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# Mediation in Language Learning and Teaching

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Dear Language Teachers, Lecturers, Instructors, Educationalists and Examiners,

Has the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting move to online teaching caused you to look for new methods of teaching? Have you had to redefine your role as a teacher, and have you started to look at the process of teaching and learning in a new way in order to achieve this? If so, we are here for you.

We would like to introduce to you the project MiLLaT – Mediation in Language Learning and Teaching – which commenced in November 2019 at the Centre for Foreign Language Teaching, University of Warsaw, as part of Erasmus+, Action 2. There are four universities participating; The University of Helsinki (Finland), the Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania), Charles University (the Czech Republic) and the University of Warsaw (Poland) as the project's coordinator. You can find information about the higher education institutions that are taking part in the MiLLaT project [here](#).

The aim of our project is to promote MEDIATION in the field of foreign language teaching for academic purposes. Nowadays, the student of a foreign language is perceived as a social agent rather than a mere learner. Moreover, the fundamental documents for framing European curricula such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2018) emphasises also the non-linguistic elements related to the learning and use of a foreign language, such as mediation or pluricultural competence. However, although mediation is an inseparable part of communication, language teachers may find it difficult to include it, or better put, reveal it in their teaching strategies. If you want to learn more about mediation, how it relates to language learning and teaching and how it manifests in a particular teaching and learning situation – visit our [website](#).

## What has happened so far?

Kick-off meeting, 28 November 2019.

We had a chance to get to know each other during the kick-off meeting, which was devoted to deciding on the actual dates of transnational meetings, short-term staff training visits and multiplier events. We also established international teams responsible for working on the project outcomes and shared the tasks that will result in offering new pedagogical tools. You can read the report on our website [here](#).

Peer-Observation Form in the Area of Mediation.

The first outcome, the Peer-Observation Form in the Area of Mediation, has already been completed. It has been developed in accordance with the illustrative descriptors and

associated explanations in the new CEFR Companion Volume, where mediation is broken down into three main areas: Mediating Texts, Mediating Concepts and Mediating Communication. It would be helpful for both the observing teacher and the teacher being observed to refer to a corresponding set of Mediation Can Do statements given in CEFR CV while observing a lesson at a particular level. It may also give considerable support in identifying, describing and preparing tasks and activities within the mediation competences. You may read and download it [here](#).

Transnational Project Meeting, 13<sup>th</sup> March

This time the representatives of our teams met online. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, universities have closed and we have had to arrange all our teaching online. The meeting was devoted to rescheduling the project plan and reorganizing our teams work. Although the situation has changed significantly, we are still determined to fulfill our objectives. Never before have we had so many opportunities to use online tools to cooperate!

### **What activities are in progress?**

Peer observations in online courses. April – May 2020.

In April and May we conducted peer observations on mediation tasks in online courses. The 37 observers visited 34 foreign language classes, led in English, French, Spanish and Russian. While working together, we had a chance to share good practices in teaching mediation in diverse educational higher educational systems. Presently, we are providing feedback on mediation tasks in online courses. The aim is to help the teacher, but also to refine the tasks so that they can later be included in our teacher guides. We hope to hold in-class observations planned in the project as soon as teaching has returned to normal.

We would like to regularly provide you with information about our activities and plans, and to share the outcomes of our work connected with MiLLaT with you.

We hope that the MiLLaT project will provide inspiration for your teaching.

Best wishes from

The MiLLaT TEAM