



Pre-service teacher education and the integration of mediation, technology, and plurilingualism

Giulia Ciaramita¹

Abstract. Although some research has been conducted on the importance of mediation in language learning and teaching (Dendrinios, 2006; González-Davies, 2020; Piccardo, 2012, 2020; Scarino, 2016), there is still scarce research on the integration of plurilingualism, mediation, and technology. Through qualitative and quantitative methodology, this paper investigates teachers' abilities in Italy and Spain to integrate plurilingualism, mediation, and technology. A survey has been distributed in order to explore teachers' attitudes towards the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their awareness of the definition and importance of mediation. Furthermore, some mediation tasks performed by teachers in which they had to integrate mediation, plurilingualism, and technology were analysed.

Keywords: teacher education, mediation, ICTs, language learning, TEMPLATE project.

1. Introduction

Mediation can be considered as the act of language that makes “communication possible between persons who are unable [...] to communicate with each other directly” (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 34). This definition is provided by the CV, which also underlines the relationship between mediation and plurilingual and pluricultural competences. Mediation was already present in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR), published in 2001 (Council of Europe, 2001), but it was not sufficiently developed: the only two mediation strategies were translation and interpretation (Piccardo, 2020). The

1. UJI, Castellon de la Plana, Spain / UNITO, Turin, Italy; giulia.ciaramita@gmail.com; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9685-5518>

How to cite this article: Ciaramita, G. (2022). Pre-service teacher education and the integration of mediation, technology, and plurilingualism. In B. Arnbjörnsdóttir, B. Bédi, L. Bradley, K. Friðriksdóttir, H. Garðarsdóttir, S. Thouéšny, & M. J. Whelpton (Eds), *Intelligent CALL, granular systems, and learner data: short papers from EUROCALL 2022* (pp. 77-82). Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2022.61.1438>

Council of Europe (2015) decided to further develop the topic in the CV since nowadays societies are characterised by cultural and linguistic diversity and, therefore, the citizens need to be able to mediate.

After the publication of the CV, some research has been conducted on the importance of mediation in language learning and teaching. Some academic research focuses on the presence and role of mediation in the CEFR (Piccardo, 2012, 2020), while other studies have been conducted on translation as a mediation strategy (González-Davies, 2020; Scarino, 2016). Other research focuses on the role of mediation in language certifications (Dendrinos, 2006) and some ICT tools for teaching mediation have been identified (Cinganotto, 2020). Nevertheless, there is still scarce research on the integration of plurilingualism, mediation, and technology. For this reason, this paper aims at investigating the ability of teachers in Italy and Spain to integrate plurilingualism, mediation, and technology. It also aims at comparing the Italian and Spanish results.

2. Method

In order to investigate teachers' awareness of mediation and their ability to integrate it with plurilingual and pluricultural competences and with ICTs as well, data were collected during two occasions:

- 30/11/2021, Universitat Jaume I, Spain (workshop on mediation for pre- and in-service teachers, held within the multiplier event of the TEMPLATE project, <https://templateplurilingualism.eu/>);
- 23/02/2022, Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy (workshop for pre-service teachers proposed within the university course 'Approaches to Language Teaching').

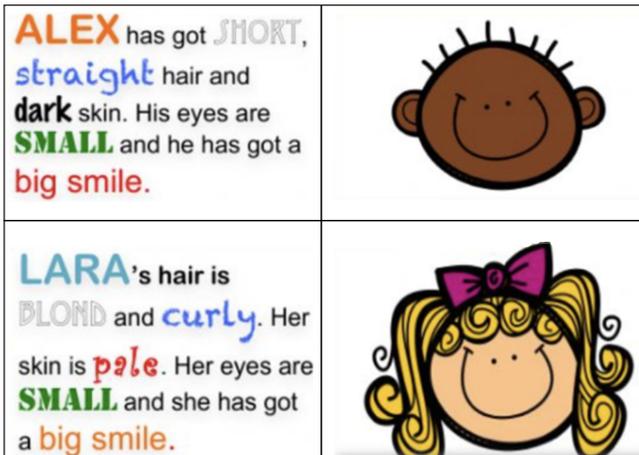
In Spain, 52 participants took part in the multiplier event. Most of them (71%) were pre-service teachers. The remaining participants were mostly in-service teachers (19%). On the other hand, all the 23 Italian participants were pre-service teachers. The participants are part of the TEMPLATE project and they are mainly pre-service language and/or content and language integrated learning teachers.

For these workshops, a survey was designed through Google forms in order to explore teachers' awareness of the definition and importance of mediation, and their ability to recognise mediation exercises. Indeed, after some questions about

metadata (age, occupation, years of experience), the participants were asked to define mediation, to explain its importance, and to recognise some mediation exercises.

In order to collect qualitative data, some tasks performed by the participants were analysed. In these tasks, they had to integrate mediation, plurilingualism, and technology by adapting some mediation exercises to a digital context, through the addition of some ICTs and motivating the reason for selecting the tools. Figure 1 below is an example of a task.

Figure 1. Mediation Task²: Alex and Lara will soon be two new English students in your class. You read their description (in English) and you orally describe them to your class using Spanish



The exercise is a cross-linguistic mediation task: the students have to mediate orally an English written text, using Spanish. In addition to the verbal input, a visual input was provided. The teachers participating in the workshop had to adapt this task to a digital context, simply by listing some ICTs that could be included and explaining the added value of the inclusion of the tools selected.

2. Created for this research, using text and images retrieved from <https://www.pinterest.es/pin/who-is-who-language-english-gradelevel-elemental-school-subject-english-as-a-second-language-esl-mai--452330356328865065/>

3. Results and discussion

The survey results show that most of the Spanish participants (92%) knew the definition of mediation, and 96% of them were aware of the necessity to include it in the curriculum for educational and social reasons. Nevertheless, most of them (63%) did not always recognise mediation exercises. On the other hand, in Italy, a smaller number of pre-service teachers (74%) knew the meaning of mediation and 65% were aware of the importance of including mediation in language courses, but 43% of them were not always able to recognise mediation exercises. The quantitative data just mentioned are summarised in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Quantitative results

	Percentage of teachers able to define mediation	Percentage of teachers aware of the importance of mediation	Percentage of teachers not always able to recognise mediation exercises
Spain	92%	96%	63%
Italy	73%	65%	43%

Analysing the tasks performed by the Spanish participants, it emerged that they were able to include ICT tools in existing tasks. They included ICTs in various phases of the task and for different reasons:

- for pre/post-task activities (e.g. hangman to revise vocabulary, interactive exercises to learn the vocabulary);
- for the task itself (e.g. Canva to prepare a new infographic, Filmora to prepare a video, Pixton to create comics, Twitter to summarise the text, Grammarly to correct the text, online dictionaries to check vocabulary);
- to facilitate collaboration (videoconference, shared documents).

Furthermore, they often motivated the use of technology by referring to factors not linked to facilitating mediation, such as: motivation, acquisition of digital skills, preparation for the job market and academic studies. Italian participants also proved to be able to integrate the use of ICTs. Similarly to the Spanish participants, they included ICTs:

- for pre/post-task activities (e.g. Mentimeter to elicit vocabulary, YouTube/Quizlet/Kahoot/British council website to present/explain vocabulary, collocations, and sentence structure);

- for the task itself (e.g. Instagram/Prezi to make the text more visual, Grammarly to correct the text, online dictionaries, programmes for writing effective emails); and
- to facilitate collaboration (videoconference, shared documents, Google Drive, Google Classroom).

When motivating their choices of ICTs, they never referred to mediation but to other aspects such as: using tools closer to younger students, increasing amusement in learning, interaction and collaboration, and facilitating the production of correct texts.

4. Conclusions

In both Italy and Spain pre-service teachers are aware of the definition of mediation. Nevertheless, Spanish pre-service teachers are more aware of the importance of mediation. In both countries, the participants associate the concept of mediation with the educational context and language learning. Even though their theoretical knowledge about mediation seems of a good level, when it comes to practise some of them encounter difficulties. Indeed, many teachers (63% in Spain, 43% in Italy) are not always able to identify mediation exercises.

Concerning technology, in both countries the attitude is positive, and pre-service teachers consider technology as an added value to the task, demonstrating to be able to integrate technology in language teaching, but not always focusing on the facilitating role that it can have in mediation tasks. Considering the findings mentioned above, it is possible to conclude that teachers still need to be trained to be able to recognise mediation exercises and to integrate the use of technology in mediation tasks, in order to use these tools to facilitate mediation.

5. Acknowledgements

The present research has been funded by the European Erasmus+ K201 project TEMPLATE (<https://templateplurilinguism.eu/>).

References

Cinganotto, L. (2020, November). *How to teach mediation online*. <https://youtu.be/y16Jqpas6pk>

- Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR)*. <https://rm.coe.int/16802fc1bf>
- Council of Europe. (2015). *Education, mobility, otherness: the mediation functions of schools*. <https://rm.coe.int/education-mobility-otherness-the-mediation-functions-of-schools/16807367ee>
- Council of Europe. (2020). *Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR), companion volume with new descriptors*. <https://rm.coe.int/common-european-framework-of-reference-for-languages-learning-teaching/16809ea0d4>
- Dendrinis, B. (2006). Mediation in communication, language teaching and testing. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 22, 9-35.
- González-Davies, M. (2020). Developing mediation competence through translation. In S. Laviosa & M. Gonzalez-Davies (Eds), *The Routledge handbook of translation and education* (pp. 434-454). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367854850-27>
- Piccardo, E. (2012). Médiation et apprentissage des langues : pourquoi est-il temps de réfléchir à cette notion? *Études de Linguistique Appliquée*, 167, 285-297. <https://doi.org/10.3917/ela.167.0285>
- Piccardo, E. (2020). La mediazione al cuore dell'apprendimento linguistico per una didattica 3.0. *Italiano LinguaDue*, 1, 561-585. <https://riviste.unimi.it/index.php/promoitals/article/view/13946/13088>
- Scarino, A. (2016). Reconceptualising translation as intercultural mediation: a renewed place in language learning. *Perspectives*, 24(3), 470-485. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2015.1022192>



Published by Research-publishing.net, a not-for-profit association
Contact: info@research-publishing.net

© 2022 by Editors (collective work)
© 2022 by Authors (individual work)

Intelligent CALL, granular systems and learner data: short papers from EUROCALL 2022
Edited by Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir, Branislav Bédi, Linda Bradley, Kolbrún Friðriksdóttir, Hólmfríður Garðarsdóttir, Sylvie Thoučsny, and Matthew James Whelpton

Publication date: 2022/12/12

Rights: the whole volume is published under the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives International (CC BY-NC-ND) licence; **individual articles may have a different licence.** Under the CC BY-NC-ND licence, the volume is freely available online (<https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2022.61.9782383720157>) for anybody to read, download, copy, and redistribute provided that the author(s), editorial team, and publisher are properly cited. Commercial use and derivative works are, however, not permitted.

Disclaimer: Research-publishing.net does not take any responsibility for the content of the pages written by the authors of this book. The authors have recognised that the work described was not published before, or that it was not under consideration for publication elsewhere. While the information in this book is believed to be true and accurate on the date of its going to press, neither the editorial team nor the publisher can accept any legal responsibility for any errors or omissions. The publisher makes no warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein. While Research-publishing.net is committed to publishing works of integrity, the words are the authors' alone.

Trademark notice: product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Copyrighted material: every effort has been made by the editorial team to trace copyright holders and to obtain their permission for the use of copyrighted material in this book. In the event of errors or omissions, please notify the publisher of any corrections that will need to be incorporated in future editions of this book.

Typeset by Research-publishing.net
Cover photo by © 2022 Kristinn Ingvarsson (photo is taken inside Veröld – House of Vigdís)
Cover layout by © 2022 Raphaël Savina (raphael@savina.net)

ISBN13: 978-2-38372-015-7 (PDF, colour)

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data.
A cataloguing record for this book is available from the British Library.

Legal deposit, France: Bibliothèque Nationale de France - Dépôt légal: décembre 2022.