

## **PEDAGOGICAL SCIENCES**

### **MEDIATION IN THE CONTEXT OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN UKRAINE**

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The importance of mastering several foreign languages is becoming increasingly important throughout the world and in Ukraine in particular. Knowledge of several languages provides a great opportunity to obtain useful information, valuable experience, high-quality education, opens new perspectives, it is the key to success in the modern world. Multilingualism is becoming a requirement today, that is why the countries of the world are introducing gradually multilingual education, striving to meet the demand for knowledge of foreign languages. The first recommendations for learning two foreign languages are found in the recommendations of the European Commission «White Paper» – «Teaching and learning. On the way to a cognitive society» in 1995 [5]. Later, in 2003, the «Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Study, teaching, assessment» (CEFR) introduced the concept of «plurilingualism – knowledge of a number of languages or the coexistence of different languages in a given society» and substantiated its importance [1].

Currently, the issue of introducing plurilingualism in education in Ukraine is especially relevant, as from September 1, 2022, in accordance with the Laws of Ukraine «On education» and «On complete general secondary education» the new State Standard of basic secondary education is introduced, according to which students will have the opportunity to learn two foreign languages. Also, general secondary education institutions may offer students «teaching one or more subjects (integrated courses) alongside the official language English or another official language of the European Union» [4; 7]. The State Standard also states that the methods and techniques of bilingual and multilingual education may be used in the educational process.

Taking into account the changes in the Ukrainian education system, special attention should be paid to the additional volume «Common European Recommendations on Language Education: Study, teaching, assessment» (2020), which does not change the 2001 edition but offers new descriptors as a means to improve teaching quality. and second/foreign language learning, as

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well as multilingualism and intercultural education. The main purpose of the volume was to update the descriptors: to highlight innovations that were not included in the presented set of descriptors in 2001.

The CEFR expands the perspective of language education in countries through the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competences. Already in the CEFR 2001, the authors clearly distinguish between the concepts of «multilingualism – the coexistence of different languages at the social or individual level» and «plurilingualism – the dynamic linguistic repertoire of an individual user/learner, which is constantly evolving» [1].

The CEFR Companion volumes 2018 and 2020 emphasize that plurilingualism is a variable competence, which provides an opportunity for an individual to use flexibly the interdependent, different, plurilingual repertoire, the components of competence are also added and changed [3; 4]. Here is the analysis of changes in the components of plurilingual competence of the CEFR 2001 and 2020.

Table 1

**Components of plurilingual competence**

<b>CEFR 2001 Components</b>	<b>CEFR 2020 Additional components and differences</b>
switch from one language or dialect to another, exploiting the ability of each to express themselves in one language and to understand the other	express oneself in one language (or dialect, <i>or variety</i> ) and understand a person speaking another (added and changed)
call upon the knowledge of a number of languages to make sense of a text, written or even spoken, in a previously 'unknown' language	call upon the knowledge of a number of languages ( <i>or dialects, or varieties</i> ) to make sense of a text (added and changed)
recognise words from a common international store in a new guise	the same
help those with none to communicate by mediating between individuals with no common language	<i>mediate</i> between individuals with no common language ( <i>or dialect, or variety</i> ), even <i>if possessing only a slight knowledge oneself</i> (added)
achieve some degree of communication by bringing the whole of their linguistic equipment into play, experimenting with alternative forms of expression in different languages or dialects	bring the whole of one's linguistic equipment into play, experimenting with alternative forms of expression (changed)
exploit paralinguistics (mime, gesture, facial expression, etc.) [1, p. 4]	the same [3, p. 30]

Among the outlined changes in the CEFR Companion volumes 2018 and 2020, the concept of mediation acquires special significance, thanks to which, both in receptive and productive modes, in writing or in oral speech, communication becomes possible even between interlocutors who are not ready for direct communication with each other. We share the opinion of a researcher V. Hamanyuk, who notes that «mediation is much broader in scope because it is not limited to the translation and transmission of the main content without taking into account the opinion of the user who performs mediation but includes those types of communicative activities that were not considered before» [6, p. 270]. The researcher provides the analysis of changes and additions to the Companion volume 2018 and gives the example of descriptors of mediation and online communication. The researcher focuses on mediation, its meaning and presents the detailed scale of mediation activities in three groups, which depends on how it is expressed: mediating a text, mediating concepts, mediating communication, and identifies mediation strategies: strategies to explain a new concept and strategy to simplify a text [6, p. 270].

The CEFR Companion volume 2020 identifies and describes in detail the descriptors for each type of mediation depending on the levels of language proficiency. To the existing levels A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 (2001), new ones are added – Pre-A1 and above C2 (only mentioned, no descriptors yet). However, the CEFR emphasizes that the division at levels is relative, so, depending on the context and the communicative situation, it is possible to distinguish sub-levels, for example A2 +, B1 +, B2 + and so on. The CEFR also takes into account the specifics of mastering the first foreign language (Language A) and the second (Language B) according to levels and descriptors. Important changes in 2020 are the detailing of mediation actions and strategies, as in the edition 2001 (p. 3.4.) only a scale of self-assessment of speech proficiency levels and descriptors of oral speech were provided. Mediation scales first appear in the CEFR Companion volume 2018 and are supplemented in the CEFR Companion volume 2020. In particular, illustrative scales of descriptors are given in part 3.4., the detailed description of which is presented by V. Hamanyuk [6]. It should be noted that the difference between the CEFR 2020 is the appearance of the word «sign» in the descriptors, for example: relaying specific information in speech or sign, explaining data in speech or sign, translating a written text in speech or sign. By the word «sign», we understand the ability of a user/ student to convey, explain, process, translate using an electronic presentation, illustration, video, gesture, object, any material, sensory object. However, the authors of the CEFR 2020 note that mediation as a specific activity, in addition to plurilingual competence, presupposes that a mediator has formed at a certain level of social and intercultural competences and adds that the proposed descriptors are not limited and allow the inclusion of other descriptors of mediation in future [3].

The CEFR 2001 outlines the starting points for plurilingual and pluricultural competences but the changing world has been evolving too fast in recent times, dictating new requirements for the education system and modifying the purpose of education. Currently, knowledge of two or more foreign languages is not seen as uniqueness of personality but as a compulsion of the present. Expanding the perspective of language education in Ukraine, the scales of descriptors of plurilingual and pluricultural competences are especially important, which are absent in the CEFR 2001 but are described in detail and expanded in the CEFR 2018, 2020. We consider it necessary to focus on chapter 4, which highlights the components of plurilingual and pluricultural competences: building on pluricultural repertoire, plurilingual comprehension and building on plurilingual repertoire. The descriptors of these components reveal aspects of multilingual and intercultural education, help not only to study but also to appreciate linguistic and cultural diversity. Here is the example of progression at the scale of building on plurilingual repertoire because there are descriptors of building on pluricultural repertoire and plurilingual comprehension in this very scale: «at the A levels, the focus is on exploiting all possible resources in order to handle a simple everyday transaction. From the B levels, language begins to be manipulated creatively, with the user/learner alternating flexibly between languages at B2 in order to make others feel more comfortable, provide clarifications, communicate specialised information and in general increase the efficiency of communication. At the C levels this focus continues, with the addition of an ability to gloss and explain sophisticated abstract concepts in different languages. Overall there is also a progression from embedding single words/signs from other languages to explaining particularly apt expressions, and exploiting metaphors for effect» [3].

Thus, the CEFR 2020 outlines the importance of mediation, identifies new descriptors, and adds descriptors for the development of plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires. The CEFR introduces mediation as the fourth category of communicative language activities in addition to perception, interaction and production, where the main focus is on language, namely the development of plurilingualism, the promotion of multilingualism and pluricultural competence. Thanks to the fruitful work of scientists in 2020, an updated scale of descriptors was presented in English, French and German, which includes 1832 positions with a detailed description of descriptors, means of communication, competencies, language proficiency levels, etc., for each position.

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