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Practicing mediation in the Italian and English classroom

Практика медіації у навчанні італійської та англійської мов

Summary. *The paper is targeted at reinforcing a foreign language learning and teaching in higher education settings. A primary complexity for learners who acquire foreign language tailored to a particular field is mastering the specific ways experts communicate within a professional context. Informal classroom observation reveals how some categories of Italian and English students seem to have little self-confidence in their ability to facilitate foreign language communication among experts within a specialized domain. Many may experience greater or lesser difficulty in transferring expert knowledge in a specific subject from one language to another or within a single language due to linguistic and terminological nuances, differences in educational backgrounds or lack of relevant contextual information. To enhance students' competence and confidence in navigating the subtleties of professional communication in Italian and English, the article suggests equipping learners with mediation skills through the field-related tasks that require clarifying misunderstandings and rephrasing complex ideas to make specialized knowledge accessible to both experts and general public within the same language and across languages. The paper provides practical examples of mediation tasks in the field of music, which are relevant and transferable and may be used as a template for the practitioners wishing to incorporate cross-linguistic or intra-linguistic mediation in their teaching practice. The effectiveness of mediation activities in Italian and English language classes was evaluated by means of online questionnaires. The findings showed that mediation tasks, which require learners to bridge communication gaps, force students to become more flexible and creative with their existing vocabulary and grammar, improving overall foreign language proficiency, crucial for cross-cultural communication. Additionally, mediating a specialized discourse is a form of professional socialization where an expert's identity is constructed and reinforced through interactions with subject-matter experts.*

Key words: *Italian/English language for specific purposes (music), mediation activities, mediation skills, specialized discourse, higher education.*

Анотація. *Стаття спрямована на вдосконалення процесу вивчення та викладання іноземних мов у закладах вищої освіти. Одним із ключових викликів для студентів, які опановують іноземну мову, орієнтовану на певну професійну галузь, є засвоєння специфічних моделей комунікації, притаманних експертному середовищу. Неформальні спостереження за навчальним процесом свідчать, що окремі групи студентів, які вивчають італійську та англійську мови, демонструють низький рівень упевненості у здатності забезпечувати іншомовну комунікацію між фахівцями у вузькопрофільних контекстах. Значна частина здобувачів освіти стикається з труднощами під час передачі спеціалізованих знань з однієї мови іншою або в межах однієї мови. Причинами цього можуть бути мовні та термінологічні нюанси, відмінності в освітньому досвіді або нестача відповідної контекстуальної інформації. З метою підвищення компетентності та впевненості студентів у подоланні комунікативних викликів у професійному середовищі італійською та англійською мовами, у статті пропонується формувати в них навички медіації. Це передбачає виконання професійно орієнтованих завдань, спрямованих на уточнення непорозумінь, перефразування складних концепцій та адаптацію спеціалізованих знань для різних цільових аудиторій – як у межах однієї мови, так і в міжмовній взаємодії. У публікації подано практичні приклади медіаційних завдань у галузі музичного мистецтва, які є актуальними, універсальними та можуть бути використані як методичний орієнтир для викладачів, що бажають інтегрувати міжмовну або внутрішньомовну медіацію у свою педагогічну практику. Ефективність застосування медіаційних завдань у курсах італійської та англійської мов була оцінена за допомогою онлайн-опитувань. Отримані результати підтвердили, що завдання, орієнтовані на подолання комунікативних бар'єрів, стимулюють студентів до більшої гнучкості та креативності у використанні наявних лексичних і граматичних ресурсів. Це, своєю чергою, сприяє зростанню рівня іншомовної компетентності, що є важливим чинником ефективної міжкультурної комунікації. Крім того, медіація спеціалізованого дискурсу розглядається як форма професійної соціалізації, у межах якої формується та зміцнюється експертна ідентичність у взаємодії з фахівцями відповідної галузі.*

Ключові слова. *Італійська/Англійська мова для спеціальних цілей (музика), медіаційні завдання, медіаційні навички, спеціалізований дискурс, вища освіта.*

Introduction. In the constantly evolving landscape of foreign language for specific purposes, the focus on mediation, a fourth mode of communication, has gained much more prominence in recent years. Many researchers and higher-education practitioners have emphasized the ability to mediate language (transfer, reinterpret, summarize a message from one language to another or within a single language) is a key skill for language learners at all levels to excel in many real-world professional contexts. Language learners often find themselves in situations where there is a need to explain something to someone to ensure mutual understanding whether it's misunderstandings over services or products payments;

partnerships disagreements regarding rent, repairs, security deposits; workplace conflict between coworkers; neighbor dispute over noise or property boundaries; family disagreement about caregiving responsibilities; student–teacher misunderstanding. The Companion Volume to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, an international standard for describing language ability, has proved the necessity of mediation skills to be included in higher education foreign language programs and significantly expanded the concept of mediation as more sophisticated language skills enabling a mediator to navigate communication gaps arising from linguistic, cultural, social, or conceptual differences [3].

Methods. To gain in-depth, descriptive insights into the effectiveness of mediation activities, we use qualitative research methods like informal classroom observations, discussions, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires that allow students to answer in their own words, providing descriptive, detailed responses.

Results and Discussion. Following the recommendations outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (the CEFR), foreign language instructors who are concerned with cross-linguistic mediation have been reflecting on practical suggestions for extending linguistic mediation in their teaching practices to improve students' learning outcomes. Higher-education foreign language practitioners from the METLA project team have developed teaching guide for language educators called “Mediation In Teaching, Learning and Assessment (METLA)” in which they explore the theory and practice of mediation and provide practical examples of cross-linguistic mediation tasks and step-by-step guidelines on how you can design and evaluate your own language mediation tasks [9]. The development of mediation skills has become the subject of the Cambridge Paper in ELT, “Mediation: What it is, how to teach it and how to assess it” which defines mediation as bridging communication gaps and categorizes mediation into mediating texts (summarizing), concepts (explaining ideas), and communication (acting as an intermediary), requiring cognitive and sociolinguistic skills to convey meaning across languages or within the same language for real-life situations [2]. Adolfo Sánchez Cuadrado (University of Granada), Susana Lorenzo (The University of Manchester), Marga Navarrete (University College London) in their article “The role of contextual factors in the implementation of mediation descriptors with higher education language learners” describe a project which explored new ways of developing and applying the action-oriented tasks aimed at improving students' mediation skills and social agency when acting as intermediaries [8]. Tony Liddicoat, professor of applied linguistics at the University of Warwick

in his article “Intercultural mediation in language learning” overviews the importance of metapragmatic awareness in mediation and how it is understood in intercultural contexts [5]. He researches the nature of mediation as a language teaching activity in which teachers construct learning as an interpretive process of making sense of meanings encountered in and across languages [5]. Iryna Zhukevych in her paper “Enhancing mediation skills in the virtual English language classroom” from the conference proceedings “Linguistic mediation for higher education language instructors and students” held in Kyiv, investigates methodologies aimed at enhancing students’ mediation capabilities within a virtual English language classroom context [10]. She states that through the implementation of structured role-play scenarios, students not only developed essential communication and conflict resolution strategies but also built self-confidence in their ability to navigate interpersonal conflicts [10]. Svitlana Pechenizka, leading researcher from Institute of Pedagogy of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, in her article “Mediation as a modern educational strategy for forming foreign language socio-cultural competence of learners in general secondary education” analyzes the phenomenon of mediation as the newest educational strategy for Ukraine and argues the necessity to create an appropriate system of tasks and assignments in modern foreign language textbooks in order to develop foreign language socio-cultural competence in students of general secondary education institutions [7]. Yuliana Lavrysh and Nataliia Saienko from National Technical University of Ukraine “Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute” in the article “Teaching mediation skills at technology-enhanced ESP classes at technical universities” state that mediation as a dual-nature phenomenon with cognitive and linguistics domains has been disregarded at English language classes at technical universities and provide some practical recommendations on how to implement mediation into ESP courses with the integration of online educational technologies [4]. Oleksandr Pasichnyk, senior researcher from Institute of Pedagogy of the National Academy of Educational Sciences of Ukraine, in his article “Intercultural mediation – reassessment of student’s first language role in the process of foreign language learning” claims that mediation tasks aimed at solving real-life situations are excellent supplement for communicative-based approach helping introduce the true atmosphere of ‘dialogue of cultures’ in the process of foreign language acquisition [6].

The authors of this paper, higher-education foreign language teachers at Kharkiv I.P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts, are looking for innovative and engaging ways in which mediation tasks can be designed and incorporated in the English and Italian language for Specific Purpose classroom practice to improve students’ learning outcomes. Our

work focuses on enhancing the learning experience for those who acquire Italian and English to meet the professional needs within a specialized domain such as music. Italian and English classes for Music Purposes are designed for musicians struggling to communicate effectively in the target professional context. We have noticed that most Italian and English language learners have difficulties in navigating communication obstacles that prevent effective exchange of information between experts or individuals who are not professionals in music. It might be using complex technical terms, slang, ambiguous words, incomplete instructions which occur in any form of communication (verbal, non-verbal, oral, written, in person or remotely) due to linguistic differences like vocabulary and grammar, cultural misunderstandings regarding communication styles and social norms, lack of shared concepts or difficulty expressing complex ideas. These barriers can lead to misinterpretation, confusion, a failure to reach mutual understanding. While music itself often serves as a universal language, which helps bridge cultural and linguistic barriers, successful collaboration among musicians across cultures depends on challenging discussions where oral or written information needs to be reinterpreted, clarified or simplified to ensure everyone can contribute and find a mutually agreeable resolution among experts who speak different languages or have difficulty understanding each other within a single language. When a person lacks the necessary understanding of how language is used in specific work environments and how to explain "specialist discourse" to others avoiding misinterpretation, they cannot fully participate in the discussion as a result may feel isolated or less engaged in international projects and exchange programs, which connect musicians globally for cultural learning, performance, and collaboration. So, we are here to help learners majoring in music develop mediation, a targeted language skill musical artists need to facilitate open, respectful, and music-focused intercultural communication.

The main purpose of the research is to improve foreign language classes through field-related tasks aimed at developing students' mediation skills.

The best way to help English and Italian learners develop proficiency in professional conversations relevant to the music field is to create a communicative space of specialist discourse within which learners express themselves without fear of judgment to build a shared understanding of their field. A group of language learners who acquire Italian and English for music purposes is a dedicated community of musical artists, unified by specialized discourse – verbal and non-verbal shared language, communication styles, and conventions of interaction to maintain the profession's standards. This expert-to-expert discourse community is an ideal ready-made

collaborative environment where learners can mediate complex ideas and terms that are specific to a music field and may not be understood by outsiders. To encourage foreign language learners to mediate, we need build lessons around role-play scenarios and simulations which mimic real-world situations learners perform in their industry: role-plays (conductor–orchestrants, maestro–attendee, musicians–audience), simulations (rehearsals, local open mics/jams, music festivals, workshops, charity gigs), problem-solving tasks (analyzing score, explaining song meaning, technical/creative hurdles, interpretive challenges, sight-reading, ensemble coordination, audience engagement). Mediation is required when a communications gap presents itself and there is a need to make information accessible to others (colleagues, peers, experts, etc.). So, these fictional field-related communicative scenarios must contain breakdowns in understanding leading to miscommunication and a failure to reach a resolution. The breakdowns might be caused by poor listening, using difficult vocabulary or jargon, different native languages, unclear or vague wording, misinterpretation of tone or body language, emotional interference, assumptions and misunderstandings, lack of clarity, unclear instructions, missing details, overcomplicated explanations, information overload. A conflict, breakdown, or a communication gap necessitates a mediator, "social agent", who guides a discourse (conversation) helping to construct or convey meaning, sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another [3]. Liudmyla Babaievskaya from Kharkiv I.P. Kotlyarevsky National University of Arts in her article "Scenario-based method in teaching English to future musicians" examines various types of scenarios (skillsbased scenarios, problem-based scenarios, issues-based scenarios, speculative scenarios, branching scenarios, gamified scenarios, exploratory scenarios, and story-based scenarios) that can be valuable for musicians [1]. Common example of a realistic scenario that allows students to practice mediation in a music context includes a chamber orchestra conductor resolving the issue of replacing the first violinist before an important concert [1]. Get the language learners act out make-believe scenarios, taking on roles of a neutral helper who helps both sides understand each other and work together more effectively. Other examples include mediating musical interpretations, musical shaping of a piece, dynamics conflicts, personality clashes, skill-level differences, timing disagreements, stylistic decisions between singers, balancing sectional disagreements, clarifying composer's intent vs. performer's preference, handling rehearsal tension or frustration, helping the singer and the accompanist understand each other's musical intentions, explaining artistic choices, resolving misunderstandings during rehearsal, helping others understand instructions, summarising expert comments, guiding communication between maestro and performers. Specialized music

discourse can be mediated in various settings, including cultural venues like concert halls, orchestras, and festivals; collaborative environment like music rehearsals, workshops, master classes; academic contexts like music education programs and research projects; community-based projects that are often independent of traditional institutions. Mediation role is not to decide the outcome, but to interpret and re-establish meaning ensuring mutual understanding and managing the affective and cultural tensions that may arise during intercultural contact. As we can see, mediation relies on a core set of interpersonal, communication, and problem-solving skills and requires active diagnostic listening, influencing cooperation without using command-based authority, neutrality and impartiality, avoiding taking sides, emotional regulation, staying calm under pressure, problem-solving and decision-making, demonstrating competence in cross-cultural contexts, identifying core issues quickly, knowing what type of conflict you're actually dealing with, musical proficiency, a high level of ability in playing an instrument or singing, encompassing technical skill, expressive interpretation, and theoretical knowledge. Mediation tasks can be either intralinguistic (different varieties of the same language) or cross-linguistic (across languages). Don't start to look at mediation skills until your students have strong core language skills. Transforming complex or inaccessible information into a format the recipient can understand requires advanced application of language skills: a good level of proficiency in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Mediation tasks can be used as final projects or consolidation activities for students to reuse the language learnt from the lesson, unit or term. To underpin effective mediation, mediators need to develop a variety of strategies, various linguistic practices and tools, which can include summarising, clarifying, reformulating, translating musical instructions, transferring (applying existing linguistic rules to the new language), paraphrasing, adjusting the level of language to suit the intended audience, adapting style and formality, note-taking, using analogies (relating complex ideas to familiar concepts), retelling information from a text or audio source, relaying specific information, simplifying jargon, breaking down complicated information into understandable chunks, reframing (turning negative statements into productive ones), mirroring (repeating back what they've heard), interpreting and explaining issues in neutral, non-blaming language, asking open-ended questions. Encourage learners to develop their own mediation strategies. By mastering these mediation techniques, facilitators can act as a social agent to foster the creation and sharing of complex knowledge within a field.

Below are practical, classroom-ready exercises suitable for B1 level (intermediate) learners that we have incorporated during regular Italian and English language classes for specific purposes at University where we

work in Ukraine. All the tasks involve mediating only in the target language. Learners act as an intermediary in informal situations bridging gaps between: attendees and masters (master classes), audience and performers (concert), group members in ensemble settings (rehearsal), jury and candidates (audition), stakeholders (music projects), performers and organizers (music events, fests), teacher and students (music lesson), songwriters, producers and record labels, music publishers, fans, composer and performer, cultures and musical traditions. The tasks use realistic music-related contexts but might be adapted across diverse contexts, ranging from formal legal disputes to workplace conflicts, educational settings, and everyday personal disagreements. These exercises focus on core skills—active listening, checking understanding between participants, summarising viewpoints in simple language, reducing disagreement through neutral reformulation – that are essential for managing conflict in any environment.

Exercise 1.

Instruction: Students work in groups of three (Lena – singer; Tom – pianist; Eva – mediator). Get students act out the assigned roles by reading a dialogue. After reading ask students to underline mediation phrases (what mediation skills are demonstrated and where they appear in the text); rewrite the dialogues in their own words (change the ending, create a new solution).

Dialogue (a singer and pianist disagree about tempo).

Lena: The tempo is too fast for me to breathe well.

Tom: But if we play slower, the song feels boring.

Eva: So Lena needs more time to breathe, and Tom wants energy in the song (The mediator accurately restates both viewpoints without judgment. The mediator makes the singer's need clear and accessible. Negative wording is softened and reframed positively).

Lena: Yes, exactly.

Eva: What if we try a slightly slower tempo in the verses and a faster one in the chorus? (The mediator suggests a balanced, practical solution).

Tom: That could work.

Lena: I like that idea (Both parties accept the proposed compromise).

Eva: Great, let's try it (The mediator closes the interaction positively and clearly).

Exercise 2.

Instruction: One student explains a conflict for 3 minutes. The mediator practices silence, eye contact, note-taking, rephrasing the problem, proposing solutions.

Conflict Description.

Lina is a jazz pianist invited to perform at a summer music festival. She received the schedule and noticed that her performance time

was changed from 7:00 PM to 5:00 PM, just two days before the event. Lina is upset because she planned her travel, soundcheck, and rehearsals around the original time. She feels the organisers are being unfair and not respecting her preparation. The festival organisers explain that another band requested the 7:00 PM slot, and they wanted to accommodate everyone. They say the festival schedule is complicated and it is difficult to satisfy every performer. Both sides want a good solution: Lina wants enough time to prepare and perform well, and the organisers want the festival to run smoothly.

Neutral Rephrasing of the Problem.

Lina, a jazz pianist scheduled to perform at a summer music festival, was informed two days before the event that her performance time had been moved from 7:00 PM to 5:00 PM. This change affects her previously planned travel, soundcheck, and rehearsal arrangements.

The festival organisers explain that the schedule was adjusted to accommodate another band's request and to balance the overall program. Both Lina and the organisers want the event to be successful: Lina wants adequate preparation time to deliver a strong performance, and the organisers want the festival to run smoothly for all performers.

Possible Solutions.

As a mediator, I would propose this combined solution:

- Confirmed extended soundcheck for Lina earlier in the day, with priority access to the piano and sound team.
- Logistical support (adjusted rehearsal time or assistance with travel timing) to reduce stress caused by the earlier slot.
- Goodwill gesture from organisers, such as promotional visibility (featured mention, prime listing) or priority consideration for preferred time slots at future festivals.

Exercise 3.

Instruction A: Convert closed or accusatory questions into open, neutral ones.

Example: "Why did you do that?" → "What was happening for you at that moment?"

1) Why are you always late to rehearsal? → What makes it difficult for you to arrive on time?

2) Don't you practice enough? → How do you usually prepare for rehearsals?

3) Why did you play that part wrong? → How did you understand that part of the music?

4) Are you ignoring the conductor? → What were you focusing on during that section?

5) Why won't you follow my tempo? → How does this tempo feel for you?

Instruction B: turn negative statements into neutral language.

Example: “He never respects me” → “Respect is important to you in this situation.”

1) You never listen to my ideas. → You feel that your ideas are not heard.

2) Your playing ruins the piece. → The balance of the sound feels uneven.

3) The singer always comes in late. → The singer sometimes enters after the beat.

4) The conductor is too aggressive. → The conductor’s feedback feels very strong.

5) This rehearsal is a waste of time. → This rehearsal does not feel very effective.

Instruction C: Rewrite the closed or accusatory question as a neutral, open-ended question suitable for a music rehearsal context.

Examples: Closed: Why are you always late to rehearsal?

Open: What makes it difficult for you to arrive on time?

1) Closed: *Don’t you practice your part enough at home?*

→ Open: *How do you usually practice your part at home?*

2) Closed: *Why did you play that wrong note?*

→ Open: *Can you explain how you interpreted that part of the music?*

3) Closed: *Are you ignoring the conductor?*

→ Open: *What were you focusing on during that section?*

4) Closed: *Why won’t you follow my tempo?*

→ Open: *How does this tempo feel for you?*

5) Closed: *Don’t you understand the rhythm?*

→ Open: *How do you understand this rhythm?*

Exercise 4.

Instruction: Read the dialogue between musicians and a music event host and do mediation tasks to help musicians identify and regulate the conflict.

Characters: Leo – guitarist (musician); Nina – singer (musician); Host – music event organiser; Mediator.

Leo: We are unhappy with the soundcheck time. It was too short.

Nina: Yes, we couldn’t test the microphones properly.

Host: I understand, but many artists are performing today. We don’t have much time.

Leo: But our performance suffered because of this.

Host: The schedule was very tight, and we had to move quickly.

Mediator: Let me check if I understand. Leo and Nina feel the soundcheck time was not enough.

Leo: That’s right.

Mediator: And you are under pressure because of the full schedule. Is that correct?

Host: Yes, exactly.

Mediator: Maybe we can find a solution for future events, like planning longer soundchecks for bands with more equipment.

Host: That could work.

Nina: Yes, that would help us a lot.

Mediator: Great. Let's agree on that for next time.

Task A: answer the questions:

- Who is involved in the conflict?
- What is the main problem?
- What does each side want?

Task B: complete sentences:

- The musicians feel because ...
- The host feels because

Task C: rewrite these sentences in neutral language:

- "Our performance suffered because of this."
- "We don't have much time."

Task D: write one open-ended question for the musicians and the event host.

Example starter: What... / How... / Can you explain...

Task E: Suggest a simple solution:

- one possible compromise
- one way to avoid this problem in the future

Task F: Get students reflect on:

- What did the mediator do well?
- What language helped calm the situation?

Exercise 5.

Instruction: Read the conflict description and match feelings to sentences.

Daniel is a drummer in a band preparing for a concert. During rehearsals, the band leader often changes the songs at the last minute. Daniel feels unsure because he does not know which version to practice.

Last week, the leader told the band to play a slower version of a song, but during rehearsal, he asked them to play it faster again. Daniel feels stressed before rehearsals and disappointed because he practices a lot but still feels unprepared.

The other band members are confused because they receive different instructions at different times. Everyone wants to perform well, but the communication is not clear.

Match each sentence (1–4) with an emotion.

angry • disappointed • stressed • confused

1. Daniel feels nervous before rehearsals and worries about making mistakes.

2. Daniel practices a lot, but he still feels his work is not useful.

3. The band members are not sure which version of the song to play.

4. Daniel feels upset when the song changes again at rehearsal.

Exercise 6.

Instruction: Read the scenario and help musicians understand each other, share ideas, and find a solution that works for most people. You do not choose sides.

Scenario: An ensemble is planning a music tour. The group must agree on important decisions, but musicians have different opinions and needs.

Roles:

- Mediator – helps students communicate and find a solution
- Student A – prefers a short tour and less rehearsal
- Student B – wants a longer tour with concerts
- Student C – is worried about cost
- Student D – cares about free time and sightseeing

Decisions to make: • Tour destination • Length of the tour • Daily rehearsal time during the tour.

Task A: Role Preparation.

Ensemble members read their roles and think about: • their priorities • one strong opinion • one possible compromise.

Mediator prepares simple questions to: • Invite everyone to speak • Summarize ideas • Help the group decide.

Task B: Opening the Discussion (Mediator)

The mediator explains the situation in simple language.

Example: We need to plan the music tour and make decisions that work for everyone.

Task C: Sharing Opinions (All Students)

- Each student explains their ideas.
- The mediator listens and takes notes.
- The mediator makes sure everyone speaks.

Task D: Listing Solutions (Mediator)

- The mediator summarizes ideas.
- Write at least three possible tour plans.

Example:

- A 3-day tour to a nearby city;
- A 5-day tour with two concerts;
- A short tour with one rehearsal per day.

Task E: Evaluating Solutions (Group)

For each solution, discuss:

- What is good about this plan?
- What problems could there be?

The mediator helps the group stay calm and focused.

Task F: Choosing the Best Solution (Mediator)

- The group agrees on one plan.
- The mediator checks agreement.

Example:

Does this plan work for most people?

Can we all accept this decision?

Task G: Final Summary (Mediator)

The mediator clearly explains the final tour plan.

Example: We decided on a 4-day tour to Prague with one concert and daily rehearsals in the morning.

Exercise 7.

Instruction A: Read the situation: “The ensemble is stressed before a concert”. The mediator asks each student “How do you feel right now?” Students choose one feeling word and explain why. Mediator needs validate feelings, normalize stress, gently redirects the group toward safety and focus.

Mediator language:

“Thank you for sharing how you’re feeling. It sounds like many of us are feeling nervous, tense, or under pressure right now—and that’s completely normal before a concert. These feelings tell us that we care about doing well. Let’s take a moment to breathe together and remember that we’ve prepared for this. We’re here to support each other, and we don’t have to be perfect—just present and listening. We’ll take this one step at a time, together.”

Outcome: Students name emotions and feel listened to.

Instruction B: Match the feeling with a supportive response.

Feelings

- 1) Nervous
- 2) Angry
- 3) Disappointed
- 4) Stressed
- 5) Shy

Supportive Responses

- a. *It’s okay to feel this way. We can try again.*
- b. *Let’s take a short break and breathe.*
- c. *You are not alone. We can work on it together.*
- d. *I understand why you feel upset.*
- e. *Take your time. You don’t have to speak now.*

Instruction C: Complete the sentences with your own words.

- *I understand how you feel because...*

- *It's normal to feel ____ before a performance.*
- *We can help you by...*
- *You are doing well, even if...*

Instruction D: Choose the best response (Identify supportive language).

Situation 1: A student says: *"I'm afraid I will make mistakes on stage."* Which response is best?

- A. *That's not true. Stop worrying.*
- B. *Everyone feels nervous sometimes. You are prepared.*
- C. *If you make mistakes, it will be bad.*

Discuss why B is best.

Exercise 8.

Instruction A: After a discussion or role-play get students reflect on

- The situation (What was the problem? Who was involved?).

Example: *Our group had a problem choosing rehearsal times.*

- The mediator's actions (What did I say or do to help? How did I support communication?).

Example: *I asked everyone to share their ideas and I summarized them.*

- Language used (Useful phrases or questions used. New words or expressions).

Example: *I used the phrase "Let me summarize" to check understanding.*

- The outcome (Did the group find a solution? Was the solution fair?).

Example: *We agreed on rehearsing twice a week.*

Instruction B: Complete the sentences:

- The main problem in the group was...
- As a mediator, I helped by...
- One phrase I used was...
- One phrase I heard from others was...
- What went well ...
- What was difficult...
- If I were the mediator again, I would...

By incorporating these engaging and practical activities into foreign language classes, educators can help Italian and English learners master mediation skills which enable them to function effectively in a globalized, multilingual world.

Integrating mediation as a core skill alongside listening, speaking, reading, and writing into higher education foreign language classes leads to a further research on explicit tasks requiring a user to act as a social agent, resource development (textbooks, tools), and teacher training. Key areas for more study include developing practical assessment tools to

measure proficiency in mediation skills across different CEFR levels and effective strategies for enhancing students' abilities to mediate concepts, texts, and communication in real-world scenarios.

Conclusions. To help Italian and English language learners level up proficiency in professional conversations relevant to the music field we suggest developing mediation skill – the ability to bridge gaps between different languages and within the same language. Hosting mock role-play scenarios of music lessons, workshops, auditions, rehearsals, master-classes creates opportunities for learners to mediate between performers, composers, conductors, technicians, stage managers, administrative staff in music sector. Mediating communication in the field of music means acting as a neutral helper who makes complex musical concepts understandable for parties, especially when there is a communication gap caused by linguistic and terminological nuances, diverse educational backgrounds, unfamiliarity with certain concepts or processes. Tasks involving mediation require learners to reprocess (recontextualize) an existing written text or spoken communication (through simplifying, paraphrasing, summarizing, etc.) into forms accessible to a targeted audience. The findings of this study suggest that the role-play scenarios with communication gaps that encourage language learners to mediate specialized discourse to subject experts or anyone unfamiliar with the field significantly boost students' self-confidence in their ability to navigate intercultural communication in diverse professional contexts.

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