ASSESSING PLURILINGUAL MEDIATION IN UZBEK HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH A CAMPUS ENCOUNTER

Pulatjon Habitovich Omanov

PhD in Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor

Head, Department of Integrated English Language Teaching 3

Uzbekistan State World Languages University, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0008-9071-6251

E-mail: p.omonov@uzswlu.uz (corresponding author)

Abstract

When an undergraduate explains a local custom to a visiting student in English, an accurate sentence can still convey the wrong social meaning. A teacher who hears only the final explanation has little evidence of how the undergraduate interpreted the encounter. This methodological article develops a formative task for second-year English philology students in Uzbekistan. The design draws on published work on mediation, language transfer and sociocultural learning to connect each assessment criterion to a specific piece of classroom evidence. In a campus library scenario, the student reads an Uzbek exchange and a Russian clarification, advises an English-speaking visitor, and identifies the wording that prompted a decision. The resulting instrument comprises a three-stage procedure, four criteria scored from zero to three, and a worked example that traces a misleading explanation to its source. The proposed interpretation concerns the student's handling of this encounter. No learners took part in the design study. Classroom trials are needed to establish whether teachers can apply the descriptors consistently and whether the task offers comparable opportunities across language profiles.

Keywords: plurilingual competence, cross-linguistic mediation, formative assessment, intercultural pragmatics, language teacher education, Uzbekistan.

1. Introduction

A visiting student hears "Bir piyola choy ichib keting" on the way to a library event. A peer translates the words correctly as an invitation to tea. The visitor still needs to know whether accepting is expected and whether declining would affect entry to the event.

Answering calls for three judgements: what the speaker offered, what the available information actually establishes, and how the visitor can respond. A fluent translation alone gives the teacher little access to those judgements.

The proposed task is designed for a formative lesson with second-year English philology undergraduates at an Uzbek university. The assessed learner is a locally enrolled undergraduate. A classmate plays an English-speaking visitor and follows a fixed prompt. Neither a visiting student nor a mixed-nationality class is required. The instructional problem is how to recognise a difficulty with interpreting or relaying meaning when the final response is in English and the sources are in other languages.

Two questions guide the design. Which parts of a learner's work reveal where meaning was preserved, lost or added? How can a teacher use that evidence to choose the learner's next practice task? The immediate aim is diagnosis within one encounter. Development is addressed through the feedback and follow-up exercise that the diagnosis makes possible.

2. Literature review

The Council of Europe (2020) distinguishes activities such as relaying information and facilitating understanding. This distinction matters when a learner faithfully translates an invitation but leaves a visitor uncertain about what to do. Beacco et al. (2016) approach plurilingual education through curriculum planning across languages. Applied here, that perspective changes the choice of input: each source contributes information that the other does not supply. The descriptors below are purpose-built classroom criteria. Their scores have no established correspondence to proficiency levels.

In a study of additional-language teaching in Uzbekistan, Makhkamova and Amirkulov (2020) examine how earlier language experience can support or interfere with learning Italian. Their analysis suggests a diagnostic question for a different setting: which inference did the learner carry from one language into another? The present task elicits a source annotation to help answer it. A teacher can then distinguish a misreading of a Russian qualification from an unsupported cultural assumption.

Omanov's (2021) doctoral research on authentic video in English teaching provides a rationale for attending to the setting, the speaker and the sequence of an exchange. Omanov

(2025) subsequently considered plurilingual and sociocultural learning together. The present contribution gives that relationship an assessable form: the learner identifies an expression in context, checks its consequences against another source, and offers the visitor a response that preserves their choice.

3. Methods

The study used conceptual analysis and task design. Sources were selected purposively for three functions: defining mediation, interpreting transfer across languages, and situating sociocultural learning in Uzbek higher education. The analysis proceeded from an intended inference about the learner to an observable action, then to evidence that could challenge that inference. For example, to investigate whether a learner treats an invitation as compulsory, the task pairs an invitation with an explicit statement about admission and asks the visitor to query that distinction.

The materials were constructed for this article. Each factual proposition in the scoring key was traced to one of the two source cards. Each criterion was then checked against a distinct product: annotated sources, a visitor-facing message, a reply, or a reflection. The worked response illustrates use of the key. No students were recruited, no recordings were collected and no reliability estimates were calculated. OpenAI ChatGPT (GPT-6) assisted with restructuring the manuscript, drafting the illustrative materials and English wording.

4. Results

4.1. Three stages of the diagnostic task

The design yields a procedure for a 45-minute lesson. The allocation is provisional. At Stage 1 (10 minutes), the teacher records the languages the learner uses for reading and conversation. The learner reads the two cards, underlines the invitation and circles the access condition. The teacher leaves the marked sheet with the learner for use in Stages 2 and 3 and collects it at the end. If the learner cannot access one source, the teacher supplies equivalent wording in another familiar language, records the substitution and interprets that performance within its language combination.

At Stage 2 (20 minutes), the learner writes a short English message to the visitor, then answers the visitor’s scripted question aloud. The teacher notes the words used to explain the

invitation and the entry rule. At Stage 3 (15 minutes), the learner identifies one decision, marks the phrase that informed it and revises one sentence. Reflection may be in a familiar language understood by the teacher. The teacher records a four-part profile and assigns one follow-up exercise.

4.2. Materials for the learner

Card A. A local host speaking Uzbek outside a campus library event

Mezbon: «Xush kelibsiz! Tadbir boshlanguncha bir piyola choy ichib keting». Mehmon: «Rahmat, hozir ichmasam ham maylimi?» Mezbon: «Albatta. Marhamat, zalga kiravering».

Card B. A Russian note from the event organiser

«Встреча проходит в читальном зале. Чай предлагают в фойе до начала встречи. Чтобы войти в зал, достаточно показать студенческий билет».

Task. Your visitor speaks English and has only a few minutes. Write two or three sentences explaining where to go, what to show and what the invitation means here. The visitor then asks, “Will it seem rude if I go straight in?” Answer in English and suggest something the visitor could say. On your sheet, mark the phrase that supports your advice. Explain how it influenced one decision. Check that decision against the other card and say whether you would keep or revise it.

Both cards are constructed teaching materials. They describe a fictional event. For a video version, the teacher can select a consented encounter in which an invitation, the visitor’s response and the host’s next turn are audible. A frame of the invitation and one of the response can support discussion. A still image alone cannot establish how a refusal was received.

4.3. Scoring and interpretation

Score each criterion from the evidence indicated. A missing product is recorded as missing and the learner is invited to complete it. Zero applies when the available work shows the difficulty described. If accommodation changes the evidence available, record the change alongside the profile.

Criterion	0	1	2	3

Source accuracy	Contradicts the entry rule.	Gives the room or the card only.	Gives the room and card accurately.	Also marks the phrase in the source that establishes the entry condition.
Mediation	Gives no usable guidance.	Translates an isolated phrase.	Gives a usable next step but leaves a visitor question open.	Links both sources to answer the visitor's practical question.
Cultural interpretation	Treats tea as compulsory.	Calls it optional but prescribes an unsupported social rule.	Explains that declining is accepted in this encounter.	Also offers a courteous reply that preserves the visitor's choice.
Strategic reflection	Gives an explanation unrelated to either source.	Names a language or source only.	Identifies a phrase and explains one decision.	Also checks or revises that decision against the other source.

Table 1. Proposed analytic rubric for the campus encounter.

Use the highest descriptor fully supported by the evidence, judging each row separately. The optional sum ranges from 0 to 12 when all four criteria are scored. The profile determines feedback. The sum has no validated cut scores. Note English errors separately unless they change the message. Count a consequence under a second criterion only when a separate product demonstrates it.

4.4. Worked example and feedback

Constructed learner message: "The meeting is in the reading room. Show your student card. You can skip tea, but in Uzbekistan you should always give a reason." Oral reply: "You can go in. Tell them you are late." The source sheet underlines "достаточно показать студенческий билет." The reflection says, "I wrote 'Show your student card' because the organiser says 'достаточно показать студенческий билет'. The word 'достаточно' tells me that showing the card is enough to enter."

The proposed profile is 3, 2, 1, 2 (8/12). The written directions give both facts correctly and the marked sheet identifies the entry condition. The English message gives actionable directions, but the reply leaves the visitor unsure whether a reason is necessary. The claim

about always giving a reason has no support in the exchange. The learner explains how “достаточно” shaped the advice about entry. A score of 3 for reflection would also require checking that advice against the host’s response. Fluency alone would conceal the unsupported generalisation.

For an immediate repair, the teacher asks the learner to underline what the host actually said after the guest declined. A defensible revision is “Here the host says you can go straight in. You could say, ‘Thank you, perhaps another time.’” For independent or club practice, give a second exchange in which the host asks a follow-up question. Ask which advice can be reused and which part depends on the new speaker’s response. This turns an observed difficulty into a specific teaching decision.

5. Discussion

The two cards make different errors visible. If the learner locates the room but overlooks “достаточно”, the teacher can revisit how the Russian wording limits the entry requirement. If the learner correctly identifies the requirement and still makes tea obligatory, the oral explanation and reflection help locate the unsupported inference. A follow-up question is essential when several explanations fit the same answer. A single performance cannot establish the cause of an error.

The setting also limits interpretation. Reading difficulty, familiarity with the institution, and the ability to write in English may affect performance. A learner who gives an incomplete English answer can be asked to point to the decisive phrase and explain it in a familiar language. Record that prompted explanation separately from the first attempt. A scripted exchange also omits tone, pauses and gesture. Moving to authentic video would require a new source key and a fresh check of the criteria.

A first pilot could take place during an ordinary Integrated Skills lesson. The course teacher and a second language-methodology instructor familiar with the source languages would independently score the same anonymised work after practising on constructed examples. They would compare scores criterion by criterion, retain the original ratings and record the wording behind disagreements. A subsequent task with a different invitation would

test whether the interpretation extends beyond this example. Agreement, accessibility and any learning gains remain open empirical questions.

6. Conclusion

For this campus encounter, the most informative evidence is the link a learner can show between a source phrase and advice given to a visitor. The proposed three-stage task preserves that link through a marked source sheet, a message and a short explanation of one decision. It gives the teacher a way to select a focused follow-up exercise. Its present contribution is a task and a scoring rationale ready for critical review and classroom piloting.

Statements and Declarations

Author contributions. Pulatjon Habitovich Omanov: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing.

Ethical considerations. This methodological study uses constructed teaching materials and no human participant data.

Consent to participate. Not applicable.

Consent for publication. Not applicable. All dialogue and learner responses are constructed examples.

Declaration of conflicting interests. The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Data availability. The source cards, task, rubric and worked example are included in this article. No participant dataset was generated.

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