

# THE NOTION OF MEDIATION AND ITS ROLE AS A TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICE IN EFL



# WHAT IS "MEDIATION"?

- A simple Google search of the term “mediation” yields results that are pertinent to the field of law.



# EXAMPLES OF GOOGLE SEARCH

## RESULTS:

- “Mediation is a **dynamic, structured, interactive** process where an impartial third party assists disputing parties in resolving conflict through the use of specialized communication and negotiation techniques. All participants in mediation are encouraged to actively participate in the process. Mediation is a “party-centered” process in that it is focused primarily upon the needs, rights, and interests of the parties.” (Wikipedia)
- “Mediation is a process by which a neutral third party called a mediator helps people in conflict negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. The parties to the mediation control the outcome.

A mediator facilitates communication, promotes understanding, **assists the parties to identify** their needs and interests, and uses creative problem solving techniques to enable the parties to reach their own agreement.” (Australian Mediation Association)

# IS MEDIATION ONLY A LEGAL TERM?

- These associations of “mediation” with the legal process of trying to resolve a disagreement between two people or groups can lead to confusion.
- Why would a teacher need to learn about “mediation”?



# MEDIATION IS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TERM

- This means that it can be used in different disciplines (e.g. translation, philosophy, law, diplomacy, foreign language teaching, etc) and take up different meanings.

# ETYMOLOGICAL ROOTS

- ◉ **mediation (n.)** late 14c., *mediacioun*, "intervention, agency or action as a mediator or intermediary," from Medieval Latin *mediationem* (nominative *mediatio*) "a division in the middle," noun of action from past-participle stem of Latin *mediare* "to halve; to be in the middle," from *medius* "middle" (from PIE root **\*medhyo-** "middle"). Related: *Mediational*.
- ◉ **mediate (v.)** 1540s, "divide in two equal parts" (a sense now obsolete), from Latin *mediatus*, past participle of *mediare* "to halve," later, "be in the middle," from Latin *medius* "middle" (from PIE root **\*medhyo-** "middle"); from 1640s as "occupy a middle place or position." Meaning "act as a mediator, intervene for the purpose of reconciliation" is from 1610s; that of "settle by mediation, harmonize, reconcile" is from 1560s, perhaps back-formations from **mediation** or **mediator**. Related: *Mediated*; *mediates*; *mediating*.
- ◉ **mediator (n.)** mid-14c., *mediatour*, "one who intervenes between two parties (especially to seek to effect a reconciliation)," from Late Latin *mediator* "one who mediates," agent noun from stem of *mediare* "to intervene, mediate," also "to be or divide in the middle," from Latin *medius* "middle" (from PIE root **\*medhyo-** "middle"). Originally applied to Christ, who in Christian theology mediates between God and man. Meaning "one who intervenes between two disputing parties for the purpose of effecting reconciliation" is first attested late 14c. Feminine form *mediatrix* (originally of the Virgin Mary) from c. 1400. Related: *Mediatorial*; *mediatory*.

## Relevant concept:

- ◉ **go-between (n.)** "one who passes between parties in a negotiation or intrigue," 1590s, from verbal phrase *go between* in obsolete sense "act as a mediator" (1540s), from **go** (v.) + **between**.

(from etymology online)

# WHY WOULD A TEACHER NEED TO LEARN ABOUT MEDIATION?

- ◉ The new (2018) Companion Volume to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR CV) is a good place to start for the answer.

[Available at : https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989](https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989)

- ◉ In foreign language didactics mediation is mainly used to refer to the relaying of information from one language to another for a specific purpose (interlinguistic mediation)

# HOW MEDIATION HAS COME TO BE USED IN FL DIDACTICS

- ◉ Drawing upon *Vygotsky's* theory of mediation as the process through which the social and the individual mutually shape each other,



the 1996 pilot version of the CEFR, published during the last stages of the Swiss research project, sketched out categories for illustrative descriptor scales for mediation to complement those for reception, interaction and production.

- ◉ In 2001 the CEFR introduced “mediation” as a language competence.
- ◉ In 2018 the new version of the CEFR provides descriptor scales for mediation, given the increasing relevance of this area in education. In the consideration of mediation, descriptors for building on plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires were also added. It was to the validation of these new descriptors for mediation, online interaction, reactions to literature and building on plurilingual/pluricultural repertoires

See: Changes to the CEFR: Interaction & Mediation with Enrica Piccardo

- ◉ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=15&v=kVtbE1xhFMc&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=15&v=kVtbE1xhFMc&feature=emb_logo)



# HOW MEDIATION HAS COME TO BE USED IN FL DIDACTICS

- “In the field of language use ‘mediation’ has come to have a related and equally important meaning, namely to assist people to communicate effectively with one another when they speak different languages, do not understand certain terms or concepts, or when they are dealing with situations or ideas that are new to them.” (Council of Europe)

In other words...

- Mediation as a **dynamic**, **structured**, and **interactive** process can be used to **facilitate** communication between parties that cannot otherwise understand each other.

# MEDIATION'S TRAJECTORY IN THE GREEK CONTEXT

- ◉ The (1983 and the 1997) national ELT curricula legitimize the use of L1 in ELT in primary and secondary schools
- ◉ Uses of L1 for purposes of 'communicative' teaching and mediation activities appear in ELT materials locally produced (1984-1987).
- ◉ Practices of L1 and mediation exclusion, as well as of devaluating the NNS EFL teacher and trainer were theorized and ideological analysis of coursebooks for ELT published (Dendrinis 1987, 1992, 1999, 2001).
- ◉ Its inclusion (2002-2003) in a high stakes (state) exam for the certification of additional language competence (KPG) (Dendrinis,2007)

( You can also watch the lecture *Mediation in the KPG exams* by Stathopoulou Maria <https://youtu.be/eqH9sjCgyRA> )

# THE ROLE OF MEDIATION IN EFL

- ◉ The role of mediation in foreign language learning is versatile.
- ◉ It provides a negotiation ground for learners between their own language and the target foreign language and culture.
- ◉ It facilitates communication and cooperation by facing and defusing delicate situations or tensions that may rise.
- ◉ It helps improve social and cultural competences as well as plurilingual competence (Kabay & Öcten, 2019)

# WHAT MEDIATION ENTAILS ACCORDING TO DENDRINOS

**1 Sociocultural awareness**, which includes lifeworld knowledge, knowledge of how two languages operate at the level of discourse and genre, as well as rules of text and sentence grammar and of the grammar of visual design.

**2 Literacies**, i.e. school literacy, social literacy and practical literacy.

**3 Competencies**, i.e. linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence.

**4 Cognitive skills** to read between the lines, select pertinent information, retain and recall information for use in a new context, combine prior knowledge and experience with new information, combine information from a variety of source texts, solve a problem, a mystery, a query, predict, guess, foresee, infer, make a hypothesis, come to a conclusion.

**5 Social skills** to recognize the interlocutor's communicative needs and be able to facilitate the process of communication, negotiate information by adjusting effectiveness, efficiency and relevance to the context of situation.

# THE MEDIATION PROCESS ACCORDING TO DENDRINOS

1. Developing an understanding of the problem, the information gap, etc., by resorting to one's socio-cultural knowledge and experiences.
2. Considering the interlocutors' needs and determining in advance what type of intervention is required.
3. Listening to or reading the source text with the purpose of locating the pieces of information, or the message which must be relayed.
4. Deciding what to relay from the L1 text into the L2, decisions which are not only content-related but also language-related.
5. Drawing upon the gist of the source text to frame the new text and/or recalling bits of information.
5. Planning the organization of the output.
6. Entering a meaning-making process as the target text is being articulated.
7. Negotiating meaning with the (real or imagined) interlocutor.

From Table 2, Dendrinos, B.(2013). Testing and Teaching Mediation, *Directions in Language Teaching and Learning*, 1.

[https://rcel2.enl.uoa.gr/directions/issue1\\_1f.htm](https://rcel2.enl.uoa.gr/directions/issue1_1f.htm)

# TYPES OF MEDIATION

- ◉ **Linguistic mediation** is a type of interaction that takes place among people that are unable to communicate, when speakers do not speak the same language, or when speakers do speak the same language, but one of them has wider or more **specific knowledge** of the **common language**. According to this differentiation, **mediation tasks** can be monolingual (**intralinguistic mediation**) or bilingual (**cross-linguistic or interlinguistic mediation**).
- ◉ **Cultural mediation** (intercultural and intracultural mediation)

# Cross-Language Mediation in Foreign Language Teaching and Testing

Maria Stathopoulou



new  
perspectives  
on  
language  
and  
education

## WHAT IS CROSS- LANGUAGE MEDIATION?

1. A form of translanguaging practice
2. A social activity

(Stathopoulou, 2015)

# LINGUISTIC MEDIATION

Linguistic mediation activities take up an important place in our societies

## Interlinguistic/Cross-language mediation

- ◉ Watch :  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=Rs-L1dJ1Zbw&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=Rs-L1dJ1Zbw&feature=emb_logo)
- ◉ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=6&v=aelB-TR7Gls&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=6&v=aelB-TR7Gls&feature=emb_logo)
- ◉ Relaying in the target language the message in a (spoken or written) text that appears in the source language (from L1 or L2 or vice versa)
  - to someone who is unlikely to understand it fully or partially (or for a number of other purposes, e.g., to check comprehension)
  - either though the same or a different channel, same or different discourse, etc.

(Dendrinos, 2007)

## ◉ Intralinguistic mediation

### Watch:

- ◉ [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQ6T3eUCEEM&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FQ6T3eUCEEM&feature=emb_logo)
- ◉ Relaying the message in a (spoken or written) text to one or more people who fail to understand it as it is (or for a number of other purposes)
  - through a different channel of communication
  - in a different discourse, genre or register (paraphrasing or relaying salient information)
  - by conveying the main idea or information selected to suit the context of situation (summarizing, giving gist)

(Dendrinos, 2007)



# CULTURAL MEDIATION

## Intercultural mediation

- ◎ Relaying information to some-one who is from a different ethnic, linguistic or/and cultural background from that of the mediator
- ◎ Filling in an information gap (about social habits, operation of social institutions, etc.) for listeners/readers who do not share L1, cultural experiences, profession, etc.

(Dendrinos, 2007)

## Intracultural mediation

- ◎ Relaying information to someone who shares ethnic background and L1, but belongs to a different cultural group/ social network from that of the mediator
- ◎ Interpreting reality for listeners (e.g., TV and radio) and/or readers (e.g., printed media) of the same ethnic and language background as the mediator

(Dendrinos, 2007)

# MEDIATION STRATEGIES

◉ **Watch again:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=Rs-L1dJ1Zbw&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=Rs-L1dJ1Zbw&feature=emb_logo)

- ❖ Amplifying
- ❖ Simplifying
- ❖ Synthesizing
- ❖ Clarifying & adapting cultural differences
- ❖ Rephrasing
- ❖ Summarizing

# MEDIATION STRATEGIES ACCORDING TO STATHOPOULOU (2013)

Mediation Strategies	
01.	Creative blending between extracted and extra-textual information
02.	Combining information
03.	Summarising
04.	Reorganising extracted information
05.	Condensing (at sentence level) by combining two (or more) short sentences into one (sentence fusion)
06.	Expanding
07.	Paraphrasing

*Table 1: Mediation strategies as presented and defined by Stathopoulou (2013)*

Stathopoulou, M. (2013). Investigating Mediation as Translanguaging Practice in a Testing Context: Towards the Development of Levelled Mediation Descriptors, *Language Testing in Europe: Time for a New Framework?*, 209-217 Available at : [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255821688\\_Stathopoulou\\_M\\_2013\\_Investigating\\_Mediation\\_as\\_Translanguaging\\_Practice\\_in\\_a\\_Testing\\_Context\\_Towards\\_the\\_Development\\_of\\_Levelled\\_Mediation\\_Descriptors\\_Proceedings\\_of\\_the\\_International\\_Conference\\_Langu](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/255821688_Stathopoulou_M_2013_Investigating_Mediation_as_Translanguaging_Practice_in_a_Testing_Context_Towards_the_Development_of_Levelled_Mediation_Descriptors_Proceedings_of_the_International_Conference_Langu)

# MEDIATION AS A TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICE

- “Interlingual mediation is considered as a form of translanguaging as it involves purposeful transferring of information from one language to another” (Stathopoulou, 2016, p. 762)
- “By viewing mediation as a form of translanguaging, attention is shifted from languages (or from language entities as static objects) to resources, thus emphasizing the fact that there are no clear-cut boundaries between languages (cf. Canagarajah 2006; García 2009b; Dendrinos 2012)” (Stathopoulou, 2016, p.762)

# THE BENEFITS OF MEDIATION

- ◉ Mediation augments awareness of difference and diversity, thus, paving the way for intercultural differences to be addressed.
- ◉ Mediation can in practice raises awareness on learning differences and differences of opinion
- ◉ “Mediation allows us to think beyond language-as-a-subject teaching, and to look at the skills involved in working with content subjects in other languages - in CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)
- ◉ The opportunities for developing meaningful and authentic activities for looking at language and communication based around mediation competences mean that English for Professional Purposes, Specific Purposes, Academic Purposes can gain a renewed rationale, structure and set of reference points. This will potentially lead to more meaningful outcomes at the activity, lesson and course level for participants and organisations alike.”

(Thom Kiddle.(2020). Advancing Learning: Teaching mediation,[Blog , Retrieved from <http://www.onestopenglish.com/community/teacher-talk/advancing-learning/advancing-learning-teaching-mediation/557522.article>])

# MEDIATION ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO THE CEFR:

- “Mediation activities as either oral or written, specifying different tasks that can be developed as mediation practice, such as **translation, interpretation, paraphrasing, summarizing and note-taking**” (CEFR 2002: 14-15).
- Therefore, mediation is oftentimes associated with translation. A distinction, therefore, should be drawn between the two.

# DISTINGUISHING MEDIATION FROM TRANSLATION:

## In Mediation

- Mediators are a **social agent** and are at liberty of voicing their opinion, making side comments and producing their own text
- Mediators may and should on most cases choose which messages and meanings to convey to their interlocutor. The center of attention is turned towards the interlocutor's understanding and not the integrity of the text
- Mediators should choose the most optimal way for transference of meaning. They can transgress between genres, registers and styles to facilitate and ensure communication among the parties involved.

## In Translation

- Translators and interpreters are not allowed to express their opinion or side comment. They need to adhere to the source text and not intervene with its content.
- Translators and interpreters, place their attention mainly to the source text rather than the target audience/readers.
- Translators and interpreters are not allowed to transgress between genres, registers and styles. They need to be “loyal” to the source text as much as possible and avoid diversions.

Watch again : [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=Rs-L1dJ1Zbw&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=Rs-L1dJ1Zbw&feature=emb_logo)

# MEDIATION ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO THE CERF:

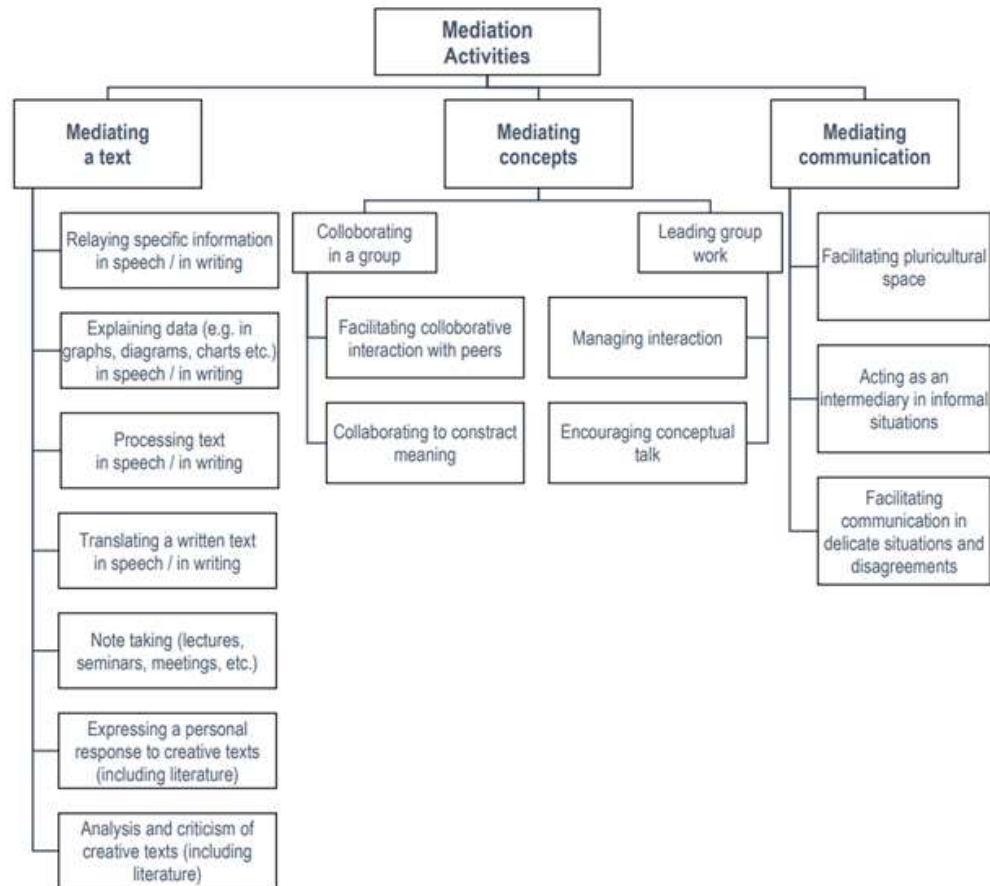
- “In mediating activities, the language user is not concerned to express his/her own meanings, but simply to act as an intermediary between interlocutors who are unable to understand each other directly, normally (but not exclusively) speakers of different languages. ...” (CEFR Section 4.4.4. English p.87)



# MEDIATION ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO THE CEFR:

- “Mediation language activities, (re)processing an existing text, occupy an important place in the normal linguistic functioning of our societies.” (CEFR, Section 2.1.3. English, p.14)
- The expanded and greatly developed illustrative descriptors and associated explanations in the CEFR CV break mediation down into three main areas: Mediating Texts, Mediating Concepts and Mediating Communication.

# MEDIATION ACTIVITIES



From CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors (p. 104) <https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989>

# CLASSIFICATION OF MEDIATION ACTIVITIES IN THE CEFR:

Table 1 . Mediation Activities from CEFR

Oral mediation	Simultaneous interpretation	Conferences, meetings, formal speeches, etc.
	Consecutive interpretation	Speeches of welcome, guided tours, etc.
	Informal interpretation	Foreign visitors in home country; native speakers when abroad; social and transactional situations; of signs, menus, notices, etc.
Written mediation	Exact translation	Contracts, legal and scientific texts, etc.
	Literary translation	Novels, drama, poetry, libretti, etc.
	Summarising gist within L2 or between L1 and L2	Newspaper and magazine articles, etc.
	Paraphrasing	Specialised texts for lay persons, etc.

# EXAMPLES OF MEDIATION ACTIVITIES

- ◉ <https://www.thewayexperience.es/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/MEDIATION-A2-WEB-SAMPLE.pdf>
- ◉ <https://www.thewayexperience.es/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/MEDIATION-B2-WEB-SAMPLE.pdf>
- ◉ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbCVjiFHKEY>

# FOR MORE EXAMPLES OF MEDIATION ACTIVITIES:

- You can also visit the KPG website and review the past papers material for levels from A1 - C2. (e.g. [https://rcel2.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/files/past\\_papers/english/2010-05/B1-May2010\\_M4\\_CANDIDATE\\_BOOKLET.pdf](https://rcel2.enl.uoa.gr/kpg/files/past_papers/english/2010-05/B1-May2010_M4_CANDIDATE_BOOKLET.pdf))
- Video lecture *Designing mediation tasks*, by *Stathopoulou Maria*  
<https://youtu.be/RoKDiSWrLAc>

# FOR MORE ON MEDIATION YOU CAN ALSO SEE :

- ◉ <https://rm.coe.int/mediation-a-paradigm-shift-in-language-education-piccardo/16808ae720>
- ◉ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/lang-migrants/linguistic-and-cultural-mediation>
- ◉ Stathopoulou, M. (2019). The reading-to-write construct across languages: Analysing written mediation tasks and performance, *International Symposium on Theoretical and Applied Linguistics*, 23, 414-428 Available at: <http://ejournals.lib.auth.gr/thal/article/view/7357/7106>

# MORE VIDEO RESOURCES ON MEDIATION

- ◉ *Mediation: What it is and how to teach it*  
<https://youtu.be/C0WBHggJhqY>
- ◉ *Introducing interaction and mediation in language assessment*  
<https://youtu.be/BUjyWD-RNpg>



THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PARTICIPATION!