

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MEDIATION IN TEACHING INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATION

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### Abstract

In a pan-European context, mediation refers to the communicative activity of a language mediator, written or verbal, providing communication between people who cannot, for whatever reason, communicate directly with each other due to linguistic, cultural, semantic or technical barriers.

Mediation can be considered as a part of interpreting/translation activities that expands the boundaries of translation and is a valid form of translation. The goal of mediation is to eliminate the conflicting component of communication and harmonize communication. At the heart of communicative language mediation is a communicative initiative that reflects the social and psychological state of communicants.

The mediator can enter into communication and helps to overcome the language barrier between the participants of communication, sometimes expressing a personal attitude to the speech behaviour of communicants.

The interpreter/translator, unlike the mediator, has obligations to both parties on the quality of the translation and is characterized by the absence of an independent intention and should be as objective and impartial as possible. Some researchers assign the translator a role sufficiently dependent on the customer, the activity of the translator depends on the accuracy of determining the requirements that the translation addresses presents to him.

Often, mediation's activity is identified with interpreting or translation from one language to another in a certain communicative situation. However, "language mediation" is not identical to the concept of "translation".

The formation of skills and abilities of mediation is carried out on the basis of the most diverse forms of work in the interaction of all components of foreign language communicative competence and contributes to the formation of key competences in teaching foreign languages and translation training.

**Keywords:** foreign languages, mediation, skills and abilities of mediation, communicative competence.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The role of intercultural communication in the modern community is constantly increasing. Therefore, the communicative and pragmatic aspects of the language attract the special attention of linguists, causing interest in such a phenomenon as linguistic mediation both in the linguistic and pragmatic aspects. Sometimes the terms "mediation" and "translation" are considered synonymous. It should be noted that linguistic mediation, in contrast to translation, is a transformation of any information (message, speech, text) orally or in writing to convey meaning to the listener (listeners) who do not know another foreign language and culture. The translator, being a direct participant in verbal communication, conveys the meaning of the statement of the first communicator in a foreign language, addressing it to the second. The translator, having received from the customer the task of transmitting certain information, in the course of its activity independently decides how best to do this in order to ensure optimal reception of the transmitted information.

Often, the role of the translator's personality and goals that he sets are emphasized, the success of his actions is associated with the accuracy of determining the requirements of the customer and the recipient of the translation. M. Lederer notes that interpretation of the meaning, which is meant by the translator's assessment, possible conclusions and associations, are not the responsibility of the translator, since the translator, while fulfilling the customer's task, should be as objective and impartial as possible (Lederer, 2007). The question of the distinction between the actual translation and communicative language mediation does not yet have a definite solution. At the same time, the question arises of the role of language mediation in teaching translation.

## **2. ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY**

Language mediation can have a different nature depending on the actual linguistic and communicative-pragmatic component of communication. Mediation, can be represented by different types that the translator can use: decipher the audio text, speech, message and comment, state the main idea, write the text in brief form. Mediation is the 4th linguistic competence after the competence of receiving information, its reproduction, interaction (communication), which is based on the translation of the meaning, the essence in oral or written form. Mediation activities include oral interpretation and written translation, as well as summarizing and reformulating texts in the same language when the original text is incomprehensible to the addressee (Seleskovitch, Lederer, 2001).

Mediation thus becomes a complex skill for the purpose of transmitting a content. Mediation is most often associated with interlinguistic mediation (transmitting reduced information to a sort of translation or interpretation) without losing its intralinguistic dimension which may concern the target language or mother tongue "when the learner / user aims to give meaning to the text (written or oral) it faces " (Piccardo, 2012). This is the first of four types of mediation present in the CEFR, that of linguistic mediation. The other three are cultural mediation, social mediation and pedagogical mediation (North, Piccardo, 2016). When we go from one language to another, we go from one culture to another and play a socially active role trying to reformulate a text. The pedagogical mediation includes cognitive mediation and relational mediation: it facilitates access to knowledge, it encourages users / learners to develop their thinking, establishing relationships and exchanges, cooperating and solving problems. These four types involve linguistic-communicative, interactional, strategico-methodical and intercultural skills and abilities (Biederman, 2014). Under mediation we designate any operation, any device, any intervention which, in a given social context, aims to reduce the distance between two (or more than two) alteration poles that are in tension with each other (Coste, Cavalli, 2015). The role of the mediator is to modulate values in order to provide communication overcoming various pragmatic barriers.

Mediation is understood as intermediary activity ensuring the communicative interaction of two or more communicants, if direct communication between them is impossible due to some circumstances (Council of Europe CECR, 2018). In a pan-European context, primarily mediation as a verbal activity was understood as the written and / or oral actions of the mediator, which provide communication between people who are unable for some reason to communicate directly with each other (Council of Europe, 2001). In "CEFR Illustrative Descriptors. Extended Version 2016 " emphasizes that only starting from the B1 level it is possible to assess real mediation skills. The mediation may be considered as an object of methodological modelling as a whole and can determine various methodological models for teaching mediation in various didactic contexts in the process of professional and intercultural training of students in foreign language teaching. "CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors" states that a person's mediatory activity when working with a foreign language text consists in transmitting to the other person the content of the text to which the latter does not have access due to linguistic, cultural, semantic or technical barriers (North, Piccardo, 2016).

Language mediation can be non-interactive (transmitting information from the communicator to the recipient without feedback) or interactive (sending a message from the communicator to the recipient and then vice versa). In language education it is possible to carry out methodological formation step by step and development of cross-cultural / multilingual students' mediation skills required to assist in interacting with participants of intercultural communication in a foreign language that will not include translation skills level B2 – C. In the preparation of professional translators, a system should be implemented for the formation of the whole complex of bilingual skills, including professional translation skills at the B2 – C level. "Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, teaching, assessment" insists of the necessity to introduce to the pan-European terminological field of the new concept - "modes of communication": (North, Piccardo, 2016; Council of Europe, 2016). This pan-European methodological concept depending on the linguistics didactic context in Russian is transmitted mainly as communicative activities: reception, production, interaction and mediation.

Mediation of a mixed type includes language mediation with elements of interaction between the mediator and one of the communicants (unlike mediation in the context of interaction, when the communicative interaction takes place between the communicators and the mediator performs a purely intermediary function). In this case, the mediator bears the dual functional load of the language mediator and the active communicator. An effective mediator is able to express the meaning of the statement and the speaker's intention more clearly than another communicator or even the speaker himself, since the goal of mediation is to eliminate the conflicting component of communication and harmonize communication. Mediation as an object of study and assessment of its quality in language education is recognized as one of the types of communicative activity that plays an important role in the study of various languages and cultures. It should be noted the importance of learning mediation as a form of intercultural communication and as a means of achieving communicative and cognitive harmony in the process of international cooperation (Byram, 2008).

In 2018 the content of the term "mediation" is expanded to include, in addition to bilingual (translation) skills, monolingual (sociocultural, interpretive and interactive) skills in the cultural mediator's tools (Council of Europe, 2018). The preparation of an interpreter as a cultural mediator is quite complicated (Martin, Phelan, 2010). Translation activities may or may not be part of the mediation process in the context of intercultural communication (Council of Europe, 2017). In various concepts of translation, researchers assign a customer-dependent role to the translator as a key actor of international communication, which limits to a certain extent the freedom of his activities. Communication through an interpreter as a linguistic mediator is carried out by setting him certain communicative tasks. The functional approach in relation to language mediation cannot distinguish translation from other types of interlingual mediation (Viaggio, 2006).

The translator, unlike the mediator, is bound by bilateral commitments and is characterized by the absence of an independent intention. The mediator may not be bound by any of the parties. The translator can be called a creative mediator, recreating the appropriate context (Sorokin, 2003). The mediator is less restricted to choose verbal and non-verbal means. The mediator can enter into communication at any stage when, in his opinion, the success of communication or the communicator is under threat. The mediator can act as a communication participant who speaks both languages. In this situation, the need for mediation is caused by the language barrier between the addressee and the recipients (Grisham, 2011). If the communicative difficulty due to psychological and cultural factors has been overcome, and communication has taken place, then the communicative goal of the mediator, i.e. the harmonization of relations between the participants in the dialogue has been achieved. In the process of mediation, the mediator's speech may coincide with the translation, but at the same time the mediator expresses a personal attitude to the content of speech and the speech behavior of communicants, emphasizing its communicative intention.

Often, the term "mediation" is identified with a translation from one language to another in a certain communicative situation. Language mediation may be a special form of interaction, but may also be non-interactive. In the field of teaching foreign languages, the task is to develop a special component of discursive or speech competence, i.e. linguistic and extralinguistic skills and modes of activity in terms of language mediation, which form the mediation competence of students. Forms of non-interactive mediation can be translation, summarization, annotation and retelling (North, Piccardo, 2016).

Translation acts as a special type of speech activity and is aimed at developing the following skills and abilities: using explanatory and bilingual dictionaries, translation techniques (replacing, rearranging, adding, omitting, tracing, editing text, etc. As a non-interactive mediation activity, one can be trained in translation with linguistic-cultural commentary. A professional translator should be able to competently make comments on foreign language texts, give the key information of the text making summary. The summarization is a type of non-interactive mediation activity.

The main forms of interactive mediation include consecutive translation and mediation in negotiations. This type of mediation is recommended to be carried out within the framework of role-playing games in translation training, taking into account the communicative task. We think that exercises such as talk shows, political debates, court appearances, etc., have a positive effect in teaching foreign languages and translating students in law, economics, and international relations. In this case, the mediator is the presenter. A good result is achieved by simulating business negotiations between representatives of companies, for example, with the aim of mutually beneficial cooperation and signing a contract. The mediator in such negotiations can be a specialist in legal matters who can provide business interaction. So the form of role-playing game is most appropriate in law schools with in-depth study of a foreign language. Performing such tasks requires intensive preparatory work from students using additional sources. Mediation in the context of interaction involves communicative interaction between communicants, and the mediator performs an intermediary function. Mediation helps students to activate their speech skills and to develop the most important competencies.

### 3. RESULTS

The result of this study is to draw a clear boundary between the competences of the translator and the mediator in the language sphere. The function of the translator is to transfer the meaning from one communicator to another/others in accordance with a previously received order. At the same time, the mediation function is to establish contact between communicators and clarify the essence of the transmitted information, taking into account the ethnocultural, historical, linguistic differences between communicants. A large role is played by a rather high level of knowledge of the mediator both in the linguistic, and in the cultural, historical, political, and global spheres.

### 4. CONCLUSION

Thus, mediation competence includes translation competence and is complemented by broad knowledge in many areas of human activity. It should be noted that highly qualified special translators have priority in the semantic transfer of information from one language to another in their area of competence. The development of meditative competence is closely related to the development of skills and abilities necessary for the future professional activity of student translators and contributes to the improvement of their professional competence.

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