



Universidad de Valladolid

**Linguistic Mediation Activities to Develop Social
and Plurilingual Skills: Design, Implementation,
and Evaluation of EFL in VET.**

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Abstract:

This Master's Dissertation proposes the implementation of mediation activities in second language teaching within Higher Vocational Education, specifically in the Web Application Development program. A didactic unit is designed and implemented based on CEFR descriptors adapted to professional contexts where mediation strategies are required. The study evaluates how these activities foster meaningful learning at this level by increasing student motivation and participation while developing linguistic competences. A mixed-method approach is used to assess the tasks, combining teacher observation, student self-assessment, and evaluable tasks. The findings show that mediation activities enhance communicative competences and promote the use of the second language in authentic contexts.

Key words: Mediation, CEFR, Vocational Education and Training, VET.

Resumen:

El presente Trabajo de Fin de Máster hace una propuesta de implementación de las actividades de mediación en la enseñanza de la segunda lengua en Formación Profesional Superior en el programa de Desarrollo de Aplicaciones Web (DAW). Se presenta un diseño de unidad didáctica según los descriptors del MCER aplicado a contextos profesionales en los que se requiera de estrategias de mediación con su posterior implementación en el aula. El estudio evalúa como estas actividades fomentan el aprendizaje significativo a este nivel, aumentando la motivación y la participación de los alumnos desarrollando competencias lingüísticas. Para la evaluación de las tareas se emplea un enfoque mixto combinado la observación docente, la autoevaluación y tareas evaluables. Los resultados de la investigación muestran como las actividades de mediación mejoran las competencias comunicativas y promueven el uso de la segunda lengua en contextos auténticos.

Palabras clave: Mediación, MCER, Formación Profesional, FP.

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1. Introduction

Mediation is a relatively new language communication activity considered essential for the learning of a second language. According to the Common European Framework of Reference (onwards, CEFR), mediation involves all the skills needed to be proficient in a second language. The present study focuses on the incorporation of mediation in educational levels such as Vocational Education and Training (onwards, VET). At VET level, mediation can play a crucial role in preparing students to effectively communicate in a second language and adapt to a globalized environment. However, this language communicative activity is not currently included in the educational law for the VET level.

The incorporation of linguistic mediation, as proposed by the CEFR, would be important for VET students at many levels. Due to the growing need for plurilingual and pluricultural competence, students would benefit from learning mediation skills. Nowadays, a globalized world means being able to adapt and develop essential skills that could be taught to students through mediation. This competence not only fosters communicative skills but also promotes intercultural understanding. Hence, mediation could be an essential skill for both personal and professional success.

The relevance of this study lies in the fact that mediation remains underexplored in formal curricula at the VET level, despite its increasing importance in international frameworks and workplace communication. In light of the CEFR Companion Volume's emphasis on mediation, this study addresses a significant gap between policy and practice. Moreover, it seeks to offer a pedagogical approach aligned with real-life communicative needs in multilingual settings.

The main aims of this study are: designing mediation activities; analyzing their implementation in the VET classroom; assessing the effectiveness of these activities in developing communicative competence, as well as plurilingual and pluricultural skills; and proposing improvements based on the results obtained. The scope of this research is limited to a specific group of VET students within a defined institutional context, which will be detailed further in the methodology section.

The structure of this paper will be outlined as follows. First, the theoretical framework will be presented to provide the ground basis. Then, the methodology and the didactic design of the activities will follow. The next point will cover the evaluation tools, followed by the implementation and results of the application in a VET educational setting. Finally, the analysis of the implementation results and the conclusion will be presented. The study intends to contribute to future curriculum development and practical strategies for integrating mediation in VET language education.

2. Theoretical framework

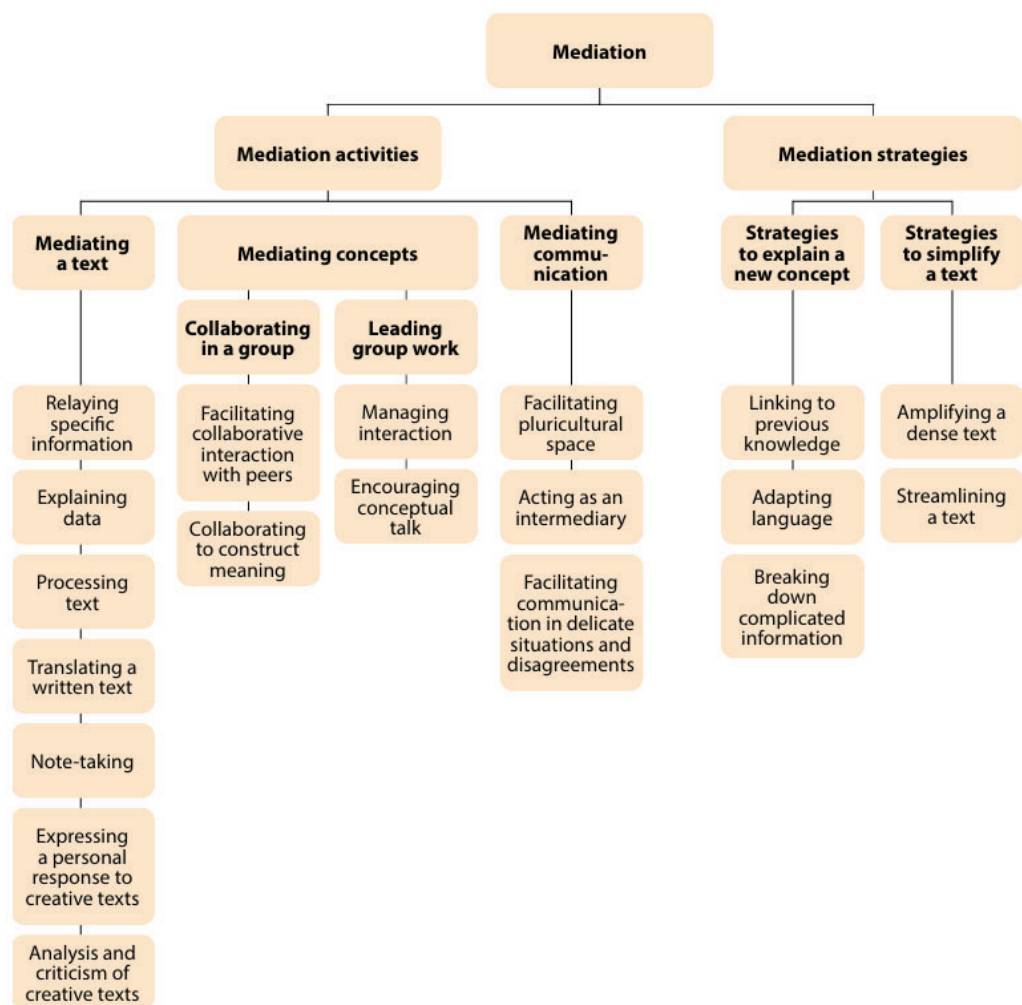
2.1. Conceptualization of linguistic mediation according to CEFR

Mediation is a concept that often leads to confusion, as it is commonly understood in terms of conflict resolution. A widely accepted definition describes it as “intervention between conflicting parties to promote reconciliation, settlement, or compromise” (Merriam-Webster, 2019). However, the concept of mediation can adopt a different definition when viewed from a linguistic perspective. According to the Common European Framework of Reference:

“The written and/or oral activities of mediation make communication possible between people who are unable, for whatever reason, to communicate with each other directly.” (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 23)

Considering the present CEFR’s definition, the main goal of mediation is to reformulate or reinterpret the information to promote understanding between different entities. The process of mediation includes translation, interpretation, paraphrasing, recording, and summarizing, among others. Mediation is not limited to the classroom walls but plays a key role in *"the normal linguistic functioning of our societies"* (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 23). It can be said that the mediator is the one responsible for constructing and creating meaning.

Figure 1. Common European Framework of Reference, p.90.



The mediation process, as defined in the CEFR, goes beyond simple translation or reformulation. Mediation is broader and more complete, as it involves facilitating understanding between individuals by adapting information into different linguistic forms and cultural contexts (Council of Europe, 2020). As represented in Figure 1, taken from the CEFR, mediation is outlined through a structured overview that divides the activity into two main areas: mediation activities and mediation strategies.

Within mediation activities, there are three categories that encompass different practices: mediating a text, mediating concepts, and mediating communication. Text mediation involves tasks that portray how mediation fosters the transmission and comprehension of meaning through different types of texts. Practices included are summarizing, translating, or relaying information. According to the CEFR, mediating a text involves passing the information contained in a text to a second

party who does not have access to that information due to any kind of barrier, such as *“linguistic, cultural, semantic or technical barriers”* (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 91). Nonetheless, the definition of text mediation has been opened to include mediating a text for oneself as a key part of the mediation activity.

Following text mediation, concept mediation is introduced, which is essential for the overall definition of mediation. Concept mediation emphasizes the importance of collaboration and cooperation between language users and/or learners, as it fosters interaction aimed at conceptual clarification in any context, such as educational or professional. The activity of concept mediation involves the facilitation of access to information for learners who, once again, are unable to access it due to any type of barrier.

“Mediating concepts involves two complementary aspects: [...] constructing and elaborating meaning and [...] facilitating and stimulating conditions that are conducive to such conceptual exchange [...].” (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 91).

Finally, communication mediation is presented, which is essential for cases such as conflict resolution (regardless of the conflict origin) and intercultural dialogue. This activity is key since it demonstrates how language can bridge social, cultural, and linguistic gaps. According to the CEFR, communication mediation aims to promote understanding between parties and foster effective communication between users/learners who may experience difficulties such as intellectual or sociocultural barriers. *“The skills involved are relevant to diplomacy, negotiation, pedagogy and dispute resolution, but also to everyday social and/or workplace interactions”* (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 91). As stated in the CEFR, the list of mediation types is not a closed one, so users are encouraged to consider additional activities beyond those explicitly included in the Common European Framework of Reference.

Figure 1 also presents mediation strategies, which serve as tools to assist individuals in the mediation process. The diagram presents techniques designed to facilitate communication through mediation. On one side, strategies to explain

a new concept are presented, where the CEFR provides three different strategies within this category. The first aspect to mention would be linking to previous knowledge (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 118). Establishing a connection between prior knowledge and new concepts is a key element in the learning process, and it is equally important in the mediation process. This technique, as stated in the CEFR, could be applied by the mediator by creating comparisons or describing with references to aspects the audience already knows, etc. The following technique proposed is adapting the language (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 118). In this case, the learner/user needs to transform one text into another of a different register or genre while maintaining the same content. “This may be done through the inclusion of synonyms, similes, simplification or paraphrasing” (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 118). Finally, the last strategy proposed is breaking down complicated information (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 118). One way of understanding complex content and information is by breaking it down into easier parts. When the different constituent parts are understood, it is easier to see how all those parts fit together to create a whole meaning.

On the other side, focusing on Figure 1, strategies to simplify a text are presented, which include two different approaches. The first of the techniques is amplifying a dense text (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 121). Sometimes, the text to be interpreted is too dense for the learner/user to understand. To address this issue, this technique concerns “[...] the expansion of the input source through the inclusion of helpful information, examples, details, background information, reasoning and explanatory comments” (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 121). The following approach is streamlining a text (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 121). This strategy is the opposite of amplifying, meaning that it focuses on the process of simplifying a text by removing unnecessary elements and unneeded information to emphasize the main idea of the message. This technique involves practices such as:

“[...] expressing the same information more economically by eliminating repetition and digressions and excluding those sections of the source that do not add relevant new information” (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 121).

Mediation strategies are relevant when studying a second language since they enable students to learn knowledge of social, cultural, and discourse conventions as they develop an intercultural awareness. The capacity of the user/learner to mediate goes beyond proficiency in a language or several languages. As stated in the CEFR, it involves employing appropriate mediation strategies, which will depend on the context, the participants, and the communication environment in general. *“Mediation strategies are the techniques employed to clarify meaning and facilitate understanding”* (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 117). The strategies proposed allow the user/learner to cover gaps in communication that could occur between people, texts, types of discourse and/or languages. As it is mentioned in the CEFR, *“the strategies here presented are communication strategies, that is, ways of helping people to understand, during the actual process of mediation”* (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 118). The strategies mentioned are presented separately, but they can be applied across various activities, adapting them to the needs of the mediation situation. Each strategy outlined is essential to foster effective communication and ensure the intended message takes place in an accessible and understandable way.

“The term “mediation” is also used to describe a social and cultural process of creating conditions for communication and co-operation” (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 91).

In this sense, mediation serves as a tool to prevent cultural misunderstandings. When mediation involves multiple languages (called cross-linguistic mediation), or different forms of communication (called cross-modal mediation), the communication requires social, cultural, and plurilingual knowledge along with language proficiency. *“This emphasizes the fact that one cannot in practice completely separate one type of mediation from another”* (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 91). Mediation is interconnected, as its different types often overlap. Therefore, users are encouraged to mix types of mediation in order to adapt them to their specific context.

Hence, according to the definition from the CEFR, mediation is not just about translation but also about collaboration, understanding, and effective

communication. It establishes a comprehensive framework that provides learners with the necessary competencies to achieve effective communication.

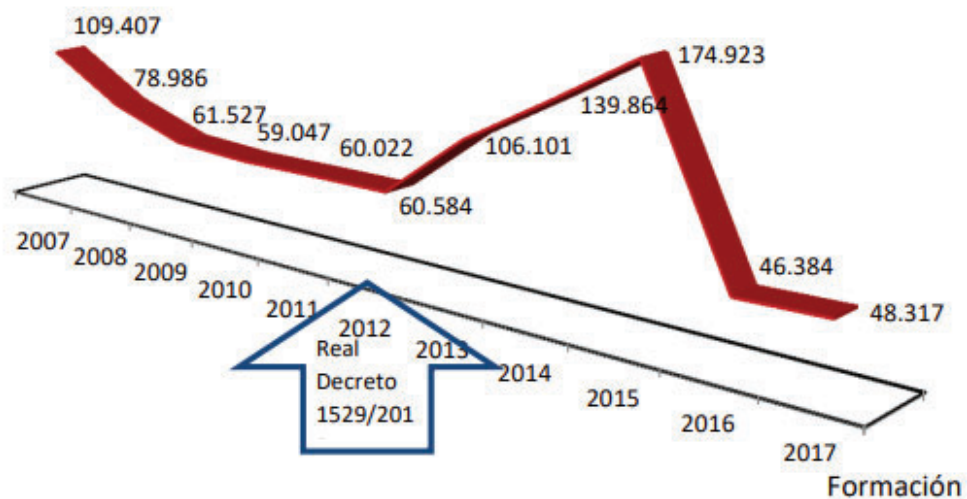
2.2. Education in Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Vocational Education and Training (VET), known in Spanish as Formación Profesional, provides students with both practical and theoretical training oriented towards the job market. According to Spain's Ministry of Education, Vocational Education, and Sports, VET is structured into three levels: Level 1 corresponds to the basic degree, Level 2 to the intermediate degree, and Level 3 to the advanced degree.

Over the years, VET programs have evolved in order to adapt the law to the changing demands of the educational needs and job market. The LOGSE (Ley Orgánica 1/1990, de 3 de octubre) reformed VET by incorporating the practice of Training in Work Centers (Formación en Centros de Trabajo, FCT), then making supervised practical workplace experience a key component of Spanish vocational education. This reform aimed to elevate the status of VET, which had historically been regarded as an inferior educational path (Gutiérrez, 2021). However, it seems to be far from that objective with the exceptions of some Superior degrees (level 3). The Ley Orgánica de Educación (Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo), maintained the structure of the LOGSE regarding VET programs, but it incorporated a main change. This educational law introduced a modular approach for VET levels, which meant the combination of theoretical and practical knowledge, hence, allowing students to immerse themselves in continuous learning while obtaining essential qualifications, such as the Compulsory Secondary Education diploma corresponding to level 1 education in VET. Later on, the Real Decreto 1529/2012 of November 8, 2012, was published, and it established the concept of Dual Vocational Education. However, this new model lacked clear definition and proper educational planning, which led to its eventual failure due to insufficient structure and support. According to Gutiérrez Morillo, the implantation of the new model was motivated by the expectation of reducing dropouts and the encouragement of job insertion by the alumni. As it can be seen in Figure 2, since the insertion of the Real Decreto 1529/2012 (Real Decreto

1529/2012, de 8 de noviembre), the job insertion improved for a few years, but it reached a maximum leading to a high drop.

Figure 2. Graphic by CCOO.



(Secretaría de Empleo y Cualificación Profesional, 2019)

The *Ley Orgánica para la mejora de la Calidad Educativa* (Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre) introduced a segregation of the alumni by differentiating between academic learning for those who will be on Bachillerato, and applied learning for those who will pursue VET. This had the major consequence of discrimination which supposes a step back to de discredit of the VET considering it a second league learning (Gutiérrez, 2021). The *Ley Orgánica*, of December 29 (LOMLOE) insist on the need to improve the social recognition of VET on its preamble. This law also includes several changes to the VET education in all its levels.

The registration in VET in Spain has increased in the last few years, both in number of students and in the diversity of them. This increment seems to be a development in the social image created around the VET along the years.

“Las titulaciones más solicitadas pertenecen a las familias profesionales de Sanidad, Administración y Gestión, Informática y Comunicaciones, Electricidad y Electrónica, Hostelería y Turismo, y Mantenimiento de Vehículos.” (El País, 2025)

The Fundación Tomillo, alongside the Spanish Ministry of Social Rights and the 2030 Agenda, conducted a study on the profile and needs of VET students. According to the study, the typical student is male and aged between 16 and 18 years, with 75% of the sample being male. Many come from low socio-economic backgrounds, often from single-parent households, and parents typically have only completed secondary school or less. The study also highlights the challenges these students face, including low academic performance, limited family support, and restricted access to resources. However, VET students generally aim to improve their employability and financial stability. Additionally, 77% of students interviewed expressed a desire to continue their studies to complete their training, and 63% aim to achieve Grado Superior (Level 3). The study proposes some guidance to address the students' needs in order to avoid the creation of a generation that neither works nor studies (Fundación Tomillo, 2022). It is stated that students need personalized support, guidance on career and professional opportunities, and practical training that aligns with their strengths and goals. It also includes the necessity of improving the image that society holds of VET studies. There is a need to consider these studies as valid and as a resource for students to access education (Fundación Tomillo, 2022).

It is key to highlight that the incorporation of English as a subject in the VET curriculum is very recent. The VET program is structured in modules, one of which is Professional English. This module is allocated 50 hours of instruction, which is standard for all grades of Vocational Education. Due to its recent introduction, the legal framework for designing a Didactic Unit is still in development. In order to assert the competences, contents, learning results, etc., teachers must consult various official documents such as BOE 659/2023 (Gobierno de España, 2023), BOCyL 24/2024 (Junta de Castilla y León, 2024), and the official document (BOE) for the specific module of teaching. However, the information provided in these documents remains brief and in a draft state.

To illustrate how the legal framework is organized, BOE 405/2023 (Gobierno de España, 2023) is used as an example. This document corresponds to the official document for Royal Decree 405/2023, of May 29, updating the vocational education titles of Higher Technician in Multiplatform Application Development and Higher Technician in Web Application Development, within the professional family of Information Technology and Communications, and establishing their minimum teaching requirements. Article 5 of BOE 405/2023 (Gobierno de España, 2023) outlines the professional competences that students are expected to acquire during the course. Nonetheless, the second language is neither explicitly mentioned nor alluded to within these competences. Article 9 of BOE 405/2023 (Gobierno de España, 2023) includes the general objectives of the module, again without mentioning any objective regarding the second language explicitly. Later, Annex I lists the basic contents, but there is no information regarding the contents for teaching the second language. Finally, moving to BOE 659/2023 (Gobierno de España, 2023), Annex X includes the specifications for the Professional English module. The information outlined provides the learning results and the evaluation criteria. Throughout the official documents regarding Vocational Education, the mediation activity is not contemplated as a skill to be developed for these students.

The overall situation of Vocational Education in Spain remains as stated in the previous paragraphs. Despite its importance in the country's education system, Vocational Education continues to face challenges regarding its low social recognition. This type of education is often regarded as a secondary option compared to other educational pathways. The image created around Vocational Education affects potential students, current students, and the educational system as a whole. Additionally, there is the absence of a solid, well-structured legal framework to support the development of Vocational Education in Spain. The recent incorporation of the Professional English module remains in a draft status, which results in a lack of consistency, criteria, and guidance in its implementation. As a consequence of these factors, the environment created ultimately impacts the students who choose or plan to choose Vocational Education.

2.3. Plurilingual and pluricultural competence and the VET language classroom

Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to a person's ability to use multiple languages and navigate different cultural contexts correctly and effectively. According to Coste, Moore, and Zarate, these competencies can be defined as follows:

“Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social actor has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the social actor may draw” (Coste et al., 1997, p. 11)

In the document, *Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence* (Coste et al., 1997) the key elements of the development of the language remain on the cultural and social context in which language occurs, hence, going beyond mere linguistic proficiency. In the referred document, it is proposed the integration of plurilingualism, understood as the knowing of multiple languages, and pluricultural competence, understood as an understanding of different cultures, into educational curriculum. As mentioned in the document, Coste, Moore, & Zarate state that a key feature of plurilingual and pluricultural competence is that the strategies speakers employ may vary depending on the language or combination of languages used. This aspect refers to the capacities, abilities, or skills that the speaker possesses in different languages, which may differ from one language to another. Speakers may not have the same level of proficiency in all competences across different languages; therefore, the speaker may resort to gestures, facial expressions, or nonverbal communication to achieve effective communication and compensate for limitation in certain language skills.

“The task involving a language activity may thus be redefined, the linguistic message reshaped or redistributed according to the resources actually available to the actor and his perception of these resources or his

perception of his interlocutor's resources (like the possible use of forms of codeswitching and bilingual speech, i.e. passing from one language to another in the same conversational exchange)” (Coste et al., 1997, p.11)

This affirmation leads to the next key element mentioned in *Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence* (Coste et al., 1997). This competence allows the interactions of all the language competences, hence arising in the speaker “*linguistic awareness*” (Coste et al., 1997). Plurilingual and pluricultural competence enables the speaker to switch codes to fulfill the message intended, or even to resort to bilingualism during the speech. The development of these competences promotes the acquisition of “*metacognitive strategies, which enable the social actor to become aware of and to control his own "spontaneous" ways of handling tasks and, in particular, their linguistic dimension*” (Coste et al., 1997, p.11)

Plurilingualism emphasizes the interconnected nature of languages, unlike multilingualism which advocates for viewing languages as separate entities. According to the definition of plurilingualism provided in the Common European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2020), language use is made of a repertoire of linguistic and cultural skills used by individuals to communicate and understand the world.

“Plurilingualism is presented in the CEFR as an uneven and changing competence, in which the user/learner’s resources in one language or variety may be very different in nature from their resources in another. However, the fundamental point is that plurilinguals have a single, interrelated, repertoire that they combine with their general competences and various strategies in order to accomplish tasks” (Council of Europe, 2020, p.30).

As stated previously, plurilingual competence enables speakers to use the resources available in different languages to accomplish effective communication of a message. Plurilingualism provides speakers with an essential competence to achieve the main objective of communication. However, plurilingualism is not

given fixed competences in the CEFR. This is because individuals develop different strategies in languages due to necessity, desire, or the need to accomplish communication with others, etc. The competence of plurilingualism is the reflection of the speaker's life or "*social path*" (Council of Europe, 2020, p.17).

Hence, language proficiency consists of different competencies that are interconnected. Pluricultural competence "*derives from the concept of plurilingualism, which itself derives from the concept of bilingualism*" (Council of Europe, 2020, p.20). The concepts of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism were introduced for the first time in the educational system in 1997 with the second provisional version of the CEFR. According to this official document, communication across linguistic boundaries should be treated as dynamic and creative, referred to as "*linguaging*" (Council of Europe, 2020). The proposed approach promotes the fluid interaction between different languages and cultures, hence recognizing mediation as a key competence in communication and language learning. Mediation proved the necessity of developing linguistic adaptability and cultural awareness, especially in contexts in which speakers do not share the same language. "*Because of the plurilingual nature of such mediation, descriptors were also developed and validated [...] during the 2014-17 project to develop descriptors for mediation*" (Council of Europe, 2020, p.30).

In the context of VET in Spanish educational system, the plurilingual and pluricultural competence is not specifically researched or addressed in the legal document that regulate education. However, it can be treated as in any level of secondary education. Its integration is crucial. By promoting not just language proficiency but language adaptability and cultural awareness, students can develop strategies that prepare them to a globalized world. However, there are educational implication in the context of secondary and vocational education regarding pluricultural and plurilingual competence. According to María Daniela Cifone Ponte, in "*La competencia Plurilingüe y Pluricultural en el Currículo de Educación Secundaria*" (Cifone Ponte, n.d.), the Spanish law in force recognizes the importance of the learning of a second language to achieve the development of the plurilingual competence. However, there are inconsistencies in the conceptualization of the competences. The organic law 3/2020 (Ley Orgánica

3/2020, de 29 de diciembre) separated the plurilingual and pluricultural competencies as two separate entities when the CEFR states that they work together as one (Cifone Ponte, s.f.). This incongruence leads to questioning the accuracy of the law that currently regulates secondary education and the curriculum contemplated in the Royal Decree 217/2022. Moreover, schools usually present resistance to the incorporation of pluralism. As mentioned in *Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence* (Coste, Moore, & Zarate, 2009), pluriculturalism and plurilingualism are not competences that schools are open to include.

“Find-sounding slogans about the plurality of languages and cultures can remain only pious hopes unless if the factors making for resistance are not constantly taken into account and unless realistic proposals based on them are progressively put to the test of innovation” (Coste et al., 1997, p.23)

As has been stated, plurilingual and pluricultural competence work as one individual competence that provides students with linguistic awareness, control of their own spontaneity, cultural awareness, and the ability to adapt linguistically, among others. Due to its many benefits, its incorporation into regulated education is essential. Students can acquire several competencies and proficiency in the second language by developing plurilingual and pluricultural competence.

2.4. Importance of mediation in educational settings

As stated in the previous sections, mediation is still not considered at some educational levels in the current educational law. Given its crucial role in students' educational development, it is an essential language communicative activity to implement. According to Sanz Esteve (2020), linguistic mediation constitutes a holistic activity in second language teaching. This language communicative activity includes multiple strategies and abilities that encourage the development of communicative competence, oral and written comprehension, oral and written production, and interaction. Not only that, but mediation also promotes the facilitation of effective communication in a group that does not share the same culture or language, as stated by Michienzi (2023). The final objective of the mediation activity is for the student to produce independently in order to

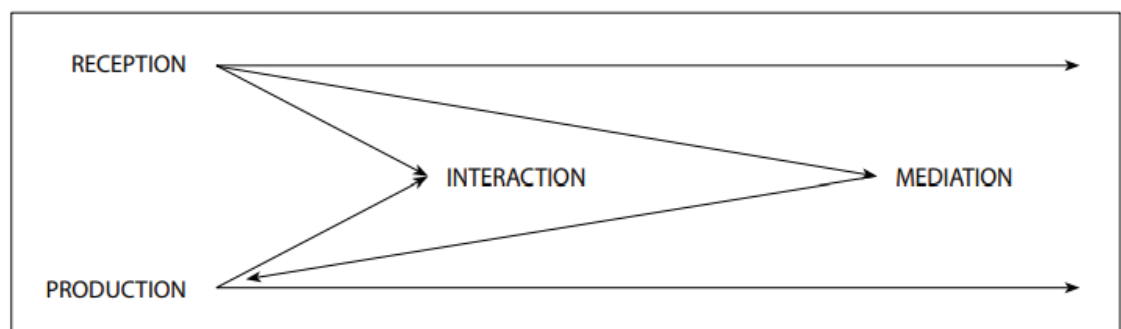
communicate and mediate in their immediate context, as portrayed by Sanz Esteve in her work.

Mediation is centered on the concept of the “co-construction of meaning” (Michienzi, 2023, p. 39), which places the speaker in the plurilingual and pluricultural context. This author stated that this technique provides students with new tools that encourage autonomous learning. Hence, mediation not only contributes to the “co-construction of meaning” but also lays the foundation for others to actively participate in communication, as there is mutual understanding. Delia Kidd further expands on this view by emphasizing on the learner’s role in communication, stating that:

“Mediation recognizes the role of the learner as a social agent. This is rooted in Vygotsky’s conceptualization of communication and cognition as an outside–in process.” (Kidd, 2023)

Mediation makes communication possible in different contexts since it allows the connection of information to create full meaning. The mediation activity provides an educational foundation for students to create a pluricultural space to avoid or reduce linguistic and cultural misunderstandings (Michienzi, 2023). The practice of these activities is not only aimed at enriching intercultural communication but also promotes democracy, social cohesion, and mutual understanding. According to Michienzi (2023), mediation is part of the process of changing second language teaching and evaluation itself.

Figure 3. Common European Framework of Reference, p.34.



According to the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020), mediation is one of the four ways of communication, alongside reception, interaction, and production. As seen in Figure 3, these four communication types are represented. Before the CEFR was published, the English language was divided into four different competencies: oral comprehension, written comprehension, oral production, and written production. These four were complemented by three big content groups: grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. With the publication of the CEFR, a revolutionary concept known as mediation was introduced. This fact changed the planning previously arranged (Esteve, 2020). Figure 3 represents the mediation process, in which the reception of the message, the reception of the message in communication, and the production of a message with new information intervene (Esteve, 2020, p. 196). All competencies, as seen in Figure 3, end with and intervene in the process of mediation. *“For students, it is important to show how developing mediation skills can help them both inside the classroom and beyond”* (Kidd, 2023).

Nowadays, people are immersed in a wide range of linguistic codes, which drives second language students to develop a communicative competence that must be *"multiple"* (Mendizábal de la Cruz, 2022). The objective that every second language teacher must pursue is for the student to develop communicative, plurilingual, and pluricultural competencies. In order to achieve this objective, the student must acquire mediative skills. Mediation activities, both linguistic mediation activities and linguistic-pluricultural mediation activities, promote the student's role as a social agent. This role taken by the second language student establishes his/her position as a relevant figure in contact with several cultures and languages (Mendizábal de la Cruz, 2022).

The acquisition of the mediation activity must become a key objective in the process of teaching and learning in the second language classroom. This action would incorporate mediation as a way of improving societies. Teachers, with the proper linguistic and cultural tools, will take on the role of social agents responsible for achieving understanding through the act of mediation (Mendizábal, 2022, p. 15).

3. Methodology

The present section outlines the methodological approach followed in this study, which aims to explore mediation activities in Vocational Education and Training levels. What follows is a description of the research procedure, including the participants and their context, the activities design, the implementation procedure and data analysis.

3.1. Research approach: design and procedures

The research followed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of mediation practices in Vocational Education and Training levels. The qualitative phase took place during the initial observation period in the target secondary school, with the aim of gathering notes on students' language proficiency, behavior, and general classroom dynamics. This phase involved observing one week of English lessons with their usual teacher, allowing note taking regarding the learning environment and students' engagement with the subject before the intervention phase. During this time, detailed notes were taken regarding student interaction, participation in the lessons, their response to tasks, and their language use and proficiency. During the observation, especial attention was dragged to spot instances of spontaneous mediation, collaborative problem-solving, and student attitudes toward group work and oral expression in English. The classroom in which the intervention took place was a traditional classroom equipped with a *SMART TV*, a blackboard, and individual desks arranged in rows. Each lesson followed lasted 50 minutes as stipulated by the school schedule.

Following the observational phase came the intervention phase. The second stage of the investigation involved six sessions over three weeks, in which the newly designed didactic unit based on mediation strategies was implemented. The didactic unit followed a task-based approach and included several mediation activities to develop in professional and non-professional contexts such as summarizing emails, adapt messages to different audiences, restructure information, etc. The tasks were designed with the intention of asserting students' capacity to develop the mediation activity in various scenarios proposed in the classroom. The exercises followed the descriptors proposed in the Common

European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for the B1 level, specifically those relating to "mediating a text," "mediating concepts," and "facilitating collaborative interaction."

The evaluation phase took place during and after the intervention. Student performance was continuously assessed through a rubric specifically designed for this research. This rubric was constructed using CEFR descriptors and following the VET curriculum. The rubric focused on several key aspects: clarity and accuracy in reformulating content, appropriateness of language register, collaboration, and the ability to adapt information to the audience. Evaluation occurred at two levels: formative and summative. The formative component was integrated into classroom feedback during the sessions, while the summative evaluation was carried out at the end of the unit, through a final mediation task combining written and oral components. Additionally, students were encouraged to share their experiences, opinions on the methodology, and perceived relevance of mediation in their future professional lives.

Finalized the qualitative phase, started the quantitative phase involving the analysis of the results obtained from the evaluation and the observation made in the classroom. The results obtained were taken into an evaluation rubric which shows students' progress along the didactic unit and the final result of the implementation. The data gathered from both phases, quantitative and qualitative, were analyzed as a whole to obtain accurate and significative results. The combination of the students' final task results, rubric scores, and self-reflections contributed to the quantitative data set, while the teacher's anecdotal notes and students' feedback formed part of the qualitative data corpus. Both types of data were cross-analyzed to ensure triangulation and draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the implemented unit. The integration of the two methods allowed for the identification of patterns not only in students' measurable progress but also in their attitude changes toward mediation and English language use in general. This comprehensive approach also enabled a more holistic understanding of the applicability of CEFR-based mediation strategies in real vocational settings.

In summary, the research was conducted through a carefully planned process beginning with a structured observation phase that provided context and initial insights. This was followed by a targeted intervention using a mediation-focused didactic unit and concluded with a thorough evaluation phase involving both quantitative and qualitative instruments. The clarity in the organization of phases, consistent classroom conditions, and alignment with the CEFR ensured the reliability of the outcomes. Ultimately, this methodology provided solid ground for analyzing the integration of mediation in English language teaching within Vocational Education and Training, opening new perspectives for curriculum development aligned with the communicative demands of professional contexts.

3.2.Participants and context

The implementation took place in a rural secondary school in which there was low student enrollment each year, resulting in small classes in terms of the number of students. The building was provided with several spaces to support the learning process, such as a “classroom of the future” equipped with modular furniture and that allowed the implementation of different educational methodologies, and bilingual classes that aimed to foster a communicative and immersive learning environment for the second language. The school provided students with laptops when required for the lessons, and each classroom had either a SMART TV or a projector to support the use of multimedia materials and digital resources in the lessons. Internet access was stable and available for everyone with the school password, which enabled the incorporation of online resources and platforms into some of the mediation tasks implemented in the sessions. Moreover, along with the weekly English lessons, the school offered several English programs aimed at reinforcing the second language. These included extracurricular activities and participation in bilingual projects such as eTwinning. Despite these initiatives, students' overall English level was generally low compared to the expected standards at this stage of education.

The didactic unit was implemented in a Higher Vocational Education and Training course, specifically within the Web Application Design program. This course places an emphasis on digital competence and professional development, offering a practical framework for introducing mediation tasks that reflect real-world

communication scenarios. The unit was implemented in the second term of the academic year, at a point when students had already developed familiarity with the class routine and the expectations of the English module.

The observations were conducted in a B1-level class within a higher vocational training program, with a total of 7 students aged between 18 and 19 years old. Five students attend classes regularly, one attends sporadically, and the student left, although taking the stipulated exams, no longer attends lessons. The average English proficiency level is B1, with some students slightly below or above this level. The student achieving a strong B2 level does not attend classes. This level was selected for this study, considering that students are expected to reach a higher level of English proficiency, thus facilitating the initial implementation of mediation activities. Should the hypothesis prove successful, the activities could subsequently be adapted and introduced at lower Vocational Education and Training levels.

3.3. Instruments and materials used

For the implementation of the didactic unit, each task was introduced with a brief context/introduction and examples to promote effective understanding, and students worked individually, in pairs, or in small groups depending on the task. The didactic unit required several materials in order for it to be visual and engaging. It included authentic materials such as video extracts, email samples, workplace dialogues, and other documents related to real communicative situations in professional environments. These were selected with the aim of promoting student interaction with meaningful content and encouraging the development of mediation strategies in realistic contexts.

In addition to the authentic materials, the unit incorporated a Canva presentation that was used throughout the sessions to introduce and support each activity. The visual nature of the presentation helped to keep students focused and offered a clear structure for the lessons. It contained visual prompts, short instructions, and examples of language use, all adapted to the students' level. Furthermore, a cardboard placed in the classroom was used as a collaborative visual aid. This was gradually completed by students as the unit progressed, and it served both as a

vocabulary bank and as a summary of key expressions and concepts introduced during the sessions. This tool encouraged participation and helped reinforce content in a visible, cumulative way.

Alongside these materials, the unit also included adapted resources that had been simplified to meet the needs of the group. These adaptations mainly consisted of modifying the linguistic complexity of the texts, reducing density of information, and providing visual or written support where necessary. The aim was to preserve the communicative purpose of each task while ensuring the materials were accessible to B1-level students. However, even when simplified, it was essential to maintain the relevance of the materials.

The teacher acted as a guide. The main task was introducing task for them to develop while monitoring the students' performance and collecting informal notes on their progress, engagement, and problem-solving strategies. In addition to observational notes, a rubric was used to assess performance in each task. The rubric included specific indicators related to mediation, such as clarity of expression, use of reformulation, and appropriateness of register. This instrument supported a more systematic evaluation of student outcomes and provided a solid basis for the analysis of the implementation. It is important to note that no major disruptions affected the implementation, and attendance remained consistent throughout the sessions.

4. Didactic design

4.1. General and specific objectives

The present didactic unit is framed within the context of English teaching in Vocational Education and Training (VET) for students of a B1 level following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The unit follows a task-based approach to promote communicative and mediation strategies.

The main objective of this didactic unit is to foster the development of mediation skills among students of VET levels so that they are able to practice the competences of interaction, production and reception contextualized along with

plurilingual and pluricultural competence. According to the descriptors of the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020), and the current curriculum for VET levels established in Real Decreto 217/2022, del 29 de Marzo, the unit aims to enhance learners' capacity of interaction, interpret information and reformulate across languages and cultural contexts. This didactic unit intends to integrate the concept of linguistic mediation as a key language communicative activity in VET education for language learning. According to the CEFR, mediation skills are essential for the development and the learning of the second language and the communicative competence. This unit includes the learning of abilities such as the ability to facilitate understanding between speakers of different languages or from different cultural backgrounds, using appropriate strategies to reformulate, summarize, or clarify messages in spoken or written form, all included in the CEFR as essential skills. Furthermore, it is included the intercultural awareness competence, which aims to encourage learners to recognize and respect cultural differences and to adapt the discourse and behavior accordingly to communicative situations. The didactic design is oriented towards active participation, learners' engagement with the second language and contextualization of the learning.

The main objective of the didactic unit could be broken down in order to obtain the specific objectives that serve as guide to follow the study. These objectives are focused on the mediation activity and its impact on students' motivation and linguistic performance:

- a) To develop learner's ability to mediate meaning in oral and written activities: Students are asked to summarize, reformulate, and convey essential information adapting to the context.
- b) To improve learners' oral production and interaction skills: students are asked to participate in oral and interactional activities simulating specific contexts so that they have to adapt the discourse to the communicative scenario.
- c) To foster motivation and engagement with the subject through the use of meaningful, authentic and contextualized materials: According to the research question, this didactic unit intends to foster motivation for the subject promoting dynamic and participative activities.

- d) To develop student's plurilingual and pluricultural competence: students are exposed to cultural norms, differences in communication styles and cross-cultural interactions.
- e) To facilitate acquisition of domain specific vocabulary: Students are presented vocabulary specific of their field of study enabling them to develop English proficiency contextualized for their situation.
- f) To encourage critical thinking and adaptability: students are given open ended tasks that require for instance problem solving situations, decision making, etc.
- g) To provide continuous formative assessment opportunities: Along the unit, students are given varied tasks that are subject of evaluation to monitor their improvements in the development of mediation skills.

Each specific objective forms part of the activities developed for the didactic unit. These tasks aim to active the mediation skills, practice linguistic forms and connect the second language to the real-world communication.

The design of the present didactic unit supports the research hypothesis, that mediation, when introduced in a communicative and task-based environment, it has a positive impact on student's language proficiency and motivation for the subject. The unit allows to observe and investigate how students engage with activities based on mediation skills and how they affect them in their learning of the second language. Moreover, the unit pays special attention to include authentic, professional contexts that reflect their vocational orientation so that the unit is both pedagogically relevant and adapted to their field. The unit intends to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life situations so that students are prepared not just for a language exam but for day-to-day life.

4.2. Legal and curriculum framework

Despite including the mediation activity, which is not yet explicitly addressed in the current Spanish educational legislation for Vocational Education and Training (VET), the present didactic unit aligns with the main legislative documents in

force: Royal Decree BOE 405/2023, Royal Decree BOE 659/2023, and the regional regulation BOCyL 24/2024. These texts provide the national and regional curricular framework for the implementation of the new vocational education model and define the basic competences, learning outcomes, and assessment criteria for each professional module.

As the legislation specific to VET foreign language teaching is still in development, this unit follows the structure and competences outlined in the broader curricular guidelines. It addresses oral and written comprehension and production, interaction, and sociolinguistic competence. Cultural awareness and mediation are also included as transversal elements that enhance the communicative process.

Although mediation is not yet formally recognized in BOE 405/2023 or BOE 659/2023, its inclusion is based on the guidelines of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and its Companion Volume (2020). Mediation, understood as the ability to process and convey meaning across contexts and interlocutors, is integrated transversally through collaborative tasks, hypothesis comparisons, and context-based simulations.

The unit also complies with BOCyL 24/2024, which supports active methodologies, digital competence, and transversal skills. For the implementation of the present didactic unit, there was no need of adaptation; however, if needed, they will align with ORDEN EDU/1332/2023, de 14 de noviembre, which regulates educational support in Castilla y León.

The present unit promotes key competences, including mediation, so that students learn essential skills in the second language to acquire functional language. All activities and contents align with both national legislation and standards included in the CEFR.

4.3.Methodological approach

The methodology applied in this didactic unit is task-based learning, organized through a sequence of theory explanation followed by interrelated tasks leading to a final project. Tasks are contextualized within a fictional scenario about a

Spanish woman who moves to the United Kingdom and engages with local village gossip. This setting captures students' attention by connecting Spanish and British cultures and encouraging curiosity, research, and active communication in English. Activities include individual work, pair interactions, and group collaboration, promoting both autonomy and teamwork. Technological tools were not integrated due to the center's limitations; however, the design remains adaptable for future implementations involving technology if circumstances allow.

The integration of mediation as an activity, although not explicitly included in the current educational legislation for Vocational Education and Training levels, is a central component of this didactic unit. Through dynamic and contextualized tasks, mediation is introduced via the creation of a fictional character, fostering the development of communicative competences, vocabulary, grammar, and cultural awareness. The approach aligns with real-life situations, thus promoting meaningful learning. The activities have been designed to remain flexible to meet diverse student needs if required.

4.4. Organization of the sessions and time allocation

The didactic unit contains several competencies compiled in the current educational law for Vocational Education and Training, as well as descriptors proposed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). These references provide the legal and methodological framework that supports the unit's design, ensuring relevance of the contents introduced and significance of the activities proposed.

The present didactic unit revolves around the thematic of professional communication and development of mediation skills. For the first part of the unit students are introduced to new concepts contextualized in the work environment, but, for the second part of the unit, students meet a fictional character that serves as the contextual backdrop for the following activities. The activities mirror real life situations that help students develop essential skills as reformulation, or summarization. All tasks are designed to foster the development of mediation skills while they reinforce other competencies such as oral production, written

comprehension or written production. All activities follow the line of the CEFR for a B1 level.

The present didactic unit is structured in six sessions of fifty minute each. This didactic unit is planned for a month of lessons at VET levels (2 lessons per week). The didactic unit follows the task-based approach, so students develop activities that lead to a final project or task. Each session programmed includes a warm-up activity to reinforce previous knowledge, a central task, and a final wrap-up. The time distribution for each session is maintained in almost every lesson: 5-10 minutes are dedicated to the introduction of vocabulary or grammar knowledge, 30 minutes to the development of the main task, and finally, 5-10 minutes to wrap-up activity.

For the first session, students are gradually introduced to mediation by inserting small tasks that require mediation skills between activities they are used to doing in their regular lessons. This session consists of four activities: first, a brainstorming of working positions in order to activate their knowledge and warm up the lesson. Then, an explanation is introduced to provide answers to the previous guessing. With this information, students continue to the next two activities that include mediation skills by interpreting characters from a video shown in the classroom, extracted from a TV series that takes place in an office, and **summarizing** what they have just seen. With this activity, students reinforce professional vocabulary and office relations, and develop interpretation and summarization skills. These are not practiced as isolated tasks, but rather as part of a mediation activity where learners are expected to **convey key ideas from the video to someone who has not seen it**, ensuring mutual understanding through the **selective transmission of relevant information**.

The second session focuses on the consolidation of the concepts introduced in the previous session through written mediation activities, making emphasis on register adaptation. The lesson begins with a short review of the video seen in session one to active previous knowledge. Then, students analyze an email that is not well written since it is not adapted to the linguistic register required for a professional context. This session focuses on written mediation and register

adaptations. Individually, they are asked to reflect on **how to rewrite it** and **improve it**. This is followed by an explanation of formal email format, including appropriate greetings and closings, appropriate organization, and the use of discourse markers. Finally, students are asked to write a formal email using the guidelines previously worked. This session develops students' written mediation skills by asking them **to reformulate and adapt informal or unclear messages into appropriate professional register**.

Session three continues with the contents seen in session one and two, now focusing on reading comprehension and introduction of new meditation skills. For the first activity, students are asked to make an oral production about what ideas they developed for their formal email in the previous session. Then, students are given document they must read and complete the activities that include questions regarding text comprehension and the summary of that text. Finally, the session ends with a cool-down activity in which students participate in the broken phone game, incorporating translation **to promote instant reformulation**. This session reinforces students' reading comprehension abilities while introducing oral mediation skills in a collaborative and engaging way.

Fourth session change the topic seen in previous sessions. This session is the middle of the didactic unit so there have been already two weeks of lessons. This session is designed to introduce and reinforce vocabulary related to professional roles in a company, as well as the introduction of the conditionals structure. The session begins with the welcome to a new, fictional character that will accompany students in the remaining sessions as they learn new contents. The character is an old lady that happens to like gossip very much, she lives in United Kingdom, but she only speaks Spanish. The introductory activity is followed by a dynamic activity to revise known vocabulary but using meditation techniques such as **reformulation of information**. The vocabulary activity ("Mysterious words") is in the format of Taboo. The main task of the session involves students to be immersed in a simulated communicative situation that mimics a professional call, encouraging them to **extract essential information** and comprehend the context. The session concludes with grammar explanation that will serve students for the activities to come up in the following session. Through a mix of oral interaction,

oral comprehension and grammar instruction, this session aims to introduce mediation activities as they develop productive language skills in professional scenarios.

Session five continues with the theme of the fictional character introduced in the previous sessions. This session aims to reinforce grammatical knowledge through the use of mediation activities. It starts with the creation of hypotheses, where students are required to use the conditional sentences studied in the previous lesson. This is followed by a clue hunt around the classroom, in which students apply mediation techniques such as **translation and reformulation** to uncover the clues that will lead them to the answer, they need to provide to the fictional character of the old lady in order to complete the gossip. To conclude the session, students are given an email written by one of the fictional characters in the story, so **they have to create a summary of it for the old lady that does not speak English**. This session reinforces the use of mediation techniques to foster effective communication skills in both oral and written formats.

Finally, session six brings together all the competencies and contents addressed throughout the didactic unit. In the first activity, students write a second hypothesis about the gossip they are trying to uncover, incorporating the new clues presented during the session. With this additional information, their initial hypothesis is revised. Next, students compare their updated hypotheses aloud in small groups. They are asked to contrast their interpretations and reach a consensus by merging all their ideas into a single shared version. This task requires students to gather clues and articulate their reasoning orally in a **comparative mediation task**, involving discussion, negotiation, and justification of conclusions. The activity integrates **mediation of concepts**, as learners process, compare, and co-construct meaning based on the clues they have individually interpreted. The session concludes with the revelation of the actual gossip, which serves as both a closure and a reflective space. In this final phase, learners analyze their language choices and the contextual use of conditional structures. Throughout the session, the focus is on the appropriate selection of register and production of coherent and cohesive oral and written messages. The task-based progression allows learners to consolidate grammar structures meaningfully,

reinforcing their capacity to use language purposefully in both formal and informal communicative settings.

The six sessions that make up the didactic unit follow a coherent structure that maintains a specific order for the sake of the students' learning and understanding of the content while they develop new communicative skills. The task-based methodology provides the basis for the integration of varied evaluation instruments, fosters both collaborative and individual activities, and balances productive and receptive tasks. All sessions include activities in which students develop mediation strategies as they learn new content appropriate to second language teaching. Moreover, the planning of the didactic unit contributes to the development of social, plurilingual, and pluricultural skills by promoting students' collaboration in didactic and contextualized communicative contexts. Learners are able to practice meaning negotiation, respect for cultural diversity, and develop communicative skills to bridge differences among languages.

4.5. Adaptations to Diversity

The level at which the unit was developed did not require any specific adaptation, as the group presented a homogeneous profile in terms of linguistic proficiency and cognitive development. However, it is essential to acknowledge the possibility of diverse adaptations and the potential variety among students. For this reason, the didactic unit was planned to be flexible and subject to adaptation to suit different learning needs, styles, and levels.

Although no formal adaptation was necessary for this particular group, the didactic unit aligns with the principles proposed by the Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The main aim of this framework is to ensure accessibility and inclusivity for all students regardless of their individual differences. UDL promotes the planning of educational contexts considering potential variability among learners. Creating flexible learning environments is key for students to feel included, and to be able to participate and engage.

If future adaptation were needed, several strategies could be incorporated. For instance, students who require additional scaffolding can benefit from simplified

instructions, visual resources, vocabulary adaptations, reformulations, and so forth. These resources would be particularly useful during any classroom activity. Additionally, practices such as peer feedback and teacher observations could serve as educational support to help students struggling in certain areas of the subject. Moreover, advanced students could be provided with extra activities added to the main ones, allowing them to develop the principal task while continuing to enrich their learning. Some examples of activities could be developing an alternative ending for the gossip or proposing cultural clues to be included in the hunting activity. These activities promote the development of linguistic proficiency while staying aligned with the unit's goals.

Overall, the present didactic unit promotes an inclusive environment through a variety of activities that cater to different learning styles, incorporating a balanced range of task types and methodological flexibility. This ensures that all learners have access to the subject content, develop competences, and acquire meaningful learning.

5. Implementation

5.1. Overview of the intervention process

The didactic unit implemented during the internship period was based on the proposal to integrate mediation activity into Vocational Education and Training (VET) classrooms. This unit consisted of six sessions conducted over the course of a month. Due to the reduced number of hours dedicated to foreign language instruction in VET compared to compulsory secondary education, the completion of the unit required an extended timeframe. Nevertheless, the structured and progressive design of the sessions allowed for a successful implementation despite time constraints.

The intervention took place within the Higher Vocational Training program in Web Application Design at IES Juana I de Castilla, a semi urban educational center located in Tordesillas. The group comprised seven students aged between 18 and 20 years. Regular attendance was limited to five students, with a sixth attending occasionally and the seventh only participating in assessments. The

prevailing level of English in the group was B1, although individual proficiency ranged slightly below and above this level. Notably, the student with the highest proficiency (upper B2) did not attend the English lessons.

The unit was carried out in the center's bilingual classroom, which offered a larger space than the standard FP rooms but lacked consistent language-themed decoration and student materials. Due to the change of classroom, students often arrived without textbooks or stationery, which posed organizational challenges. Despite these aspects, the sessions were generally well-received by students.

The didactic unit was divided into two parts: an introductory phase and specialized phase focusing on mediation strategies. The first three sessions gradually introduced mediation activities alongside familiar formats to ease students into the new language communicative activity. This progressive approach facilitated the transition to the second part of the unit, which consisted of more dynamic and contextualized mediation tasks embedded in a fictional narrative. The character of “La Vieja al Bolillo” was introduced to create a humorous and culturally engaging storyline that motivated students and encouraged participation.

As sessions progressed, student engagement and motivation increased significantly. Initially cautious, students became more confident, especially in the use of English, even when improvising or using invented words. Task-based learning methods supported this evolution, with activities ranging from writing formal emails to solving a fictional mystery using conditional sentences. Interaction, production, and mediation were all practiced in a contextualized manner that reflected real-world use of the language.

Overall, the implementation of the unit demonstrated that mediation can be successfully integrated into VET curricula, promoting communication skills and reinforcing existing competencies. The students' growing involvement and their positive response to dynamic, varied activities underscored the potential benefits of incorporating mediation as a central aspect of language learning at this educational level.

5.2. Description of each session and activities

As previously mentioned, the structure of the unit followed a two-phase progression. The first three sessions were designed to gradually introduce the concept of mediation to students, combining familiar activity formats with selected mediation strategies. This initial phase enabled students to build confidence and develop the necessary skills to progress to the second part of the unit. The final three sessions adopted a more didactic and dynamic approach, incorporating a fictional storyline. The humorous tone and culturally relatable figure functioned as a consistent narrative element throughout the unit. Through this contextual framework, students engaged with the subject content while simultaneously developing mediation strategies.

The first session contained four different activities. The session started with a brainstorming activity that encouraged learners to activate previous knowledge about job-related vocabulary, promoting the co-construction of meaning, a main component of mediation. This activity was followed by a guided explanation of the job positions inside a company, in which students had to **identify the roles and interpret their duties**. Such tasks required the ability to **relay information clearly**, a key mediation strategy according to the CEFR. The third activity included video input from the series *The Office*, combined with vocabulary work, providing students with contextualized exposure to professional language and expressions. The final task—oral comprehension and mediation activities—asked students to **process information from the video and then explain or summarize this content, adapting it to the imagined needs of a less-informed interlocutor**. All four activities required the use of a visual presentation screened on the SMART TV available in the classroom. The visual support facilitated students' following of the lesson while reinforcing the information with relevant images. For activities 3 and 4, students were given a worksheet with the task's questions to complete.

In the second session, students were immersed in formal written communication, mainly focusing on the structure and the register to use on business emails. The lesson began with a brief review of the previous session through the video, reinforcing understanding. This was followed by the analysis of an informal email

from a fictional character, Michael Scott, which students revised to identify errors in tone and register. The next task included an explanation of how to write formal emails, using textual markers and discourse connectors. The final activity invited students to **produce their own formal email, thus mediating professional tone, structure, and purpose through written production**. This session promoted written mediation by requiring learners to **synthesize information and rephrase it using appropriate formal conventions**. For this session, the use of a visual presentation screened on the SMART TV was required. For the email writing, students were given a worksheet, subject to evaluation, for them to complete.

Session three aimed to reinforce and consolidate mediation strategies already introduced. Students began by presenting the ideas from their previous emails orally, giving them the opportunity to **mediate written information into spoken discourse**. This was followed by the reading of a professional text related to the business world and the **creation of a summary, allowing learners to extract and rephrase relevant content** which is an essential mediation skill. The final activity, a “broken phone” translation game, allowed students to practice **reformulating meaning across languages and registers in a collaborative, communicative context**. For this session, the visual presentation was also used, along with the appropriate worksheets for the reading activity. For the final activity, cards containing different sentences were required for students to translate in the “broken phone” game.

The fourth session marked a shift towards more dynamic and imaginative mediation contexts, introducing the fictional character called *La Vieja al Bolillo*. This humorous and culturally relatable figure served as a narrative thread for the remaining sessions. Students were presented with a mystery scenario involving a businessman named Mr. Richard. Through tasks such as a **Taboo-style vocabulary game and a listening activity simulating a phone call**, learners had to **gather, interpret, and relay key pieces of information to help the character understand what was happening**. The session concluded with a grammar-focused activity on conditionals, essential for the following hypothesis-building tasks for the following session. For this session. The visual presentation was also used to present the new character for the following sessions as to present the

activities to complete. For the taboo-style activity students were given cards with the word they had to explain and the words they could not use to describe it. Finally, for the listening activity they were given a worksheet with the questions to answer.

Session five deepened the engagement with the storyline. Students wrote their **first hypotheses** about the mysterious situation using conditional structures, combining imagination with linguistic mediation. This was followed by a clue-hunting activity, where learners physically moved around the classroom **to gather fragmented information and reconstruct it collaboratively**. The session concluded with a **summarization** task in which students had to explain the contents of a key email to *La Vieja al Bolillo*, whose poor vision served as a humorous excuse to practice **adapting content to the needs of a fictional recipient**. This promoted advanced written mediation and problem-solving in English. For session five, activities were presented through the visual presentation screened on the SMART TV. For the hypothesis activity and the explanation task, students were given a piece of paper with the instructions for each task. Finally, for the clue-hunting activity, envelopes containing clues and numbered on the inside were hidden throughout the classroom for students to follow in sequence. Students also received a worksheet with numbers and instructions to help them record useful information.

Finally, session six brought closure to the unit both in terms of content and narrative. Students revised and refined their **hypotheses in light of the clues and shared them orally in a comparative mediation task**, discussing and justifying their conclusions. The “great ending” revealed the true events of the storyline and provided a cultural twist that merged Spanish and British customs. All the British and Spanish customs had been introduced throughout the didactic unit via the various tasks completed; when a new cultural clue appeared, students were given a paper with the information to paste onto a poster board in the classroom. This final reflection reinforced not only linguistic content and mediation strategies, but also intercultural awareness, which is central to effective communication. For this final session, the visual presentation was used to represent the “great ending” with

images related to the story. For the revised hypothesis activity, students were once again given a worksheet, subject to evaluation, with the instructions to follow.

Overall, the six sessions developed successfully since students were introduced the concept of mediation and they were able to do every activity that included the use of mediation skills. Students were exposed to multiple tasks in which they had to interpret, reformulate, and convey meaning through various modes—oral and written, formal and informal, individual, and collaborative. The narrative thread, humor, and real-world relevance of the tasks promoted high levels of participation and motivation. This experience demonstrates that mediation, although not formally integrated into VET curricula, is a powerful tool for enhancing second language acquisition and communicative competence in meaningful and professional contexts.

5.3. Use of mediation in practice

The implementation of the mediation activity in VET was successfully incorporated into students' lessons. The alumni responded to all activities related to the development of mediation skills as they learnt the contents of the subject.

Throughout the six sessions of the didactic unit, mediation was not treated as a separate element but as an integral aspect of the communicative competence. The activities included in the sessions were designed to foster the ability to simplify, interpret and summarize information in various formats, aligning with the descriptors included in the CEFR. In both oral and written forms, students engaged in relaying messages, summarizing professional texts, adapting register and tone, and co-constructing meaning in collaborative contexts.

The initial sessions helped to introduce mediation strategies gradually, combining them with familiar formats to reduce anxiety and increase accessibility. Students were first exposed to simplified mediation tasks such as summarizing a video from *The Office* or identifying errors in tone and register in an email. As confidence grew, more dynamic and imaginative contexts were introduced, culminating in role-play, mystery-solving, and interaction with the fictional character “La Vieja al Bolillo.” This narrative thread not only added humor but also supported

intercultural awareness by embedding British and Spanish customs into the storyline, thus deepening learners' engagement with both language and cultural content.

Despite the small group size and the organizational challenges posed by the bilingual classroom setting, student participation increased steadily. Learners who were initially hesitant began to interact more freely, even improvising language creatively when unsure. The tasks fostered a communicative environment where errors were seen as part of the learning process. Moreover, the progression from receptive to productive mediation allowed students to internalize strategies and apply them autonomously.

From a pedagogical perspective, the experience highlights that mediation can be successfully introduced in VET environments, even with limited contact hours. The tasks not only aligned with real-world professional communication but also promoted essential soft skills such as summarizing, negotiating meaning, and adapting content to audience needs. In this sense, mediation emerged not only as a linguistic goal but as a bridge between language learning and professional practice—confirming its value as a central pillar of communicative competence in vocational education.

5.4. Challenges encountered during implementation

The implementation of the present didactic unit posed several challenges throughout the six sessions. One of the first issues emerged on the first session, the change of classroom. Due to the need to use the bilingual class, students had to move from their usual room to another. This situation caused students frequently arrived with the required materials as pens or notebooks, which disrupted the flow of certain activities and required the teacher to provide additional organizational support.

Another significant challenge was the irregular attendance of students. Although the group was composed of seven learners, only five attended regularly. This inconsistency affected group-based tasks, often requiring last-minute adaptations

to convert collaborative activities into individual or pair work. While this flexibility helped ensure that all students remained engaged, it occasionally compromised the intended communicative or cooperative dynamics of the activities.

The limited number of weekly hours allocated to second language instruction in VET also presented a constraint. Unlike in compulsory secondary education, where language exposure is more consistent, the six-session unit extended over an entire month. This prolonged timeline made it more difficult to maintain continuity between sessions, and at times, reinforcement of previously introduced content was necessary to reactivate knowledge.

Furthermore, students did not have any contact with mediation activities before, which meant that their initial mediation skills were limited. For this reason, it was required extra time for them to internalize the concept and develop basic mediation skills. The progressive design of the unit helped address this issue, so students were able to develop the skills needed gradually as the unit progressed.

Pedagogical limitations also played a role. One of the main difficulties encountered was the assessment of mediation. Unlike traditional language skills such as grammar or vocabulary use, mediation involves dynamic processes like reformulating and adapting information to a specific context or interlocutor. The evaluation of these skills objectively posed a challenge as the mediation activity usually relies on interaction rather than in the final product.

Additionally, the balance between creativity and structure needed careful attention. While the fictional narrative and humorous elements enhanced student motivation and participation, keeping learners focused on linguistic objectives during imaginative tasks required constant redirection and scaffolding.

6. Evaluation tools

The evaluation of the didactic unit is aligned with the learning outcomes established in Annex X of BOE 659/2023, which includes competencies related to professional

English in Vocational Education. Although linguistic mediation is not explicitly stated in the official curriculum, it is incorporated here following the descriptors provided by the CEFR Companion Volume (2020), particularly for B1–B2 levels. The evaluation follows a competency-based approach, focusing on the following criteria:

- 1) **Comprehension and extraction of key information:** This criterion assesses student's ability to identify main ideas of a written or oral text ensuring that they capture the key information for message transmission.
- 2) **Reformulation and explanation for others:** This refers to student's capacity to reformulate and explain information or a message so it can be understood by the interlocutor.
- 3) **Written and oral production with coherence and cohesion:** This criterion involves the production of clear and well-structured text in different modalities that express a coherent message.
- 4) **Adaptation to communicative context:** This refers to the student's capacity to adapt the message to a specific style or register according to the situation, audience, or purpose, which is essential for effective mediation.
- 5) **Collaboration and interaction in mediation:** this criterion includes student's active participation so that they facilitate interaction fostering understanding among speakers.
- 6) **Self and peer evaluation:** this criterion values student's ability to critically reflect on own performance and to provide meaningful feedback to peers being respectful. This promotes autonomy and critical thinking.

Each criterion is assessed through observable indicators during the classroom activities along the didactic unit. The different criteria have been given a percentage over the final grade for the didactic unit. Criteria 1, 2 and 3 are given 20% each on the final grade since they are essential in the development of mediation skills as they align with CEFR descriptors. Also, these competences are the most worked along the didactic unit, so their percentage is higher than the following ones. Criteria 4 and 5 are given 15% each since they are less present along the unit, however, they are as important to develop for mediation as the previous ones. Finally, criterion 6 is given a 10% over the final grade. While important for fostering reflection and autonomy, is supportive in nature and given less weight to reflect its formative role.

The main evaluation tool used for this didactic unit is a rubric designed to assess student's development and completion of tasks. This rubric was developed specifically for the activities carried out from session 1 to session 6. The evaluable activities are:

- a)** Oral comprehension and mediation activities (Session 1)
- b)** Written production of an email (Session 2)
- c)** Oral production of ideas (Session 3)
- d)** Story summarization and adaptation (Session 3)
- e)** Taboo (Session 4)
- f)** Hypothesis formulation (Session 4)
- g)** Clue hunting (Session 5)
- h)** Summary of the email (Session 5)
- i)** Final hypothesis (Session 6)
- j)** Oral production (Session 6)

The rubric is divided into several columns to ensure an accurate representation of each student's grade. Each criterion is broken down according to the sessions in which it is addressed. Depending on the performance observed for each student, the corresponding box will be marked. On the right side of the rubric, there are two columns: one saved for the score out of ten, and the other for the score based on the percentage assigned to that specific criterion. To calculate the final grade for the student, all the percentage-based scores will be added, resulting in the final mark at the end of the didactic unit.

In addition to rubric-based assessment, observation tools will be employed throughout the unit to evaluate oral interactions, student engagement, and the application of communicative strategies during dynamic tasks such as the Taboo, and group hypothesis building. The teacher will record aspects such as spontaneous use of English, collaboration and role assumption, and strategy application (e.g., paraphrasing, simplifying, clarifying). These formative observations will help adjust instruction when necessary and contribute to the overall evaluation. Moreover, students may be invited to assess each other's presentations or roleplays, as well as

their own, using simplified versions of the rubric, fostering metacognitive awareness and self-regulation.

Data for evaluation will be collected through various sources, including:

- a) Rubric-based scores from selected tasks (Sessions 1–6).
- b) Teacher observation notes from dynamic activities (e.g., oral mediation, collaborative tasks).
- c) Student-produced materials such as written summaries, adapted messages, emails, and presentations.
- d) Audio recordings of oral productions, especially during individual mediation tasks.
- e) Teacher notes on behavioral and attitudinal aspects such as engagement, effort, and initiative.
- f) Self and peer evaluation rubric completed by students.

All these sources will be triangulated to ensure a valid and comprehensive evaluation of each student's development in stipulated competences and mediation skills.

7. Results and analysis

7.1. Student performance and Progress

This section presents an analysis of students' performance and development of mediation strategies throughout the implementation of the didactic unit. The evaluation is based on both quantitative and qualitative data collected through rubrics, observational notes, students' self-assessment, and the overall tasks.

According to the observations made prior to the implementation of the didactic unit, students were not given space to develop mediation skills, neither on a regular basis nor sporadically. At the beginning of the implementation, students were given brief mediation activities alongside their usual tasks. While students showed fluency in spoken interactions and reading comprehension for a B1 level, there was significant variation in their ability to paraphrase, summarize, or mediate written and oral content for others. Students required further explanation

on how to approach the mediation tasks, which is a normal aspect considering they were not used to putting these activities into practice.

Different assessment methods were used to record students' progress throughout the implementation of the didactic unit. The first element used was the observational notes, which reflected the general initial level of the VET students. One of the most important tools, as mentioned in point 6 (evaluation), was the rubric, which recorded students' development of competences from session one to session six. Later in the implementation of the didactic unit, self-assessment and peer feedback rubrics were also used, reflecting students' own perception of their performance.

The first data to be presented is the qualitative one, since it was the first to be collected through initial observations of the classroom's skills, proficiency, and development of competencies. Before the implementation of the didactic unit, students from VET were only asked to complete tasks provided by Cambridge for the B1 level. The competencies that students were able to develop with that classroom methodology were written production and written comprehension. The rest of the competencies—such as oral interaction, oral production, and mediation—were not addressed or developed, so students completed tasks mechanically during all the sessions. When students had the opportunity to speak, they often avoided using the second language and resorted to Spanish instead. In fact, during the initial sessions, over 80% of students responded in Spanish when prompted in English. Moreover, there were no mediation-like activities such as adaptation, simplification, or mediation of concepts. As a result, opportunities for the development of effective communication were very limited.

During the implementation of the didactic unit, students started to show noticeable improvement in the development of effective communication, since they were working on all language competences in an integrated way, along with mediation activities. In session one, students were still unfamiliar with the dynamic of the new tasks, so their performance was slightly lower, with an average score of around 6 out of 10 across the assessed indicators. However, as students became familiar with the dynamics and engaged more actively with the didactic unit, their

progress increased. By session three (middle of the didactic unit), students had increased their marks to around 7 points, and by session six (end of the didactic unit), students' score reach or surpassed the 8 out of 10 in the indicators included in the evaluation rubric.

In addition, the use of English in the classroom experienced a clear improvement. Through observation, a significant improvement has been seen in students' use of the second language in the classroom. Only 2 out of 7 students spoke in the second language at the beginning of the implementation. Nonetheless, by the end of the implementation, the number rose to 5 out of 7 students using the second language during the lesson. This change in numbers supposes an increase of 42%, which reflects not only a quantitative improvement, but also a qualitative one. Students started to gain confidence, so they started to actively participate using the second language. The inclusion of communicative and mediation-based activities encouraged students to take part in oral exchanges and reduced their dependence on Spanish. As a result, the classroom environment became more participative, with English being used as the main language of communication during most tasks and interactions.

There were key indicators that showed the progress among VET students. First, there was an improvement in fluency in the second language, interaction, use of specific vocabulary, and task completion related to oral communication and mediation. Moreover, students showed an improvement in language use in the completion of both written and spoken tasks, as they were exposed to significant input and output opportunities. Finally, students developed autonomy in their work, and engagement with the subject was shown when students were the ones that started communication in English, carried out self and peer correction during tasks, and showed willingness to collaborate.

The progress observed throughout the implementation of the didactic unit aligns with the general and specific objectives specified in section 4.1 of this study. The students' improvement in interaction, fluency in the second language, and the use of domain-specific vocabulary confirms that the unit enhances oral production and mediation skills, hence aligning with the specific objectives of developing

learners' ability to mediate meaning in oral and written activities, and improving learners' oral production and interaction skills. Also, the increasing engagement and autonomy developed by VET students reflect the positive impact of meaningful and contextualized materials on motivation towards the subject. The integration of plurilingual and pluricultural competence in the didactic unit helped students adapt their language to different contexts and communicative scenarios, fostering effective communication. The continuous use of specialized vocabulary useful for their field enabled students to connect English learning with the professional world. Moreover, the inclusion of open-ended mediation tasks encouraged critical thinking and adaptability, as students were required to negotiate meaning, problem-solve, and make decisions collaboratively. Finally, the variety of formative assessments proposed along the didactic unit provided diverse opportunities to monitor and encourage students' progress.

These results are relevant in the context of second language teaching in VET since they demonstrate that a task-based approach centered on mediation activities can effectively transform English teaching from mechanical to meaningful learning. This change is crucial for VET students, as their professional future will require not just technical knowledge but also interaction, negotiation, and adaptation across languages. The findings suggest that the integration of mediation activities as an essential communicative and learning strategy fosters confidence, autonomy, and language competence. All these aspects carry great significance in a globalized world.

7.2. Analysis of the effectiveness of mediation in VET context

Mediation, as portrayed in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020), is defined as the activity that enables communication between language users who, for any reasons, cannot access information and are unable to directly communicate. This activity involves linguistic, social, and cognitive strategies to enable understanding. In the present study, the mediation tasks were structured around three CEFR categories: mediating a text, mediating concepts, and mediating communication.

In the didactic unit, mediating a text was presented through tasks that required students to summarize or adapt content, such as reformulating emails into a formal

register or summarizing written material for a third party. Mediating concepts involved tasks where students worked together to build shared understanding, such as comparing hypotheses or paraphrasing during vocabulary games. Finally, mediating communication was presented through interactive tasks, such as explaining clues to peers, often within culturally framed scenarios.

The mediation tasks designed for this didactic unit proved to be effective in several ways. Most tasks were directly connected to students' professional futures—for instance, summarizing and rewriting emails helped them engage with business and communicative scenarios, while adapting texts to a specific audience allowed them to practice making technical content accessible to non-specialists. These activities ensured that mediation was not abstract, but clearly applicable to real-world contexts outside the classroom.

The tasks required information processing, transformation, and interaction. In Session 3, students had to summarize a business article and explain it orally, combining text comprehension, reformulation, and spontaneous speaking. In the “clue-hunting” activity from Session 5, students co-constructed meaning collaboratively by collecting and interpreting fragmented information, integrating mediation and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, all mediation tasks incorporated the use of English not as isolated linguistic knowledge, but as a functional tool for communication. Thus, the target language was consistently used as a medium to mediate meaning and foster understanding, in contrast to traditional exercises focused mainly on grammar or vocabulary.

Another factor demonstrating the effectiveness of the mediation activities was the students' engagement and interaction throughout the didactic unit. The progressive structure of the unit, moving from familiar tasks to more unfamiliar formats, contributed to increased engagement by avoiding cognitive overload. In the first sessions, students were hesitant and often relied on Spanish. However, by the end of the unit, participation in the second language had increased. The number of students using English in oral tasks rose from 2 out of 7 students to 5 out of 7, a 42% increase. The number results so significant due to the small class size.

Students engaged with contextualized and humorous tasks, such as helping the fictional character “La Vieja al Bolillo” understand the gossip. This approach lowered the affective filter and encouraged the use of English in the classroom. Collaborative tasks also fostered effective peer interaction. For example, the hypothesis comparison task in Session 6 allowed students to work in groups to refine their guesses about the storyline, using strategies such as negotiation, paraphrasing, and reaching agreement. This task aligned with CEFR descriptors on facilitating collaborative interaction. During the Taboo activity, students had to describe professional vocabulary without using the word itself or immediate synonyms, thereby practicing paraphrasing and conceptual mediation.

Several factors influenced the successful implementation of the didactic unit based on mediation activities. First, using mediation as a methodological foundation—rather than treating it as an isolated skill—allowed for its integration across all classroom practices. This gave students the opportunity to use the second language with purpose and intention. Second, the sequence of tasks—progressing from simpler to more complex—ensured a gradual development of mediation skills. The activities were coherent and interconnected, creating a natural flow throughout the unit.

The student profile and classroom context also played a crucial role. The small class size enabled more individualized support and formative feedback. Finally, the practical, narrative, and humorous nature of the unit enhanced engagement and supported the development of core mediation competencies.

Nonetheless, several challenges emerged during implementation. Students were unfamiliar with mediation activities and required additional explanation and scaffolding at the beginning. Irregular attendance also forced adjustments to planned collaborative activities. Lastly, assessing mediation remains a complex task due to its dynamic and process-oriented nature, which requires evaluating not only the final product but also the communicative strategies used throughout the task. This calls for a combination of qualitative observation and performance-based assessment tools.

7.3.Limitations of the study

The present study presents some limitations. Firstly, the small number of participants does not allow for generalizations regarding the success or failure of the study. Since only five students attended regularly, the sample is not sufficient to draw firm conclusions or to fully reflect the diversity of a typical vocational education group. The absence of one student and the sporadic attendance of another also affected the classroom dynamics, reducing opportunities for collaboration and limiting the development of certain planned group tasks.

In addition, the implementation period was not long enough to determine significant changes in students' proficiency in the second language. The unit was carried out over a limited number of sessions, which restricts the observation of long-term progress. Some short-term improvements in mediation strategies were noted, however, it was not possible to confirm whether these developments would be maintained over time.

Furthermore, the dual role of teacher and observer may have promoted the Hawthorne effect among students, leading to changes in their behavior simply due to their awareness of being observed. Although every effort was made to maintain a natural learning environment, the presence of that figure in the classroom may have influenced student participation, motivation, or performance during the intervention.

Despite the limitations the study presents, the findings can provide valuable information to continue investigating and to understand how mediation activities can be introduced in Vocational Education and Training levels. Further research could expand the sample and extend the implementation period in order to obtain more significant results. Additionally, including mediation activities at different VET levels and special fields could broaden the findings, contributing to the creation of a more adaptable and inclusive teaching environment.

8. Conclusion

The present study investigates the design, implementation, and evaluation of linguistic mediation activities—according to the CEFR—as a pedagogical tool to

develop communicative, plurilingual, and pluricultural competencies in second language teaching within Vocational Education and Training (VET). Although the current curriculum does not formally recognize mediation as an explicit educational objective, the findings reveal that its integration can improve students' linguistic performance, engagement with the second language, and communicative skills.

At the beginning of the intervention phase, classroom observations revealed that students lacked previous mediation practice. English lessons were predominantly focused on grammar and written comprehension, while competencies such as oral production, interaction, and mediation skills in general were given little importance. This situation resulted in limited student participation and a general reluctance to use English in spontaneous or regular interactions. However, the implementation of a didactic unit based on mediation activities promoted an improvement in students' engagement and participation in the second language. The structured nature of the sessions, which followed a task-based approach, provided learners with multiple opportunities to gradually acquire the essential strategies needed to mediate meaning in varied communicative contexts.

The data for the present study was collected through rubrics, teacher observations, and self and peer assessment by students. All this data collection provided the information to assess student's progress along the implementation of the unit. Initially, students struggled with the new concept of mediation and its application in tasks. However, as the unit developed, they showed better proficiency, wider range of vocabulary, and growing ability to use the second language for efficient and significant communication. By the end of the implementation, most students had not only increased their participation in English, but also were able to complete more complex mediation activities naturally. This evolution was mainly noticeable in their oral interactions which changed from Spanish predominance to natural and spontaneous conversations in English.

One of the most significant results of the investigation is the holistic nature of mediation, as it supports the development of all the main competences to gain proficiency in the second language. Language learning is usually treated as isolated competences, but mediation activities encourage learners to develop essential

practices such as: process information, message interpretation, content adaptation for third parties, and meaningful interaction with others. This approach aligns with the descriptor proposed by the CEFR, which makes emphasis on the importance of language use in contextualized and real-life scenarios. This didactic unit advocates for the learning of the second language as a contextualized and meaningful activity. The fictional narrative character incorporated in the didactic unit, called “La Vieja al Bolillo,” served as a narrative tool to engage students to English with motivation and a pinch of creativity. The incorporation of a humorous tone, cultural references and professional instances bridged a connection between language learning and the learners’ vocational orientation.

Despite the success of the intervention phase, several challenges occurred during the development of the unit. The limited number of lesson hours per week assigned to the English subject in VET along with the irregular attendance of students, lead to the necessity of both content and activity adaptations. Additionally, mediation evaluation proved to be complex, as it involves dynamic and context-dependent processes that cannot always be captured through traditional evaluation tools. Nonetheless, the use of a specialized rubric and the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data allowed the creation of an evaluation that adjusts to necessities and the educational law.

This research shows the importance of integrating mediation in English teaching for VET levels. Mediation promotes a communicative environment in which learners are the center of the teaching process. Also, this approach supports the development of essential and transversal skills such as adaptation, reformulation, and critical thinking. These skills are not only essential inside the classroom wall, but also in real life contexts and for their professional future. Furthermore, mediation incorporated the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competence arising cultural and diversity awareness among students.

Considering all these findings, it is recommended that mediation be formally incorporated into the VET curriculum. The current educational law that regulates VET level curriculum does not recognize the mediation activity. However, the present study demonstrates its pedagogical relevance and its applicability in diverse contexts.

Teacher training programs should therefore include modules on mediation strategies, providing educators with the necessary tools and knowledge to design and implement effective mediation-based tasks.

Future research could explore the application and effectiveness of mediation activities in other VET specialties or other educational levels as could be adult education or even bilingual programs. Moreover, the inclusion of digital mediation tasks that incorporate TIC uses present an interesting area of study taking into account the increasing digitalization of educational contexts. Finally, longer studies could provide further information into how mediation activities influence the development of second language proficiency, their intercultural abilities and their autonomy.

In conclusion, the present study portrays the transformative potential of mediation activities in second language teaching in VET levels. By the task-based approach and the emphasis on effective communication, mediation not only fosters linguistic proficiency but prepares students for the real-world communication and interculturality. Its inclusion in the educational framework of VET is not only justified but necessary as language education meets the transformative language demands of both professional environments and current society.

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10. Annexes

Annex 1

Criterion	Excellent (10-9)	S/N°		Good (8-7)	S/N°		Satisfactory (6-5)	S/N°		Insufficient (<5)	S/N°		Grade /10	Grade /%
1. Comprehension and extraction of key information (CEFR: Mediation strategies; UD: 1.e, 2.c, 4.c) 20%	Identifies main ideas and relevant details precisely and quickly, presenting them clearly.	S1/4		Identifies main ideas with some minor inaccuracies.	S1/4		Extracts general information but misses important details.	S1/4		Fails to adequately identify relevant information.	S1/4			
		S3/1			S3/1			S3/1			S3/1			
		S3/3			S3/3			S3/3			S3/3			
		S4/3			S4/3			S4/3			S4/3			
		S5/3			S5/3			S5/3			S5/3			
2. Reformulation and explanation for others (CEFR: Processing texts; UD: 4.g, 3.c) 20%	Reformulates and explains clearly, accurately, and in a structured way, adapting to the interlocutor's register.	S4/2		Reformulates with general clarity, although with minor errors in precision or structure.	S4/2		Partial or poorly structured reformulation; difficulty adapting the register.	S4/2		Confused or inadequate reformulation; does not adapt discourse to the interlocutor.	S4/2			
		S4/3			S4/3			S4/3			S4/3			
		S5/1			S5/1			S5/1			S5/1			
		S5/3			S5/3			S5/3			S5/3			
		S6/1			S6/1			S6/1			S6/1			

3. Written/oral production with coherence and cohesion (CEFR: Mediation concepts; UD: 4.c, 4.f, 3.c) 20%	The message is well organized, with effective use of connectors and specialized vocabulary.	S1/4		Good organization and adequate use of connectors, although with minor errors.	S1/4	Basic organization, limited connectors, and general vocabulary.	S1/4	Lack of coherence, poor structure, and inadequate vocabulary.	S1/4		
		S2/4			S2/4		S2/4		S2/4		
		S3/1			S3/1		S3/1		S3/1		
		S3/3			S3/3		S3/3		S3/3		
		S5/1			S5/1		S5/1		S5/1		
		S5/3			S5/3		S5/3		S5/3		
		S6/1			S6/1		S6/1		S6/1		
		S6/2			S6/2		S6/2		S6/2		
4. Adaptation to the communicative context (CEFR: Communication strategies; UD: 3.c, 5.a)	Effectively adjusts style and register to the formal/informal or professional situation.	S2/4		Style and register generally appropriate to the context.	S2/4	Shows some recognition of context, but with incoherencies.	S2/4	Does not adapt language or register to the communicative context.	S2/4		
		S5/1			S5/1		S5/1		S5/1		

OBSERVATIONS	
Spontaneous use of English	
Collaboration and role assumption	
Strategy application (e.g., paraphrasing, simplifying, clarifying).	
Others	

