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### **EFL learner mediation performance: Implications of an empirical study in a testing context**

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This paper is based on findings of a research project which explored the complex nature of cross-language mediation, i.e., a translanguaging activity (Stathopoulou, 2013a, 2013b) and social practice (Dendrinos, 2006) which entails selective relaying in one language messages purposefully extracted from a source text in another language for a given communicative purpose. Although its role is considered crucial in today's multilingual and multicultural societies which demand cultural and linguistic negotiation, mediation has seldom been included in foreign language curricula or examination batteries, for reasons which are probably related to the monolingual practices of European language teaching and testing. Despite the fact that the influential Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001) has considered mediation as an important aspect of language users' proficiency (along with production, reception and interaction), it provides no illustrative descriptors relevant to mediation which would in turn facilitate its reliable assessment. This absence due mainly to lack of relevant research has been a significant incentive for the particular study, which has used data from the Greek national standardized foreign language exams (KPG exams), the only examination system in Europe which assesses test-takers' mediation ability. The research, actually, identified (through an inductive approach to data analysis) successful mediation strategies in test-takers' scripts of different proficiency levels from different KPG writing test papers over a period of six years and ultimately explored what it means to mediate. This investigation has led to the development of an Inventory of Written Mediation Strategies (IWMS) and a levelled mediation task typology.

This paper discusses the usefulness of the aforementioned outcomes and presents the implications of the particular research for (multilingual) testing, curricular planning, syllabus design and teaching. Overall, the outcomes of this study, may facilitate the development of mediation levelled tasks for teaching and testing purposes, while they may also contribute to the creation of standardized measures and clear benchmarks for reliable assessment of mediation competence, thus providing a critical supplement to the CEFR. The paper, in the light of its research findings, concludes by pointing to the role of language testing in the effort to support multilingualism.

#### **References**

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