpreting different perspectives, managing ambiguity, anticipating misunderstandings and intervening diplomatically in order to redirect talk. Can build on different contributions to a discussion, stimulating reasoning with a series of questions. Can convey clearly and fluently in well-structured language the significant ideas in long, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own fields of interest, including evaluative aspects and most nuances.

B2
Can work collaboratively with people from different backgrounds, creating a positive atmosphere by giving support, asking questions to identify common goals, comparing options for how to achieve them and explaining suggestions for what to do next. Can further develop other people’s ideas, pose questions that invite reactions from different perspectives and propose a solution or next steps. Can convey detailed information and arguments reliably, e.g. the significant point(s) contained in complex but well-structured texts within his/her fields of professional, academic and personal interest.

B1
Can collaborate with people from other backgrounds, showing interest and empathy by asking and answering simple questions, formulating and responding to suggestions, asking whether people agree, and proposing alternative approaches. Can convey the main points made in long texts expressed in uncomplicated language on topics of personal interest, provided that he/she can check the meaning of certain expressions.

A2
Can use simple words to ask someone to explain something. Can recognise when difficulties occur and indicate in simple language the apparent nature of a problem. Can convey the main point(s) involved in short, simple conversations or texts.
1. Mediating a text

- involves passing on to another person the content of a text to which they do not have access, often because of linguistic, cultural, semantic or technical barriers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td><em>No descriptors available; see B2</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td><em>No descriptors available; see B2</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Can relay in writing (in Language B) which presentations at a conference (given in Language A) were relevant, pointing out which would be worth detailed consideration. 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. Can relay in writing (in Language B) the relevant point(s) contained in an article (written in Language A) from an academic or professional journal. Can relay in a written report (in Language B) relevant decisions that were taken in a meeting (in Language A). Can relay in writing the significant point(s) contained in formal correspondence (in Language A).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>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). Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific, relevant information contained in straightforward informational texts (written in Language A) on familiar subjects. Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific information given in a straightforward recorded message (left in Language A), provided that the topics concerned are familiar and the delivery is slow and clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Can relay in writing (in Language B) specific information contained in short simple informational texts (written in Language A), provided the texts concern concrete, familiar subjects and are written in simple everyday language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Can list (in Language B) the main points of short, clear, simple messages and announcements (given in Language A) provided that speech is clearly and slowly articulated. Can list (in Language B) specific information contained in simple texts (written in Language A) on everyday subjects of immediate interest or need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-A1</td>
<td>Can list (in Language B) names, numbers, prices and very simple information of immediate interest (given in Language A), provided that the speaker articulates very slowly and clearly, with repetition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Can interpret and describe clearly and reliably (in Language B) various forms of empirical data and visually organised information (with text in Language A) from conceptually complex research concerning academic or professional topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Can interpret and describe clearly and reliably (in Language B) the salient points and details contained in complex diagrams and other visually organised information (with text in Language A) on complex academic or professional topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Can interpret and describe reliably (in Language B) detailed information contained in complex diagrams, charts and other visually organised information (with text in Language A) on topics in his/her fields of interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Can interpret and describe (in Language B) detailed information in diagrams in his/her fields of interest (with text in Language A), even though lexical gaps may cause hesitation or imprecise formulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Can interpret and describe (in Language B) overall trends shown in simple diagrams (e.g. graphs, bar charts) (with text in Language A), even though lexical limitations cause difficulty with formulation at times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-A1</td>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
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</table>
### PROCESSING TEXT IN WRITING

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td>Can summarise in writing (in Language B) the main points made in straightforward informational spoken and written texts (in Language A) on subjects that are of personal or current interest, provided spoken texts are delivered in clearly articulated standard speech. Can paraphrase short written passages in a simple fashion, using the original text wording and order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2</strong></td>
<td>Can summarise in writing (in Language B) the main content of complex spoken and written texts (in Language A) on subjects related to his/her fields of interest and specialisation. Can explain in writing (in Language B) the viewpoint articulated in a complex text (in Language A), supporting inferences he/she makes with reference to specific information in the original. Can compare, contrast and synthesise in writing (in Language B) the information and viewpoints contained in academic and professional publications (in Language A) in his/her fields of special interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1</strong></td>
<td>Can summarise in writing (in Language B) long, complex texts (written in Language A), interpreting the content appropriately, provided that he/she can occasionally check the precise meaning of unusual, technical terms. Can summarise in writing a long and complex text (in Language A) (e.g. academic or political analysis article, novel extract, editorial, literary review, report, or extract from a scientific book) for a specific audience, respecting the style and register of the original.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2</strong></td>
<td>Can explain in writing (in Language B) the way facts and arguments are presented in a text (in Language A), particularly when someone else’s position is being reported, drawing attention to the writer’s use of understatement, veiled criticism, irony, and sarcasm. Can summarise information from different sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation of the overall result.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Mediating concepts

- refers to the process of facilitating access to knowledge and concepts for others, particularly if they may be unable to access this directly on their own.
- This is a fundamental aspect of parenting, mentoring, teaching and training.
- involves two aspects:
  a) constructing and elaborating meaning
  b) facilitating and stimulating conditions that are conducive to conceptual exchange and development.
3. Mediating communication

• The aim is to facilitate understanding and to shape successful communication between users/learners who may have individual, sociocultural, sociolinguistic or intellectual differences in standpoint.

• The skills involved are relevant to diplomacy, negotiation, pedagogy and dispute resolution, but also to everyday social and/or workplace interactions.

• is primarily concerned with personal encounters, and so descriptor scales are only provided for spoken communicative activities.
The *new* CEFR project and aspects of importance for teaching in multicultural contexts

Exploiting pluricultural and plurilingual repertoires
In the development of the particular descriptors, the following points were given attention:

► languages are interrelated and interconnected especially at the level of the individual
► languages and cultures are not kept in separated mental compartments;
► mastery of different languages is not the goal, but rather the ability (and willingness) to modulate their usage according to the social and communicative situation;
► barriers between languages can be overcome in communication and different languages can be used purposefully for conveying messages in the same situation.
## PLURILINGUAL COMPREHENSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **B1** | Can use what he/she has understood in *one language* to understand the topic and main message of a text in *another language* (e.g. when reading short newspaper articles on the same theme written in different languages).  
Can use parallel translations of texts (e.g. magazine articles, stories, passages from novels) to develop comprehension in *different languages*.  
Can deduce the message of a text by exploiting what he/she has understood from texts on the same theme written in *different languages* (e.g. news in brief, museum brochure, online reviews).  
Can extract information from documents written in *different languages* in his/her field, e.g. to include in a presentation.  
Can recognise similarities and contrasts between the way concepts are expressed in *different languages*, in order to distinguish between identical uses of the same word root and ‘false friends’.  
Can use his/her knowledge of contrasting grammatical structures and functional expressions of *languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* in order to support comprehension. |
| **A2** | Can understand short, clearly articulated spoken announcements by piecing together what he/she understands from the available versions in *different languages*.  
Can understand short, clearly written messages and instructions by piecing together what he/she understands from the versions in *different languages*.  
Can use simple warnings, instructions and product information given in parallel in *different languages* to find relevant information. |
| **A1** | Can recognise internationalisms and words common to *different languages* (e.g. Haus/hus/house) to:  
deduce the meaning of simple signs and notices;  
identify the probable message of a short, simple, written text;  
follow in outline short, simple social exchanges conducted very slowly and clearly in his/her presence;  
deduce what people are trying to say directly to him/her, provided they speak very slowly and clearly, with repetition if necessary. |
| **Pre-A1** | *No descriptors available* |
BUILDING ON PLURILINGUAL REPERTOIRE

Can alternate between languages flexibly to facilitate communication in a multilingual context, summarising and glossing in *different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* contributions to the discussion and texts referred to.

Can participate effectively in a conversation in two or more *languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire*, adjusting to the changes of language and catering to the needs and linguistic skills of the interlocutors.

Can use and explain specialised terminology from another *languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* more familiar to the interlocutor(s), in order to improve understanding in a discussion of abstract and specialised topics.

Can respond spontaneously and flexibly in the appropriate language when someone else changes to another *language in his/her plurilingual repertoire*.

Can support comprehension and discussion of a text spoken or written in *one language* by explaining, summarising, clarifying and expanding it in *(an) other language(s)* in *his/her plurilingual repertoire*.

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**C1**

**Can recognise the extent to which it is appropriate to make flexible use of *different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* in a specific situation, in order to increase the efficiency of communication.**

**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.**

**Can introduce into an utterance an expression from *another language in his/her plurilingual repertoire* that is particularly apt for the situation/concept being discussed, explaining it for the interlocutor when necessary.**

Can alternate between *languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* in order to communicate specialised information and issues on a subject in his field of interest to different interlocutors.

Can make use of *different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* during collaborative interaction, in order to clarify the nature of a task, the main steps, the decisions to be taken, the outcomes expected.

Can make use of different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire to encourage other people to use the language in which they feel more comfortable.

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**B2**

Can exploit creatively his limited repertoire in *different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* for everyday contexts, in order to cope with an unexpected situation.

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**B1**

Can mobilise his/her limited repertoire in *different languages* in order to explain a problem or to ask for help or clarification.

Can use words and phrases from *different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire* to conduct a simple, practical transaction or information exchange.

Can use a word from *another language in his/her plurilingual repertoire* to make him/herself understood in a routine everyday situation, when he/she cannot think of an adequate expression in the language being spoken.
The new CEFR project and aspects of importance for teaching in multicultural contexts

Mediation strategies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels (C1, C2, B2, B1, A2, A1, Pre-A1)</th>
<th>Linking to Previous Knowledge</th>
<th>Adapting Language</th>
<th>Breaking Down Complicated Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2</strong></td>
<td>Can introduce complex concepts (e.g. scientific notions) by providing extended definitions and explanations which draw upon assumed previous knowledge.</td>
<td>Can adapt the language of a very wide range of texts in order to present the main content in a register and degree of sophistication and detail appropriate to the audience concerned.</td>
<td>Can facilitate understanding of a complex issue by explaining the relationship of parts to the whole and encourage different ways of approaching it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1</strong></td>
<td>Can spontaneously pose a series of questions to encourage people to think about their prior knowledge of an abstract issue and to help them establish a link to what is going to be explained.</td>
<td>Can explain technical terminology and difficult concepts when communicating with non-experts about matters within his/her field of specialisation. Can adapt his/her language (e.g. syntax, idiomaticity, jargon) in order to make a complex specialist topic accessible to recipients who are not familiar with it. Can paraphrase and interpret complex, technical texts, using suitably non-technical language for a listener who does not have specialist knowledge.</td>
<td>Can facilitate understanding of a complex issue by highlighting and categorising the main points, presenting them in a logically connected pattern and reinforcing the message by repeating the key aspects in different ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2</strong></td>
<td>Can clearly explain the connections between the goals of the session and the personal or professional interests and experiences of the participant(s).</td>
<td>Can explain technical topics within his/her field, using suitably non-technical language for a listener who does not have specialist knowledge. Can make a specific, complex piece of information in his/her field clearer and more explicit for others by paraphrasing it in simpler language.</td>
<td>Can make a complicated issue easier to understand by presenting the components of the argument separately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td>Can formulate questions and give feedback to encourage people to make connections to previous knowledge and experiences. Can explain a new concept or procedure by comparing and contrasting it to one that people are already familiar with.</td>
<td>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 paraphrasing in simpler language.</td>
<td>Can make a complicated process easier to understand by breaking it down into a series of smaller steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong></td>
<td>Can explain how something works by providing examples which draw upon people’s everyday experiences.</td>
<td>Can paraphrase more simply the main points made in short, straightforward spoken or written texts on familiar subjects (e.g. short magazine articles, interviews) to make the contents accessible for others.</td>
<td>Can make a short instructional or informational text easier to understand by presenting it as a list of separate points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1</strong></td>
<td>Can show how new information is related to what people are familiar with by asking simple questions.</td>
<td>Can paraphrase short written passages in a simple fashion, using the original order of the text.</td>
<td>Can make a set of instructions easier to understand by saying them slowly, a few words at a time, employing verbal and non-verbal emphasis to facilitate understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-A1</strong></td>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
<td>Can repeat the main point of a simple message on an everyday subject, using different words to help someone else understand it.</td>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[www.coe.int]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMPLIFYING A DENSE TEXT</th>
<th>STREAMLINING A TEXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can elucidate the information given in texts on complex academic or professional topics by elaborating and exemplifying.</td>
<td>Can redraft a complex source text, improving coherence, cohesion and the flow of an argument, whilst removing sections unnecessary for its purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can make complex, challenging content more accessible by explaining difficult aspects more explicitly and adding helpful detail.</td>
<td>Can reorganise a complex source text in order to focus on the points of most relevance to target audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can make the main points contained in a complex text more accessible to the target audience by adding redundancy, explaining and modifying style and register.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>B2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can make the content of a text on a subject in his/her fields of interest more accessible to a target audience by adding examples, reasoning and explanatory comments.</td>
<td>Can simplify a source text by excluding non-relevant or repetitive information and taking into consideration the intended audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Can edit a source text by deleting the parts that do not add new information that is relevant for a given audience in order to make the significant content more accessible for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can make new information more accessible by using repetition and adding illustrations.</td>
<td>Can identify related or repeated information in different parts of a text and merge it in order to make the essential message clearer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can make an aspect of an everyday topic clearer and more explicit by conveying the main information in another way.</td>
<td>Can identify and mark (e.g. underline, highlight etc.) the essential information in a straightforward, informational text, in order to pass this information on to someone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can make an aspect of an everyday topic clearer by providing simple examples.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
<td>Can identify and mark (e.g. underline, highlight etc.) the key sentences in a short, everyday text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-A1</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No descriptors available</td>
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</table>
The *new* CEFR project and aspects of importance for teaching in multicultural contexts

More about mediation strategies...
...back in time....
Research project (2009-2013)

Motivation

Despite the fact that the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) has put mediation forward as an important aspect of language users’ proficiency, it provides no illustrative descriptors (Stathopoulos, 2013)
Research project (2009-2013)

- **Context of the research**: The Greek national foreign language examinations leading to the state certificate of language proficiency (KPG)
- **Aim**: To investigate *what mediation is* by identifying successful mediation strategies in *scripts* produced by users of English when performing KPG written mediation *tasks*
- **Outcome**: *Inventory of Written Mediation Strategies* empirically developed through mediation script analysis (a corpus of 54,000 words)
The Inventory has been presented in the book:
What the UPDATED CEFR suggests...

- identify **bridges** between school subjects, and pace learning to ensure such coherence;
- highlight language components shared by the various subjects learned;
- promote awareness of possible **transfers**;
- link **knowledge and skills** for the purpose of developing intercultural competence.
- make plurilingual and intercultural education an explicit general aim
- **Mediation** should be defined as an operation aimed at reducing the distance between two **poles of otherness.**
What the (new) CEFR suggests about plurilingualism and plurilingual education

- language education must be considered **holistically**, overcoming the separation between first, second, foreign languages
- curriculum design and pedagogy must reflect and be determined by the **holistic vision** of a language education
- promotion of plurilingualism and diversity is axiomatic in all planning
- language education is tied to values and in particular education for **democratic citizenship**
Integrating mediation: a localised example of a testing battery

KPG exams
Mediation in the Greek national foreign language exams (KPG): an innovation

http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/kpg
Mediation in the KPG exams (1)

In 2003, mediation is introduced as a basic component of the National Foreign Language Exams (KPG) exams in Greece: 

افظ oral and written mediation test tasks were included
Mediation in the KPG exams (2)

• Candidates are expected to have the necessary competences & skills to:
  - Understand written texts in Greek
  - Selectively extract information
  - Use it to produce messages in the target language
Imagine that you work for the Greek Tourist Organization. Your department has received a request from the tourist organization of another country for information about the very successful ‘Blue Flag’ programme. You have been asked to write a report (180-200 words) explaining how Greece has managed to achieve Blue Flag status for many of its beaches. Use information from the website below to write your report.
Rethinking education through a multilingual lens

On the basis of the new descriptors:

1. **implementation of programmes** which will include mediation activities as a means for engaging students in ‘language’ practices which involve interplay of languages.

2. Development of **multilingual literacy** and a **multilingual ethos of communication** through the introduction of mediation in the classroom.

3. **Training the teachers** to know how to build on the reality of **multi-semilingualisms**, how to achieve learners’ **multilingual literacy**, how not to see linguistic diversity as a problem but as an asset.
Dr Maria Stathopoulou
mastathop@enl.uoa.gr