

**ARE THE NEW MEDIATION DESCRIPTORS LIKELY
TO ALLEVIATE CONCERNS ABOUT THE
DOMINANCE OF ACADEMIC ENGLISH IN
RESEARCH PAPERS?**

**ELAINE BOYD
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON**

SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED? A EPISTEMICIDE

‘English has become the lingua franca of academic discourse, and novices as well as established researchers **must be able** to express themselves in that language if they want to be fully accepted members of the international academic community.’

(Vold, E.T. 2006:2) [EB emphasis]

EPISTEMICIDE?

‘knowledge that has been construed **in accordance with other cultural norms** often has to be radically reformulated in translation to bring it into line with English discourse expectations. Such domestication procedures (which often go far beyond the word or sentence level to involve textual organization and the whole rhetorical approach) effectively **repackage the text in terms of the dominant epistemology, thereby rendering invisible rival forms of knowledge.**’

(Gulden, A.T. 2013) [Emphases Gulden’s, Karen Bennett, call for papers, 2011]

SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED? B ESSAY STRUCTURE

U.S. Essay Structure	Chinese Essay Structure
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Low-Context Culture</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arguments are linear ✓ Meaning is explicit ✓ Writers are responsible for articulating meaning 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>High-Context Culture</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Inference creates meaning ✓ Meaning is implicit ✓ Readers are responsible for interpreting (and, therefore, creating) meaning
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Goals of Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Analyze and categorize information in order to share information ✓ Originality is privileged 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Goals of Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Create harmonious relationships between pieces of information ✓ Tradition is privileged
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Figurative Language</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Figurative language is ambiguous and inhibits meaning 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Figurative Language</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Metaphors allow readers to create multiple meanings

Ling & Cahill,
2008

SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED? C PLAGIARISM

- **Memorisation** as respect
- **Banking** model of education
- **Fluctuation** across geographies

(Nelson, A. 2017 for Turn It In)

MEDIATOR AS AGENT

Expectation of agency:

- Translator: 'mediator is an **agent** of intercultural communication and mediation is seen as a **conscious, purposeful intervention** into the act of communication' (Liddicoat, 2016. p348)

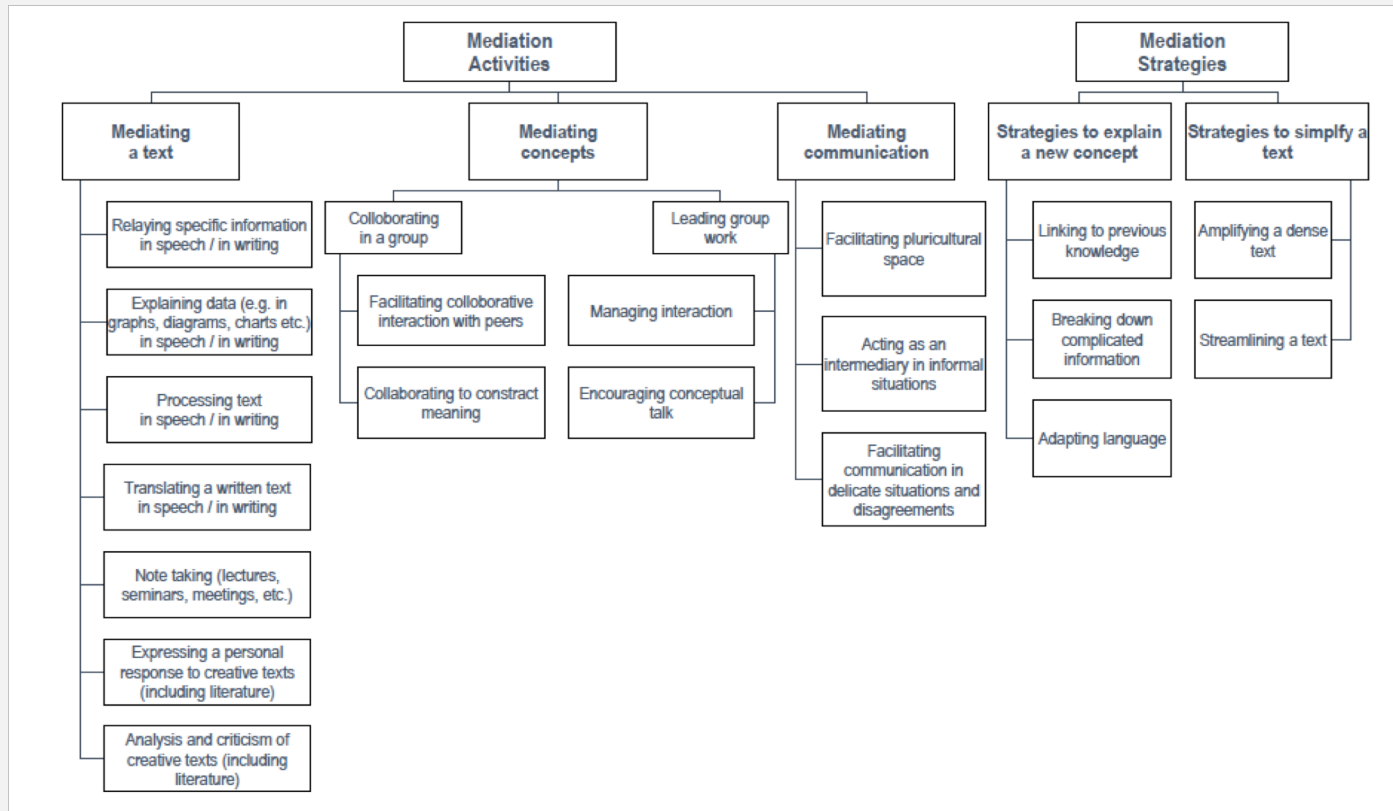
CEFR recognition of agency:

- 'represent the act of mediation as an **interpretative act** in which those who perform operations on texts (writing, reading) bring into those texts their own interpretative frames' (p348)
- '**intra and inter** personal' (p350)
- 'Scarino highlights the need for language learners to analyse and reflect on their translation work to develop insights into the processes of meaning making and to come to a deeper awareness of the roles of language and culture in constructing **ways of creating and interpreting** meanings' (p352) [EB bolding]

DEFINING MEDIATION IN THE CEFR

‘The focus is on the role of language in processes like creating the space and conditions for communicating and/or learning, collaborating to construct new meaning, encouraging others to construct or understand new meaning, and passing on new information in an appropriate form.’ (CEFR, C.V. 2018, p103)

MEDIATION IN THE CEFR (P104)



EXAMPLE MEDIATION DESCRIPTORS

CI overall: Can convey clearly and fluently in well-structured language the significant ideas in long, complex texts, whether or not they relate to his/her own fields of interest, including evaluative aspects and most nuances.

Processing text in speech:

BI Can collate short pieces of information from several sources (in Language A) and summarise them (in Language B) for somebody else.

CI Can summarise (in Language B) discussion (in Language A) on matters within his/her academic or professional competence, elaborating and **weighing up different points of view** and identifying the most significant points

Processing text in writing:

A2 Can copy out short texts in printed or clearly hand-written format.

BI Can paraphrase short written passages in a simple fashion, using the original text wording and ordering.

CI Can summarise in writing (in Language B) long, complex texts (written in Language A), **interpreting the content appropriately**, provided that he/she can occasionally check the precise meaning of unusual, technical terms.

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