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The Many Faces of Multilingualism

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Contents

Part II: **Pedagogical Aspects of Multilingualism**

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Chapter 11
Interlingual Education in the Classroom: An Action Guide to Overcoming Communication Conflicts

Abstract: Society's linguistic and cultural diversity transfers, unavoidably, to schools. For this reason, teachers need to consider linguistic and cultural diversity as a learning tool, and children need to be trained to deal with interpersonal communication barriers that sometimes arise from linguistic and cultural diversity. This chapter addresses issues related to diversity in schools mainly from a communicative perspective, placing "interlingual" education (as correlated to "intercultural" education, vs. the use of multi- and pluri- terms) at the forefront of these issues. The first sections (2–4) of this chapter present the importance of developing intercultural and (the newly-coined concept) "interlingual education" at school, based on European policies on education and immigration. Section 5 focuses on how communication conflicts at school can be dealt with through oral mediation. And section 6 attempts to provide school teachers with an action guide to minimize these conflicts. This action guide addresses three basic issues: First, some generic measures regarding backgrounds and families; second, clues to foster "interlingual education" through the inclusion of all the languages present in the class; and third, oral mediation strategies to overcome the communication conflicts that sometimes take place in a multicultural classroom due to the presence of two or more mother tongues and home cultures.

Keywords: interlingual education, communication conflicts, inclusive education

> Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
>
> (United Nations 2015: 54, Article 26)

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1 Introduction

Social and political situations force many migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers to seek new homes in Europe. At the same time, European policies encourage the mobility of workers, who bring their families with them. Thus, increasing numbers of children are coming to European schools from other cultural and national backgrounds. It is, therefore, necessary that schools and educational institutions work towards the development and implementation of teaching approaches and strategies that promote communication, understanding, and learning. European policies are working on the implementation of measures to promote inclusive education where no child is left behind, however, this must be necessarily materialised in schools through know-how strategies. In this sense, the chapter addresses questions or issues of concern to which we intend to give some answer:

– Q.1: Are national curricula, schools, and teachers sufficiently prepared to deal with cultural and linguistic variety in a class in such a way that no child is left behind in every area of the curriculum?

In section 2 we will explore how different European policies prepare the ground for inclusive plurilingual schools. What remain to be seen and deeply studied at a large scale is how actually these policies are implemented at national and local levels.

– Q.2: In a narrower sense, can linguists and language teachers provide support to curriculum developers for the purpose of cohesion and knowledge building in plurilingual classes?

Sections 3–5 deal with social inclusion in education from a linguist point of view, drawing attention onto the communication conflicts that may rise in plurilingual school contexts, presenting the newly-coined concept "interlingual[1]education" at the base of healthy plurilingual classes and schools, and considering "linguistic mediation" as the main language activity for achieving social cohesion and actual knowledge building.

– Q.3: Are there any down-to-earth recommendations that can facilitate inclusion in plurilingual classes and schools?

Section 6 provides an action guide that covers the issue, from day-to-day concerns to more specific actions and strategies regarding interlingual education

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1 Not to be confused with "interlanguage" (Selinker 1972). For other uses of the term "interlingual" see Guardado (2017) and Tsushima and Guardado (2019).

and mediation. This guide bases on American and European perspectives on the matter (including previous work by Barranco-Izquierdo 2014, 2017).

2 European policies on inclusive migrant education

The European policies aimed at the inclusion of diversity in education originate from the rather ambitious objective of promoting mutual understanding across languages and cultures, and preventing xenophobia and marginalization. Thus, the first basic principle of *Recommendation No. R (82) 18 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States Concerning Modern Languages* establishes that "the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed" and, more specifically, that "a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding" (Council of Europe 1982: 1).

In fact, the first general measure set out in the Appendix to *Recommendation No. R (82)18* is "To ensure, as far as possible, that all sections of their populations have access to effective means of acquiring a knowledge of the languages of other member states (or of other communities within their own country) as well as the skills in the use of those languages that will enable them to satisfy their communicative needs" (Council of Europe 1982: 2).

This general measure aims to achieve "a wider and deeper understanding of the way of life and forms of thought of other peoples and of their cultural heritage" (Council of Europe 1982: 2, measure 1.3). It is vital, then, that educators work for the promotion of "democratic values and cultural diversity" as put forward by the Second Summit of Heads of State's Action Plan (Council of Europe 1997), so people can be educated in such a way that they are able to overcome communication barriers, and deal with plurilingual and intercultural experiences productively. Schools are the places where relationships of this kind should be encouraged, experienced, and appreciated from a constructive learning perspective.

Documents, such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe, 2001), *Recommendation CM/Rec (2008) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Strengthening the Integration of Children of Migrants and of Immigrant Background*(Council of Europe, 2008) and *Guide for the Development and Implementation of Curricula for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education* (Beacco et al. 2010), grow from an understanding of Europe as an in-motion, multicultural, plurilingual society

in which language learners are "social agents" (Council of Europe 2001: 9) who use foreign languages in social situations. This idea of a borderless Europe where migration, interculturality, and plurilingual relations are seen as common and beneficial must be transferred to education at all levels.

Recommendation CM/Rec (2008) 4 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Strengthening the Integration of Children of Migrants and of Immigrant Background particularly addresses the need to include core contents related to the teaching of children of migrants and immigrants in professional training programs for schools and social and health services:

> At every stage of the professional qualification process for teachers, social and health workers and other professionals working with children of migrants and of immigrant background there should be learning opportunities to develop and test the special skills that they require. These include intercultural competence skills, skills to manage cultural differences in the classroom, peaceful conflict resolution skills, diagnostic skills to differentiate language problems from learning deficiencies, and skills to develop didactic instruments and learning strategies aimed at supporting children whose mother tongue is not that of the majority of society and/or the receiving country.   (Council of Europe 2008: 3–4)

According to the *Guide for the Development and Implementation of Curricula for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education* (Beacco et al. 2010), these are some of the facts and preconceptions about young migrants that current European education encounters:

- Young migrants are from different backgrounds. We need to use strategies that are useful in all cases and can be adapted to each student's origin and first language.
- All schools should be inclusive, which means that any actions should benefit the whole group to avoid the stigmatization of students, or the dilution of the curriculum.
- Young migrants should be given the chance to develop literacy in their mother tongue for their social, emotional, and professional benefit, but also because there are psycho-linguistic arguments supporting the connection between first language development and second language learning benefits.
- Plurilingual contexts should be considered as an opportunity to educate future citizens with the intention of fostering cultural and linguistic flexibility.

European documents that provide general outlines of how school curricula and language programmes should be sensitive to diversity from a plurilingual intercultural perspective have proliferated in the past few years. This current concern at the higher levels of educational policy is also shared by many school teachers. Many school teachers believe that spurring the development of plurilingual and intercultural skills at school is beneficial for all students regardless of national

background. However, the European approach towards inclusive education involves dramatic changes in the teacher's role. Teachers are now being asked to make understanding and learning possible for all students in a plurilingual and intercultural social context. This multifaceted ideal school teacher will not only need to deal with subject content, syllabi, key competences, updated methodologies, special needs, meetings with parents, and playground supervision; but also with the management of successful learning in a plurilingual class and the communication conflicts that may arise. This will be challenging for teachers coming from monolingual backgrounds. A relevant question is also whether teachers are given the necessary tools to tackle cultural and linguistic diversity in their classes.

In this chapter, we mean to partially respond to the following European principles:

– "convert diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding" (*Recommendation No. R (82)18*'s general principle, quoted in Council of Europe 1982: 1).
– "ensure that our diversity becomes a source of mutual enrichment, *inter alia*, by fostering political, inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue" (Council of Europe 2005a: 2).
– "enhance all opportunities for the training of educators, in the fields of education for democratic citizenship, human rights, history and intercultural education" (Council of Europe 2005b: section III.3).

Throughout this chapter we describe, from the communicative point of view, what makes a multicultural class an ideal context for learning, pondering on the new concept "interlingual education" and the use of "oral mediation" (Council of Europe 2001) as language activity. The term "interlingual education" will be defined and clarified in the following sections.

3 Orientations to benefitting from inclusive migrant education at different levels

In order to ensure inclusion of migrants at school, and the enrichment of society through diversity, actions at different educational levels should be taken (Beacco et al. 2010): at the international level (supra); in the national education systems (macro); in schools and institutions (meso); in teaching and learning sequences (micro); and throughout individual learning experiences (nano). For the purpose of this chapter, we will focus on the lower levels, where down-to-earth struggles

in cultural linguistic education take place. Nevertheless, we will still be mindful of some of the general supra guidelines that contribute to the development of strategies at the meso, micro, and nano levels.

In general terms, every idea suggested at the supra level works towards the understanding of the individual learner in holistic and social terms. In other words, the student is seen as a multi-competent social agent at school, and social experiences and transferences between skills build their education. Following this idea, throughout all the different approaches mentioned by Beacco et al. (2010), we can find some down-to-earth orientations that seem to benefit migrant inclusion in class and which can enhance all learners' language and plurilingual skills. We have grouped our orientations into three categories:

–   Transferability. Transference of skills and competences should be encouraged through the crossover linking of subjects. Strategies and skills developed for a language in a subject can and should be transferred to communication and learning activities in another language or subject. For this reason, coordination between teachers becomes essential.
–   Exposure to cultures and languages. Diversity of plurilingual and intercultural experiences progressively enlarges the repertoire of skills and strategies that can be transferred, which makes plurilingual learning and interculturalism an asset in education. For this reason, activities that involve experiencing other cultures and languages should be promoted in the classroom.
–   Language awareness. Perceiving variations in terms of language (discourse genres, subject-specific language peculiarities, registers, dialects, similarities, and contrasts) allows learners to adopt a standpoint outside their own.

National education systems in Europe warrant analysis concerning whether European policies on language and cultural diversity at school are being implemented or not. Consequently, this chapter will discuss the micro and nano levels. In particular, we mean to provide some guidelines on how school teachers can effectively contribute to linguistic and cultural inclusion in their classes.

Begioni et al. (1999) have stated the need for teachers to possess and develop proficiency competences to foster interpersonal relations among students from different language backgrounds and cultures. This proficiency is intrinsically linked to four of the 40 elements described in the *European Profile for Language Teacher Education: A Frame of Reference* (Kelly et al. 2004). This report proposes a European profile for foreign language teachers that serve as a checklist for existing training programs and serve as a guide for those yet to be developed:

> 22. Training in ways of adapting teaching approaches to the educational context and individual needs of learners.

26. Training in the development of independent language learning strategies.
36. Training in the diversity of languages and cultures.
37. Training in the importance of teaching and learning about foreign languages and cultures.
<div align="right">(Kelly et al. 2004: 6)</div>

In the same line of thought, the Director General for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Battaini-Dragoni (2006), has argued that all languages are necessary in promoting social inclusion. She asserted that, beyond being merely a linguistic matter, promoting the use of different languages is a means towards a more inclusive Europe. As such, teachers are urged to work for the promotion of linguistic/cultural sensitivity and awareness in their classrooms.

4 Interlingual education in the classroom

The *DeSeCo Project* (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2005) considers three main competences as necessary for a person to participate appropriately in social contexts: use a range of tools for interacting effectively (use of language); interact in heterogeneous groups; and act autonomously. On a daily basis, all three competences are necessary for the successful handling of diverse interactions in schools. However, these competences raise several questions: What is the meaning of "adequate" in school contexts? In which sense do we understand "effective" when it comes to managing language diversity in a class? Do we, as teachers, want our students to "interact" through competition or through collaboration? These are some questions teachers need to face before attempting to design a lesson plan addressing democratic social and communicative competences.

Multilingual/multicultural classrooms offer a place where linguistically and culturally heterogeneous groups can coexist, but this heterogeneity does not necessarily turn them into environments where healthy democratic interactions are taking place, i.e., where interactions are intended for "the understanding between the citizens of the North and the South" and for the promotion of "mutual respect and solidarity among peoples" (Council of Europe 1997: 2). Migrant students' languages and cultures, apart from coexisting, should be promoted and displayed in the classrooms. In addition, there should be a relationship between individuals, and mutual benefits should be obtained from that relationship (Abdallah-Pretceille 2001).

To foster this type of classroom interaction, European policies refer to plurilingual education as an adequate method of teaching in this culturally and linguistically diverse social context. Beacco and Byram (2007: 116) have remarked that plurilingual education:

> (. . .) is not necessarily restricted to language teaching, which aims to raise awareness of each individual's language repertoire, to emphasize its worth and to extend this repertoire by teaching lesser used or unfamiliar languages (. . .) [Plurilingual education] also aims to increase understanding of the social and cultural value of linguistic diversity in order to ensure linguistic goodwill and to develop intercultural competence.

Therefore, to achieve maximum benefits and democratic success, further elaborated education strategies should be displayed: namely, the promotion of intercultural competences, and what we call "interlingual education". "Interlingual education" goes beyond "plurilingual education" mainly in the sense that in the former, language competence is used during the teaching and learning process in order to build knowledge and a more cohesive interrelated class atmosphere; while in the latter the focus is placed on the personal cognitive equipment that allows an individual to manage in situations when their whole linguistic knowledge needs to be put to work. Consequently, "interlingual education" is understood as the social process of facilitating the building of knowledge, competences and values through the active use of several languages in the learning process. In order to construe a clearer definition of "interlingual education", we will start from the terms: "intercultural competence" and "intercultural approach".

Intercultural competence was defined by Meyer (1991: 137) as:

> (. . .) the ability of a person to behave adequately and in a flexible manner when confronted with actions, attitudes and expectations of representatives of foreign cultures. *Adequacy* and *flexibility* imply an awareness of the cultural differences between one's own and the foreign culture and the ability to *handle cross-cultural problems* which result from these differences. Intercultural competence includes the capacity of stabilising one's self-identity in the process of *cross-cultural mediation* and of helping other people to stabilise their self-identity.   (emphasis ours)

The ideas described by this definition are shared by the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (Council of Europe 2001) which adds that we need to know how to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstandings and conflict situations. Relatedly, Candelier et al. (2008) have presented the "intercultural approach" as one of the pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures. As stated previously, the mobilization of the intercultural education that underlies these approaches should not be exclusive to those school contexts with a migrant population. In this case, we would be denying the rest of the educational community knowledge of cultural diversity. Thus, intercultural education should offer valid and appropriate responses to the challenges presented by the cultural coexistence in our classrooms. Students are taught to interact with others, accept others' perceptions of the world, and mediate between different perspectives. A person who possesses these abilities is interculturally competent (Byram, Nichols, and Stevens 2001).

If these insights are transferred to language learning, we need to be talking about the development of interlingual education. It is extremely necessary to highlight the importance of teaching tools and strategies which will incorporate all students' mother tongues. Therefore, when discussing interlingual education, we are not just considering the presence of different mother tongues in the classroom as an opportunity to enrich and benefit the whole group. We are referring to the teachers' capacity to increase and diversify how they approach languages, not just in order to attend to migrant students' necessities but, as said before, to prepare the whole group to address language contact outside the scope of the classroom. Teachers need to forget about the governance of duality (mother tongue and foreign language) and start planning, among other things, ways to foster the performance of all the languages in the classroom.

Interlingual education at school, as we understand it, involves meeting at least four complementary demands: 1) enlarging the children's capacity (cognitive-linguistic skills) to deal with languages different from their own through frequent exposure to other languages; 2) helping children to use their own literacy competence in their mother tongues as a base for the development of literacy strategies in other languages; 3) encouraging empathy and awareness of otherness through mutual linguistic and cultural understanding in the languages they may encounter at school or in society; 4) using language communication skills in a group to build knowledge and more cohesive class atmospheres.

Developing interlingual education is not just a matter of being able to communicate and feel at ease in different linguistic contexts or act as language mediators. When it comes to migration, developing interlingual education is also a matter of providing individuals with the necessary tools to receive basic education. A research study carried out by the European Commission (2019) on the social and school integration of migrant students specifically advises that schools tackle the teaching of language(s) of origin because of its multiple benefits. The European Commission (2019: 19) argues that:

> Proficiency in their language of origin is widely considered to be of great importance for immigrant students. Proficiency can make it easier for these students to learn the language of instruction and thus stimulate their development in all areas. In addition, the manner in which their mother tongue is viewed in the host community helps secure the self-esteem and identity of immigrant children and their families.

Indeed, the promotion of interlingual education in the classroom can provide tools and strategies to overcome or even avoid potential communication conflicts.

5 Overcoming communication conflicts in the classroom through oral mediation

In this interlingual learning scenario, interpersonal barriers which occur in verbal and nonverbal communication put spoken interaction at risk (Malik Liévano and Herraz Ramos 2005). This risk is linked to the notion of communication conflict during the teaching and learning process. Teachers must use appropriate strategies and techniques so students can attain the two key "communication" competences identified in the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning* (2006/962/EC):

> Communication in the mother tongue is the ability to express and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written form (listening, speaking, reading and writing), and to interact linguistically in an appropriate and creative way in a full range of societal and cultural contexts; in education and training, work, home and leisure. (. . .) Communication in foreign languages broadly shares the main skill dimensions of communication in the mother tongue (. . .) [and] also calls for skills such as mediation and intercultural understanding. (Official Journal of the European Union 2006: 14)

Throughout this communication process, the classroom environment is characterized by functional interdependence among its members and the verbal or nonverbal social interaction (Puren 2002). In this environment, new knowledge is generated, so the more students' contributions are produced, the more possibilities there are to enlarge knowledge. Therefore, students with different mother tongues and cultures potentially enrich the general knowledge.

Oral mediation serves as the backbone of communication and enables this enrichment to occur (Barranco-Izquierdo and Guillén Díaz 2017). Oral mediation implies spoken interaction between at least two people with their own linguistic, cultural, and personal backgrounds. For Coste and Cavalli (2015), the concept of "mediation" involves ideas such as overcoming obstacles and dealing with problem areas, etc. In this case, the teacher will need to tackle communication conflicts produced by the presence of different languages and cultures in a learning environment and, consequently, by how those languages and cultures influence each child's perspective on reality, personal relationships, teaching and learning.

The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* says that "In mediation activities, the language user (. . .) act(s) as an intermediary between interlocutors who are unable to understand each other directly – normally (but not exclusively) speakers of different languages" (Council of Europe 2001, 87). In this reference document, we find the following examples of oral mediation: simultaneous interpretation, consecutive interpretation,

and informal interpretation. Cantero Serena and De Arriba García (2004) refer to oral mediation as a verbal or nonverbal language activity of negotiation and interaction in a communicative context where speakers must be able to understand each other. For the performance of oral mediation articulated in the teaching and learning process, the mobilization of different strategies or intellectual operations is also required. They list the following strategies related to oral mediation: intermediate, summarize, synthesize, paraphrase, and apostille (or clarify).

Oral interactions between teachers and students or students and students may generate communication conflicts that should be solved at that very moment through oral mediation. It is in these situations of communication conflict that students need to deal with their own frustrations, apply flexibility of thought, appreciate one's own and their peer's diverse intelligences (Gardner 1999), or ask for and recognize help. Thus, through oral mediation as a communicative language activity, social, and emotional education is also taking place, as it fosters collaboration, engagement, conflict resolution, diversity awareness, negotiation, resilience, empathy, etc. We can, therefore, affirm that mediation in oral communication contexts, besides improving children's communicative skills, ensures their training as citizens in a global society. Adopting this activity enhances the development of soft skills, as face-to-face interaction occurs between peers and between the students and their teacher.

As we focus on the conflicts preventing successful communication, a teacher or student might perform the role of a social mediator who knows the rules to follow, or the role of a cognitive mediator who knows how to communicate their understanding (Vez, Guillén, and Alario 2002). These social and cognitive mediators facilitate the necessary interrelationships to make the classroom a place based on communication and on the social and spoken interactions of the individuals involved. In this sense, Uranga (1994) has indicated that the use of mediation in schools and in classrooms has a very positive impact in developing soft skills, since:
 – It creates a more relaxed and productive environment.
 – It contributes to the development of respect for the other.
 – It helps to recognize and value one's own and others' feelings, interests and needs.
 – It contributes to the development of the capacity for dialogue and the improvement of communicative skills, especially active listening.

A teacher, as a social and cognitive mediator, regulates class communication exchanges by controlling, directing, and reorienting interactions. The three main mediation functions, which may be interpreted as an action guide for teacher

mediators, are: planning, execution, and evaluation (Council of Europe, 2001). As these functions are carried out during the teaching and learning process, the mediator must display an intentional purpose of solving the communication conflict. This intentional purpose shows a positive attitude towards its resolution and, hence, it is the first step for schools to develop interlingual and intercultural education.

6 Action guide for school teachers

The guide presented below is addressed to those teachers who have migrant students in their classes, but it can also be useful for those who believe in the necessity of integrating intercultural and interlingual methodologies and materials into their classrooms. Some of these ideas have been taken and rephrased from: Council of Europe (2008), Beacco et al. (2010), Genzuk (2011), Barranco-Izquierdo (2014), and Meyer, Halbach, and Coyle (2015).

Before going deeply into the linguistic issue, it may be necessary to present some general clues for a convenient education frame.

6.1 General recommendations for teachers towards the inclusion of migrant children in their classrooms

– Make an effort to recognize and address the learning needs of migrant children (assess proficiency in the language of schooling, talk with family, and social services, etc.)
– Provide migrant families with important information about issues relevant to their child (services, etc.). It can also be useful for those who believe in them. If necessary and possible, make this information available in their mother tongue or any other additional language they may understand well.
– Foster the collaboration of families to promote respect for other languages and cultures.
– Differentiate learning problems from the lack of language skills. Do not assume children are not learning because they are not able to express content in the language of schooling.
– Facilitate access to the whole curriculum. Sometimes learning resources in the migrant child's mother tongue may be needed.
– Provide a "buddy" to newcomers. It can be another migrant who has successfully engaged in school life, a peer who has already developed intercultural

and interlingual communication competences, or someone who is likely to develop such competences.

- Coordinate with other teachers in order to encourage the development of learning skills and the transference of skills and competences through cross-over linking of subjects (use of cognitive maps, notebook strategies, etc.)
- Help migrant children to develop a positive image of themselves and their identification with their new country. Support the self-esteem and identity of immigrant children and their families.
- Encourage a respectful and tolerant classroom atmosphere.
- Promote links between children of different origins.
- Educate future citizens to foster cultural and linguistic flexibility.
- Assess the benefits of including the languages and cultures present in the classroom.

Language:
- Allow the use of mother tongues in your class, it should be seen as a learning opportunity from the linguistic and cultural point of view.
- Assist migrant children in acquiring proficiency in the language of schooling. Whatever the subject you are teaching, include appropriate language objectives in your classes, from specialized vocabulary to discourse organization when writing or talking about the lesson topic.
- Focus on the cognitive operations related to language (e.g., identifying, locating, recounting, describing, arguing) and have migrant students use them throughout the learning process depending on their level of proficiency in the language of schooling.
- Use metacommunicative activities, which focus on the language to be used to perform a task. You will find this not only helps migrant students but also domestic students. Being a native speaker in a language does not automatically imply having the skills for elaborate intelligible and coherent oral or written discourse on a complex topic or task.
- Change your register when speaking. Explain things in different ways. Repeat. Focus on key concepts.
- Provide mediation to overcome communication conflicts and make sure that understanding is successful.
- Assist children in the development of literacy in their mother tongue. Studies have shown that positive literacy experiences in one's first language have a positive influence on second language acquisition.
- Show a positive attitude towards the students' errors in the language activities.

Methodology:
– Build on students' previous knowledge and use scaffolding.
– Encourage teamwork and collaboration. Design cooperation activities, which involve the participation and engagement of all the students.
– Design strategies to support learning for students whose mother tongue is not the language of schooling.
– Design strategies that are useful in any situation and can adapt to each student's cultural background and mother tongue.
– Use visual aids and hands-on demonstrations to support your explanations.
– Focus on key concepts and facilitate understanding through different media (visual supports, manipulation, comparisons, etc.). Do not reduce your teaching to oral explanations and reading alone.
– Do not overload migrant students with written material in the language of schooling. Make sure written material is actually necessary and can be understood with the help of oral mediation. Provide the same information through other means.
– Design ways in which children can show their understanding and learning. In most cases, traditional exams will mainly test their language proficiency and not their actual learning in a subject.
– Teaching materials should reflect the diversity of the society.

Intercultural Competence:
– Develop positive attitudes and openness to linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom.
– Increase your knowledge of the cultures of origin in your class. In this way you may foresee reactions or avoid misunderstanding. Offer this knowledge in class to promote an inclusive classroom environment.
– Address migration and cross-cultural knowledge and its benefits through the curriculum.
– Design activities aimed at promoting awareness of cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity.
– Address communication conflict with a constructive attitude. Consider communication conflict as an opportunity for learning.

6.2 Guidelines for interlingual education

– Plan activities that involve exposure to other cultures and languages.
– Use alternation between languages in the teaching and learning process, for example using plurilingual aids.

- Allow migrant students to use material in their own language and share the information with their classmates.
- Prepare real-life activities where two or more languages are needed. For example, you can involve your class in e-twinning – a free online community to find schools to collaborate with other schools on projects – especially with those schools in the countries of origin of the migrant children in your class. Use videos or podcasts by people from different origins talking about the topic you are studying. Include videos in the languages of the migrant students and encourage them to explain to their classmates the information provided.
- Have students from different origins work together for a purpose. Keep in mind that language interaction is necessary to complete the task and permit students to express themselves using any language resource.
- Encourage students to reflect on the linguistic dimension of all the languages present in the class. You can look for similarities and differences, research the common origin of terms in different languages, etc.
- Incorporate drama and role plays in your lessons to create situations in which students need to take the role of a person from a different origin. Have students cooperate in writing their own plays and encourage them to include interactions in two or more languages in their scripts. Local and migrant students will both profit from plurilingual performance rehearsals.
- Open the door to imagination. Let students play on the aesthetic dimension of the languages by having them create puns, riddles, rhymes, stories or songs.
- Start the process of overcoming a communication conflict or even prevent it from arising.
- Use oral mediation to address conflicts.

6.3 Guidelines for mediation

6.3.1 Planning: Considering interlocutors' needs

- Plan, elaborate, and select teaching strategies, types of activities, and class materials.
- Design activities aimed at developing oral communication in all the students' mother tongues.
- Establish individual plans regarding linguistic competence for those students who need it.

- Prepare a glossary of terms: general functional terms and subject content terms.
- Provide authentic language samples.
- Plan strategies to develop skills and competences to overcome possible communication conflicts during lessons.

6.3.2 Execution: Processing input and bridging communicative gaps

- Use non-verbal communication to support the verbal message in order to minimize communication conflict, such as gestures, paralinguistic actions, and paratextual characteristics.
- Use body language and dramatization as communicative resources.
- Produce clear instructions.
- Intermediate. Be an interpreter. Explain, summarize or paraphrase the message.
- Summarize. Transmit the meaning of the message by adapting it to the interlocutor's needs.
- Synthesize. Reduce the message to essential data by adapting the message to the interlocutor.
- Paraphrase. Change the way you phrase the message to make it more understandable.
- Apostille. Clarify, comment, explain, amplify or give extra information that the interlocutor requires to understand what is being said.
- Help to solve the internal group divisions that cause communication conflict.

6.3.3 Evaluation: Checking congruence and consistency of usage

- Evaluate the students' previous knowledge and needs, introducing different strategies that take into account the characteristics of the educational context.
- Control behavior after overcoming a communication conflict.
- Report on the progress of migrant students.
- Offer new information, ideas, theories, and options to overcome communication conflicts.

Above, we offer what means to be a useful tool for teachers who want to perform inclusive education in classes with the presence of migrant students. Having migrant students in the class may cause a lack of understanding due to language

communication conflicts. The appropriate and flexible management of these communication conflicts suggests the need for adequate teacher training. This training should focus on the benefits for and enrichment of the whole class by incorporating all students' mother tongues into the teaching and learning process, thereby fostering interlingual education. Oral mediation might be necessary for the resolution of potential language communication conflicts that could take place because of the inclusion of diverse languages and cultures. We are mainly addressing the use of oral mediation in the classroom as a communicative language activity, which involves the awareness of both verbal and nonverbal elements to manage classroom diversity. It is very important to know how to mobilize oral mediation strategies and to have the ability to bring the different languages and cultures into conversation with each other.

7 Conclusions

The presence of different languages and cultures in the classroom is now a fact in European contexts. Schools must make an effort to profit from this new learning scenario by using the variety of languages and cultures as a basis for knowledge and competence building. European policy (supra) on migrant education at Primary and Secondary levels gives the general frame in this direction; yet, in other levels (macro, meso, micro and nano) measures must still be implemented.

In this chapter we have focused on how communication conflicts in the classroom can be dealt with through the use of mediation as a language activity. And, in a more holistic way, we suggest that what we call "interlingual education", as defined in section 4, can be the first step towards knowledge and competence building.

From an integrated educational perspective, including migrants' languages in the learning process cannot be attained only by paying attention to languages, but dealing with other variables, such as: families and students' mentoring; teachers' coordination regarding curriculum development; encouraging positive attitudes, self-perception and appreciation of otherness; methodology; and the development of intercultural competence, among others. Therefore, in section 6, we offer an action guide for those teachers who want to create more inclusive learning environments and do not know how to begin.

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