



Learners as Ethnographers, Informants and Mediators: Developing Intercultural Awareness through Language Teaching Materials

Mario López-Barrios

(lopez@fl.unc.edu.ar)

Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina

Abstract

The article aims to present a model of materials design for the development of plurilingual intercultural competence in a secondary school setting where two foreign languages – English and German – are taught. The intended learners are native speakers of Spanish, have acquired an elementary competence in English (A2 level) and are learning German as a second foreign language (A1 level). The plurilingual activities involve the simultaneous use of both languages in the class and simulate situations to communicate about the social practice of barbecues in Argentina, and English and German-speaking settings. Learners act as ethnographers as they find out facts about barbecues in other countries through access to Internet sources and further develop a plurilingual competence as they get information in the two foreign languages they learn. They also get ready to transmit the information to people who do not speak one or the other foreign language, thus acting as mediators across languages and cultures.

1 Introduction

Foreign language materials tend to deal with situations where the learner is a visitor in the target language community who deploys survival skills like ordering food at a restaurant, booking hotel rooms, asking for information at airports and the like. On the other hand, learners are seldom placed in the role of the host of foreign visitors to their country where they show them around and brief them on local customs. Although this is probably the most likely scenario for a foreign language learner in countries very far away from the target language communities, these kinds of situations are virtually absent in most foreign language teaching materials.

In a review article where ELT coursebooks were analyzed according to different criteria, López Barrios, Villanueva de Debat and Tavella (2008) conclude that the coursebooks do not encourage intercultural awareness as they include insufficient instances of the target language in authentic use, give prominence to global topics in detriment to more local issues that may be more meaningful to the learners and give emphasis to aspects of life in the UK and the USA in disregard of other English-speaking communities. Additionally, the authors find few attempts to make the coursebook relate to the students' experiences. In fact, what López Barrios and Villanueva de Debat (2007) found out in their analysis of the treatment of intercultural reflection in EFL coursebooks is that these mostly make learners 'consume' information about aspects of life in the target language communities and often require the creation of a similar text as a follow-up activity. This was the most frequent type of culture-related activity in four beginner EFL coursebooks analyzed. The

second most frequent activity type was to make learners compare the aspect in question in both the foreign (C2) and the native culture (C1), whereas the least common kind of culture-related task was that which actually prompted intercultural reflection, that is, that which puts learners in the role of “cultural mediators” where they act as interpreters of an event in the C2 or the C1, and explain it to someone who cannot access the information. In the above-mentioned review of EFL coursebooks (López Barrios et al., 2008), we underline the need for localized learning materials to include activities for the development of intercultural competence where the learners come in contact with speakers of English in the learners’ own environment, and in which learners express their own thoughts and feelings. In brief, it is necessary to provide activities which prompt learners to “understand otherness, to make cognitive and affective connections between past and new experiences of otherness, mediate between members of two (or more) social groups and their cultures, and question the assumptions of one’s own cultural group and environment” (Beacco et al., 2010, p. 8).

These considerations take on a distinct dimension in the context of the development of a plurilingual competence. Learners exposed to more than one foreign language in schools are seldom made to draw on their knowledge of the other foreign languages and cultures. On the contrary, frequently, learners are discouraged from making comparisons of linguistic or cultural features pertaining to the other languages. In an earlier publication (López Barrios, 2003), I reflect on possible reasons for this situation. On the one hand, the tendency to restrict communication in the foreign language classroom to the target language being learnt – a feature of a “radical” understanding of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching – may account for why teachers shun the use of the L1 or other foreign languages students learn. Secondly, the widespread equation of foreign language competence with that of the native speaker could be a deterrent for teachers who are not confident enough in the other foreign languages, as they may fear losing face when unable to judge a student’s hypothesis regarding a similarity or difference between both foreign languages and cultures. In this respect, one of the strengths of a class where plurilingual materials are used is the fact that collaboration between the teachers of both foreign languages is necessary and welcome, since the class teacher is not expected to be an expert in both languages. The development of a plurilingual intercultural competence calls for a new understanding of the role of teachers and learners in second or third language learning which reconfigures the relationships between both¹. Encouraging metalinguistic reflection helps learners make connections and formulate hypotheses about the way languages work, thus enriching their entire linguistic repertoire.

Activities that promote this kind of awareness are called plurilingual activities, whose aim is “to proceed in such a way that learners train themselves, and learn to mobilize all their language resources, take risks and deploy success strategies in carrying out a linguistic and cognitive task” (Beacco et al., 2010, p. 100). Despite their positive effects, activities involving more than one foreign language have been the object of a handful of publications, many of which refer to the acquisition of German as a third foreign language after English (e.g. Hufeisen & Neuner, 2004; Neuner et al., 2009), whereas the field of intercomprehension – notably in the case of Romance languages – has witnessed a fruitful development during the past decade (De Florio-Hansen, 2010; Degache, 2006). In López Barrios (2003), I propose some plurilingual intercultural awareness activities relating the topics of pocket money and Christmas from three perspectives: the learners’ L1/C1, English and German.

The following article provides examples of plurilingual teaching materials for upper secondary school learners with a pre-intermediate level of English and elementary competence in German. The plurilingual activities proposed prompt learners to carry out simple ethnographic research on the practice of barbecuing, a typical Argentinian custom, as represented in some English-speaking and German-speaking settings. Additionally, learners mediate between members of the school community who are not familiar with one of the two languages, or, outside the school setting, between Argentines and English and/or German speaking guests.

2 Background

Prior to the presentation of the model activities, some concepts that provide the theoretical foundations for the plurilingual activities will be discussed, namely those of *plurilingual competence*, *learners as ethnographers* and *mediation*.

2.1 *Plurilingual competence*

A distinction is usually made between multilingualism and plurilingualism. According to the “Common European Framework or Reference for Languages” (Council of Europe, 2001; henceforth CEF), the former refers to the languages spoken by individuals and in particular societies. Furthermore, the authors add that multilingualism “may be attained by simply diversifying the languages on offer in a particular school or educational system, or by encouraging pupils to learn more than one foreign language, or reducing the dominant position of English in international communication” (p. 4). On the other hand, plurilingualism makes reference to the personal experience of dealing with language, one’s own language (or languages) and those “of other peoples (whether learnt at school or college, or by direct experience)” (CEF, p. 4). It is also stressed that, far from constituting separated mental compartments, languages relate to each other, make up one’s entire communicative competence and form part of an individual’s mental lexicon.

Having cleared both concepts, we turn our attention to a related notion that is central to the materials to be presented: *plurilingual* and *intercultural competence*. Beacco et al. (2010) characterize it as “the ability to use a plural repertoire of linguistic and cultural resources to meet communication needs or interact with people from other backgrounds and contexts, and enrich that repertoire while doing so” (p. 8). By making an explicit reference to language and culture, the authors stress the inseparable quality of both and imply the today unquestioned fact that, in order to communicate, people make use of the entirety of their linguistic and background knowledge. These make up a learner’s plurilingual competence and the origin of said knowledge is not restricted to that acquired as a result of formal schooling. Speakers of related languages such as Spanish, Portuguese and Italian achieve a good degree of intercomprehension without ever having taken lessons in these languages. Though largely ignored in class, when learners use all this explicit and implicit knowledge, especially when teachers encourage learners to do so, students construct a qualitatively higher degree of plurilingual communicative and intercultural competence.

2.2 *Learners as ethnographers*

The term ethnography originates from cultural anthropology and refers to the discovery of facts about a community by immersing in it, observing it closely, collecting information about it and describing it in detail. This is followed by an interpretation of the facts under examination, which requires an attitude on the part the observer that makes him or her transcend the surface of the perceived facts. Bassnett (1997) equates this experience to a “voyage of discovery, during which perceptions are altered, unquestioned assumptions about culture and identity are challenged” (p. xvii). This experience, according to Pulverness (2003), “implies a cognitive modification that has implications for the learner’s identity as a social and cultural being” (p. 427). Thus, when learners act as intercultural ethnographers, the facts they observe take on a new dimension as their interpretation, far from being objective or value-free, relates to the learners’ own experience, knowledge and values. Because of this, it is important for learners to realize how their interpretation of the facts functions. In Corbett’s (2007) words, “to become intercultural ethnographers, language learners must first explore and understand their own culture and be prepared to explain it to those whose experience of life and formations of belief are often very different from their own. (p. 13)

Summing up, in this reflected interaction between the L1/C1 and other language(s) and

culture(s), the learner as ethnographer develops intercultural competence or “awareness of the relation between home and target cultures” (CEF, p. 104).

2.3 *Mediation*

In situations where speakers of different languages come into contact with one another, the need arises for a person with a certain competence in the languages spoken by the group of speakers to act as an intermediary or mediator to enable communication among them. This is what CEF calls mediation, a language activity in which “translation or interpretation, a paraphrase, summary or record, provides for a third party a (re)formulation of a source text to which this third party does not have direct access” (p. 14). Mediating activities, although frequent in real communication, have so far been largely ignored in foreign language classrooms and learning materials. A possible reason for this absence may be related to the above-mentioned discomfort many language teachers feel about L1 use in class, even if there is a communicative need to use the L1 and that, depending on certain conditions such as the presence of a foreign visitor in class or in simulated communication, mediation also involves expression in the foreign language(s) as well.

Mediating activities tie in directly with the outcomes of the ethnographic experiences mentioned above, thus enabling the development of intercultural competence:

Through the observation of everyday ordinary phenomena our students engage themselves in the exploration of particular cultural frames of reference. The aim [of intercultural activities] is to provide tools for learners to become mediators between different cultural realities so as to promote communicative competence within the most diverse cultural scenarios. (“Intercultural resource pack. Latin American perspectives,” 2007, p. 15)

Additionally, mediation calls for the development of specific strategies that enable learners to maximize their limited foreign language competence (also their L1 competence, as when a suitable equivalent cannot be found at the spur of the moment). These include metacognitive strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate the performance, cognitive strategies such as elaboration, summarizing, note-taking, and inferencing as well as social strategies. As regards the medium, though mainly associated with spoken interaction, mediation may involve all four language macroskills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and mediating activities, depending on the task, may require written and/or oral mediation.

Oral mediation activities range from more sophisticated ones such as simultaneous or consecutive interpretation to informal interpretation “of foreign visitors in [one’s] own country, of native speakers when abroad, in social and transactional situations for friends, family, clients, foreign guests, etc., of signs, menus, notices, etc.” (CEF, p. 87). Similarly, written mediation involves tasks of varying degrees of challenge: “exact translation (e.g. of contracts, legal and scientific texts, etc.); literary translation (novels, drama, poetry, libretti, etc.); summarizing gist (newspaper and magazine articles, etc.) within L2 or between L1 and L2; paraphrasing (specialized texts for lay persons, etc.)” (CEF, p. 87) In the context of the activities proposed in this article, examples will be shown of gist summary and of informal interpretation of written and spoken English and German source texts.

3 **The materials**

The following section shows samples of materials² for the development of plurilingual intercultural awareness including the interpretation of pictures, research tasks and mediation activities that are meant to be used in an EFL class, ideally – though not necessarily – team-taught in cooperation with the teacher of German. Because of the plurilingual character of the materials, samples of activities aiming at the activation and introduction of specific vocabulary items in both English and German are also included. Although I do not intend to show a self-contained unit of work, a gradation in the activities is noticeable. The first is a model of an introductory activity aiming at moti-

vating learners and challenging their perception of barbecuing by showing them a variety of scenes from different countries. Learners negotiate to make sense of the portrayed practice, expressing surprise, agreement and disagreement. The ensuing vocabulary activity activities provide learners a selection of lexical items in English and German needed to communicate about barbecues. By previewing the vocabulary, learners are better equipped to understand the texts used for information gathering and mediation, that is, for receptive and productive use of both target languages. The vocabulary activities also provide an opportunity for cross-linguistic and cross-cultural confrontation by prompting learners' reflection on the form and meaning of words, as well as by making them aware of the fact that one cannot always expect one-to-one correspondence and that some words do not exist in the other language. Both the research and the mediation tasks provide opportunities for developing intercultural awareness by making learners negotiate meaning as well as by making them act as mediators between the languages and cultures dealt with in the class.

3.1 Interpretation of pictures


Aims:

- To activate learners' schemata of *asado* and other types of barbecues
- To describe pictures showing a culturally marked activity
- To identify in the pictures familiar and unfamiliar characteristics of the social practice
- To challenge the students' perception of a familiar event
- To express surprise, agreement or disagreement in the target language (English)

In Activity 1 (Fig. 1), students get in small groups, look at pictures of barbecuing scenes taken in different parts of the world and answer questions that focus their attention on certain characteristics of the portrayed situation. Learners analyze the pictures and verbalize their impressions, making use of a selection of phrases provided

In small groups look at the pictures and answer the following questions. At the bottom you can find some phrases to help you express your ideas:

- What can you see in the pictures? What are the people doing?
- Where are the people in the pictures? How do you know? Are these pictures from Argentina?
- When was this picture taken?



1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8

What can you see in the pictures? What are the people doing?

I		a man / woman	He		
we	can see	... men / women	She	is	barbecuing doing a barbecue
		a boy / girl	Somebody		
		... boys / girls	They	are	

Where are the people in the picture? How do you know?

Outside
In the garden
On a campsite
...

Because	I / we can see ...
	There's / there are
	...

Are these pictures from Argentina?

Yes.
Only picture Nr. ... because ...
I / we think picture(s) Nr. ... are from ... because ...

Fig. 1. Activity 1

3.2 Activation and introduction of specific vocabulary items

Aims:

- To recognize the names of the most popular beef cuts for *asado*
- To recycle and introduce vocabulary to name different cuts of meat and types of grills and fuels in Spanish, English and German
- To find out the English and German equivalents of the Spanish vocabulary items
- To infer cross-linguistic similarities and differences in the form and meaning of the vocabulary items
- To look up words in bilingual and/or multilingual dictionaries

Activities 2 and 3 (Fig. 2 & Fig. 3) are multilingual activities involving Spanish, English and German that aim at activating the students' knowledge of cuts of meat typically used in *asados* in their L1, and to recycle or introduce the (near) equivalents in English and German. To do these activities learners resort to pictures showing the beef cuts in the three languages and they are also expected to work with bilingual or multilingual dictionaries, online dictionaries or conventional ones, depending on the school's resources, to look up the equivalents of other vocabulary items

not shown in the picture. Additionally, learners reflect on the similarities in form and meaning among the vocabulary items in the three languages.

3.2.1 The vocabulary of asado

In pairs, look at the picture showing the beef cuts in Spanish. Do you know these beef cuts? Do you call the cuts in the same way where you live? What is the same, what is different?

The diagram shows a cow and a pig with various cuts labeled in Spanish, English, and German. Spanish labels include Azotillo, Bife de costilla, Lomo, Cuadril, Nalgá, Marucha o paleta, Vacio, Matambre, Costillar, Tira de Asado, Hais, Nacken, Rippe, Roastbeef, Filet, Hüfte, Unter- und Oberschale, Schulter, Bug, Rinderbrüst, Dünning, Spahnrippe, Querrippe, and Bein. English labels include Chuck, Rib, Lean, Round, Brisket, Fore Shank, Short Plate, and Flank. German labels include Hais, Nacken, Rippe, Roastbeef, Filet, Hüfte, Unter- und Oberschale, Schulter, Bug, Rinderbrüst, Dünning, Spahnrippe, Querrippe, and Bein.

Now try to relate the different beef cuts in Spanish with their English and German names. Can you find the English and German equivalents of all the Spanish words? At this point concentrate only on the equivalents of the Spanish beef cuts. Can you find any similarities or differences regarding the names of the beef cuts in the three languages?

Fig. 2. Activity 2

An international asado!

When visitors from abroad visit Argentina they usually try our *asado*. Imagine that you want to tell English or German-speaking guests about it. Look at the pictures again and find the corresponding names in English and German for some of the most usual cuts of beef and other meat products for *asado*. In one case there is not a special name. The English and German words are in the box below the table. You may use dictionaries.

Español	English	Deutsch
costillas o asado de tira		
vacío		
bife de chorizo		
chorizos		
morcillas		
matambre		
achuras:		
mollejas		
chinchulines		
riñones		

Dünning, flank, steak, Bratwurst, kidneys, Innereien, sausage, offal, sweetbreads, Därm, black pudding, chitterings, Blutwurst, Nieren, Rumpsteak, Rippen, Gries, rumpsteak

Can you find any similarities or differences regarding the names of the beef cuts in the three languages?

Fig. 3. Activity 3

3.2.2 More words you need to talk about barbecues

As learners engage in mediation activities they need to enlarge their vocabulary to incorporate more lexical items from the semantic field at hand. In Activity 4 (Fig. 4), learners are prompted to match a series of words to refer to meat cuts in English and German. Learners first sort the equivalents in a table, provide the Spanish words and reflect on similarities and differences across the three languages.

The choice of the vocabulary items included in these activities is based on their frequency and generality of use in each language. This is an important consideration, as the names of cuts of meat tend to be subjected to dialectal variation. Sometimes, there is quite a degree of variation within the same country so that different names apply to the same cuts in different parts of the same country. Moreover, on occasions, even native speakers do not know some of these names, for example “Lummersteak” is a name for a pork cut in some regions of Germany, but it may not be known in others. Therefore, it is necessary to choose the most generally used term.

When acting as an interpreter between your friends and the foreign visitors you will need some more words to describe the cuts of meat and related items used in barbecues in the visitors' countries.

In the following activity you complete the table using the English and German words in the box below the table. The pictures of the beef cuts can help you. You may use dictionaries.

Español	English	Deutsch
	Bacon	
	hamburger patties	
	(beef) steaks	
	lamb chops	
		Schweinesteaks
		Frikadellen
		Nackensteaks

bife de cogote shoulder clods costeletas de cerdo Hamburger

Lammkoteletts hamburgesas panceta costeletas de cordero

bifes pork chops Kalbssteaks meatballs albóndigas

Can you find any similarities or differences regarding these words in the three languages?

Fig. 4. Activity 4

3.3 Research tasks

Aim:

- To find out about types of grills and fuels used in barbecuing in texts in English and German
- To compare the information contained in the texts
- To evaluate the coverage and depth of the information contained in the texts

For the proposed research tasks (Activity 5; Fig. 5), learners visit websites in English and German³ with information about different types of grills and fuels, and find out some specific information that they transfer to a table. Two groups are formed: one deals with the English texts, the other consults the German texts. Afterwards, the groups mingle and compare the information in the German and English texts. For the discussion of results, learners use the phrases provided. Subsequently, the groups evaluate the coverage and depth of the information contained in the texts

Finding out about types of grills and fuels

Two groups are formed: one with English texts, another one with German texts. Visit the websites indicated and complete the chart:

Type of grill	Type of fuel required	Pros	Cons

Once finished, mix groups and compare the information contained in the texts. Use the following phrases to discuss the results:

There are ... different types of grills:

A ... grill uses charcoal / gas / electricity

A ... grill has many / few advantages: you can ... / it is ..., but ...

In (Argentina) people / we use (mainly) a ... grill

Now get in mixed groups again and discuss the following questions about the quantity and quality of the information found:

- What information could you find?
- Do all websites include the same information?
- What topics are included in all / most of the pages?
- Can you see a difference as regards the general contents of the websites in English and German?

The ... websites include more / less information about ... while the ... websites

Fig. 5. Activity 5

3.4 Mediation

Through the previous research activities, learners get a glimpse of barbecuing practices in English and German-speaking settings that serves as information for further intercultural activities. In the following activities, learners act as mediators for people who do not speak English or German. Activity 6 (Fig. 6) consists in reading texts in English and German about *braai*, the South African style barbecue, and to summarize the information in the audience's L1. In Activities 7, 8 and 9 (Fig. 7–9), learners do consecutive interpretation of simple, brief videos about *asados* into English or Spanish for an audience who cannot access the information either in Spanish or English.

In real communication situations, the mediation activities are typically followed by further questions and answers from the interlocutors. When doing this, mediators usually add further explanations to explain practices, customs, and so forth, to the speakers of the other language, thus enabling them to see other, new perspectives of a familiar practice and to understand the reasons for the differences or similarities. In this sense, mediation has the status of an intercultural activity.

3.4.1 With printed texts

Aim:

- To find out about *braai* in English and German sources
- To summarize the information in the L1 for an audience who cannot access the information either in English or German

Barbecuing in different countries: South African *braai*.

Form two groups: Group one reads the two the texts in English⁴, group 2 reads the German texts⁵ and summarize in Spanish the main points for a non English or German-speaking audience:

- What types of meat are grilled? Are other products (vegetables, fruit, etc.) also used?
- What grilling methods are used?
- When and where do people grill?
- Is barbecuing a relatively recent custom or is it an established one?
- What do you find interesting or unusual? Why?

Fig. 6. Activity 6**3.4.2 With oral texts**

Aim:

- To do consecutive interpretation of simple, brief videos about asados into English or Spanish

The following oral mediation activities involve three videos on YouTube. Activity 7 (Fig. 7) is carried out on the basis of the video “Asado Argentina”⁴. The video is 1.27 minutes long and shows an Argentine barbecuer naming the beef cuts shown on the grill. Learners watch the video and render the main information in simple English. The activity shows a possible consecutive interpretation. Other irrelevant comments have not been included.

Original text (0.42 - 0.57)	possible consecutive interpretation
Barbecuer: Que bueno! Hay mollejas, chinchulines, lo único que falta es el riñón.	Mmmm! There are sweetbreads, chitterlings, but [there are] no kidneys

Fig. 7. Activity 7

Additionally, learners could describe the setting: who is talking, where they are, the type of grill and fuel used and why they think the video depicts a typical scene in Argentina.

Activity 8 (Fig. 8) is based on the video “Típico asadito argentino”⁵, which has a runtime of 1.16 min. and portrays a young man preparing a barbecue. The text is more sophisticated than the previous one and contains a detailed description, but is still manageable.

As can be seen in the proposed translation, because of the need to render the meanings in a very brief time, mediators concentrate on the most relevant information and leave out unnecessary information. At points, it is necessary to paraphrase certain words that have zero equivalents in the target languages such as *chimichurri* and *choripan* in this conversation. In the first case, translating *chimichurri* as *chimichurri* sauce helps the listener to understand and the consecutive interpretation can proceed. In the second case, a paraphrase and an addition along with the original term helps overcome the problem of zero equivalence: “sausage sandwiches or *choripan*, as we call them.” Resorting to these kinds of compensation strategies is of great importance in intercultural encounters. Unfortunately, they are rarely found in teaching materials.

Original text (I: Interviewer, G: Germán)	possible consecutive interpretation
I: Bueno, y aquí estamos preparando el asado, Germán.	You're preparing a barbecue
G: Muy bien	(very well)
I: Explicanos para el público español.	Please explain for the Spanish audience
G: Bueno, a ver ...	OK
I: ¿Qué estás tocando en este momento?	What's this?
G: Les paso a comentar. Esto se llama asado [giggles], eh, el asadito, el clásico asado argentino. Esto son mollejas, lo que vemos acá, estas tres bien cociditas. Esto es jamón del medio con limón, ¿eh? acá tenemos riñones, ¿sí? estos dos son riñones ... chorizo ...	This is a typical Argentine <i>asado</i> . These are sweetbreads, the three here, well grilled. They are excellent with lemon. This is kidney, sausage ...
I: ¿Los Riñones en lo posible con <i>chimichurri</i> , no? ¿Cómo te gusta a vos?	Kidneys with a <i>chimichurri</i> sauce? How do you like them?
G: Mmm ... sí ...	(yes)
I: ¿Chimichurri o más limón?	Do you like <i>chimichurri</i> sauce or lemon?
G: Chimichurri yo me olvidé de comprar [inaudible]	<i>Chimichurri</i> sauce, but I forgot to buy
I: No importa.	OK / doesn't matter / don't worry
G: Acá tenemos chorizo, estos chorizos van a estar jamón del medio para hacer unos choripan (sic).	Here's sausage, we're going to make excellent sausage sandwiches or <i>choripanes</i> , as we call them.
I: Lo felicito, acá vemos que está más hecho, ¿Por qué? Porque se come de entrada.	Good! They are almost ready because it's the starter.
G: Exactamente. Y acá tenemos el vacío, que es un pedazo de carne riquísima, bien cocidita. Este está así porque está un poquito congelado, pero ya cuando se descongele se va a pasar a estirar.	Yes. This here is flank steak, a very tasty cut, well done. It's still frozen.
I: Se parece a una cabeza de alguien en este momento, pero ...	It looks like a head!
G: exactamente, pero ya se va a estirar solito. Lo vamos a dejar.	Yes, but it's going to be all right.
I: Vamos a volver con el público cuando esto esté hecho y ya lo vamos a comer, ¿verdad?	We continue when it's ready to eat, OK?
G: Vamos a ver la diferencia entre crudo y cocido.	Right.
I: Muy bien.	OK

Fig. 8. Activity 8

Activity 9 (Fig. 9) is based on “How to prepare asado argentino”⁶, a promotional video in easy English, runtime: 1.38 min. Viewers need to understand the commentary, as pictures do not reveal all the information.

Original text	possible consecutive interpretation
Learn the secrets and techniques to prepare the authentic Argentine <i>asado</i> , now on DVD.	Aprenda los secretos y técnicas para preparar el auténtico asado argentino en DVD.
The renowned grill master Marcelo Blanco shows us all the steps to prepare an authentic Pampas style grill:	Marcelo Blanco enseña a prepararlo.
from the different cuts and ways of roasting and eat to how to start the fire and maintain the ideal temperature of live coal to achieve that unmistakable flavour of grilled meat.	Los diferentes cortes y formas de asar y comer hasta como hacer el fuego y mantener la temperatura.
Recorded in high definition and lasting 120 minutes this DVD also includes how to grill on a cross grill and on the rotary plow, the techniques used by the gauchos on their journeys across the extensive Argentine Pampas.	Grabado en alta definición, dura 120 minutos, incluye cómo asar a la cruz o en disco de arado, como los gauchos en sus viajes por las pampas.
Also the traditional side dishes of a <i>criollo</i> grill such as sauces, typical salads and grilled vegetables as well as advice on which wine to choose to enhance this delicious combination of flavours.	También las salsas, ensaladas y verduras asadas y consejos sobre vinos.
This unique edition includes a book with recipes and ingredients for a special preparation of meat, a guide to buy the typical cuts in any butcher shop in the world, plus some secrets to obtain the best <i>criollo</i> grill.	Incluye recetas e ingredientes, una guía para comprar los cortes en cualquier carnicería del mundo y secretos para el mejor asado criollo.
The constant interaction between Marcelo Blanco's words and the advice in the book will enrich your culinary knowledge. It will turn you into a real Argentine grill master.	[Leave out?]

Fig. 9. Activity 9

Because this mediation is for an audience familiar with the topic, the text can be reduced to the essentials and the last part could be left out altogether.

Even though many of the activities proposed in this paper involve the active use of two foreign languages, I deliberately disregarded multilingual mediation using oral texts, because the intended learners have a limited competence in both L2s. It is rare for professional interpreters to do this in two foreign languages, such that pushing learners to perform such a daunting task would most probably not give them any sense of achievement. Besides, mediating between these two languages would make little sense, as most Germans understand some English.

4 Conclusion

In this paper, I show activities that contribute to the development of plurilingual intercultural competence by making learners carry out activities that require them to become ethnographers and mediators between speakers of Spanish, English and German. The ethnography involves research on the practices of barbecuing in English and German-speaking settings, whereby learners acquaint themselves with the practices, compare them to their own and sharpen their perception of seemingly identical events. All this sets the foundations for learners to be successful intercultural mediators between speakers of different languages. Additionally, in educational settings with a plurilingual offer, I propose carrying out these intercultural activities in classes where both foreign languages, in the case of these model activities English and German, are taught. Team teaching, if possible due to timetable constraints, would be an added plus.

I also wish to stress that learning English, German, or any other foreign language entails more than learning grammar and vocabulary, though these are essential when dealt with contrastively and learners are given the tools to become aware of the similarities and differences. In educational

settings where different foreign languages are offered, a strictly monolingual treatment of each language should be the exception rather than the rule. It is my contention that, when prompted to relate the languages and to move across them, learners see the foreign language learning experience holistically and that mediating between languages and cultures empowers the learners to make relevant use of the foreign languages beyond school.

Notes

¹For other relevant aspects of teacher training for plurilingual and intercultural development, see Beacco et al. (2010).

²The materials have been designed for this paper to demonstrate possible activity types.

³Sources: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbecue>; <http://barbeque.fyiabout.com/barbeque-grill-types/barbeque-grill-types-charcoalgrill-and-electric.htm>; <http://www.buy-a-gas-barbecue-grill.ca/gas-electric-charcoal.html>; <http://www.cma.de/content/kochen/grillen-grillgeraete.php>

⁴<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=4756008488844965632>

⁵<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0MGkdZMFMiE&feature=related>

⁶<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X6C5eNdaq-Y>

References

- Bassnett, S. (1997). Introduction. Studying British cultures. In S. Bassnett (Ed.), *Studying British cultures* (pp. xii–xvii). London & New York: Routledge.
- Beacco, J.-C., Byram, M., Cavalli, M., Coste, D., Egli Cuenat, M., Goullier, F., & Panthier, J. (2010). *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education. Document prepared for the Policy Forum 'The right of learners to quality and equity in education – The role of linguistic and intercultural competences', Geneva, Switzerland, 2–4 November 2010*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Language Policy Division. Retrieved from http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Source2010_ForumGeneva/GuideEP12010_EN.pdf
- Council of Europe (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Corbett, J. (2007). Introduction. In *Intercultural resource pack. Latin American perspectives* (p. 13). London: British Council. Retrieved from <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/icrp-july07.pdf>
- De Florio-Hansen, I. (Ed.) (2010). *Towards multilingualism and the inclusion of cultural diversity*. Kassel: Kassel University Press. Retrieved from <http://www.uni-kassel.de/upress/online/frei/978-3-86219-222-9.volltext.frei.pdf>.
- Degache, C. (2006). *Didactique du plurilinguisme. Travaux sur l'intercompréhension et l'utilisation des Technologies pour l'apprentissage des langues. Volume 1: Synthèse de l'activité de recherche*. Grenoble: UFR des sciences du langage – LIDILEM – Université Stendhal-Grenoble III. Retrieved from http://www.galanet.be/publication/fichiers/HDR2006_DegacheC.pdf
- Hufeisen, B., & Neuner, G. (eds.) (2004). *The plurilingualism project: Tertiary language learning - German after English*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Intercultural resource pack. Latin American perspectives*. (2007). London: British Council Retrieved from <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/icrp-july07.pdf>
- López Barrios, M. (2003). Deutsch als 2. Fremdsprache nach Englisch. Beispiel für mehrsprachige Materialentwicklung im Bereich Landeskunde. In G. Neuner & U. Koithan (Eds.), *Internationales Qualitätsnetz Deutsch als Fremdsprache - Tagungsdokumentation* (pp. 55–62). Kassel: Kassel University Press.
- López Barrios, M., & Villanueva de Debat, E. (2007). Intercultural reflection in EFL coursebooks. In *cultural awareness in ELT* (pp. 79–86). Córdoba: Comunic-arte.
- López Barrios, M., Villanueva de Debat, E., & Tavella, G. (2008). Materials in use in Argentina and the Southern Cone. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *English language learning materials. A critical review* (pp. 300–316). London: Continuum.
- Neuner, G., Hufeisen, B., Kursiša, A., Marx, N., Koithan, U., & Erlenwein, S. (2009). *Deutsch als zweite Fremdsprache*. Berlin: Langenscheidt.
- Pulverness, A. (2003). Materials for cultural awareness. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), *Developing materials for language teaching* (pp. 426–438). London: Continuum.