

# СУЧАСНІ ПІДХОДИ ТА ІННОВАЦІЙНІ ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ

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## INTEGRATING MEDIATION INTO THE MARITIME ENGLISH CURRICULUM

The article explores the integration of mediation strategies into the Maritime English curriculum, emphasizing their importance in enhancing communication within the international and multilingual context of the maritime industry. With the critical need for clear communication in ensuring the safety and efficiency of navigation, the article begins by defining mediation and its relevance in language learning, as outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). It discusses the historical evolution of mediation in education, highlighting its role in conflict resolution and effective communication. The article categorizes mediation into three main components: mediating texts, mediating concepts, and mediating communication.

Furthermore, it identifies key strategies for teaching mediation, such as linking new concepts to prior knowledge, adapting language, and breaking down complex information. Practical applications in the Maritime English context include using real-life documents, role-playing, and task-based learning to develop learners' mediation skills. The Action-Oriented Approach is emphasized as a framework to foster active participation in communicative tasks.

Ultimately, the implementation of mediation strategies in Maritime English education is presented as essential for equipping future maritime professionals with the skills necessary to navigate complex communication challenges, thereby promoting a safer and more collaborative maritime work environment. As the maritime industry continues to evolve, effective mediation remains critical to operational success and the well-being of all crew members.

**Keywords:** mediation, mediation strategy, mediating a text, mediating concepts, mediating communication, CEFR.

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## ІНТЕГРАЦІЯ МЕДІАЦІЇ В НАВЧАЛЬНУ ПРОГРАМУ ВИВЧЕННЯ МОРСЬКОЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

У статті досліджується інтеграція стратегій медіації в навчальний план вивчення морської англійської мови, підкреслюючи її важливість для покращення комунікації в міжнародному та багатомовному контексті морської індустрії. В умовах критичної необхідності чіткої комунікації для забезпечення безпеки та ефективності навігації, стаття починається з визначення медіації та її значення в навчанні мови, як це зазначено в Загальноєвропейських рекомендаціях з мовної освіти (CEFR). Стаття також обговорює історичну еволюцію медіації в освіті, підкреслюючи її роль у вирішенні конфліктів та ефективній комунікації. Вона класифікує медіацію на три основні компоненти: медіацію текстів, медіацію понять та медіацію комунікації.

Крім того, дослідження визначає основні стратегії викладання медіації, такі як пов'язування нових понять з попередніми знаннями, адаптування мови та подрібнювання складної інформації. Практичне застосування в контексті морської англійської мови передбачає використання реальних документів, рольові ігри та навчання на основі завдань для розвитку медіаційних умінь здобувачів освіти. Також підкреслюється діяльнісно-орієнтований підхід як підґрунтя для сприяння активній участі в комунікативних завданнях.

Зрештою, реалізація стратегій медіації в навчанні морської англійської мови є необхідним складником підготовки майбутніх морських фахівців з умінями, потрібними для подолання складних комунікаційних викликів, і таким чином сприяє безпечнішому та злагодженішому морському робочому середовищу. З розвитком морської індустрії ефективна медіація залишається критично важливою для операційного успіху та благополуччя всіх членів екіпажу.

**Ключові слова:** медіація, стратегія медіації, медіація тексту, медіація поняття, медіація комунікації.

Taking into account the international and multilingual context of the maritime industry, implementing mediation strategies in teaching Maritime English will foster effective communication between seafarers. It is critical due to the need for clear and precise communication to ensure safety and efficiency of navigation.

The article aims to analyse the term “mediation”, its importance in study process and suggest ways of integrating mediation techniques in Maritime English Curriculum.

Mediation generally refers to the process of facilitating communication, understanding, or agreement between two or more parties. In a broader sense, it involves helping others to understand or interpret information, ideas, or language by acting as an intermediary or a bridge, especially in situations where there are differences in perspectives, language, or knowledge. In teaching languages, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages defines mediation as a process where “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.” (2001) Unlike other communicative abilities such as reception, production, and interaction, which were accompanied by extensive illustrative descriptors (or can-do statements), no similar sets of descriptors for mediation were included in the original CEFR. Consequently, the concept of mediation was not fully developed to its potential.

Research on implementation of mediation in education began gaining traction in the 20th century as schools increasingly recognized the need for constructive conflict resolution to foster healthier learning environments. The formal introduction of mediation programs in schools dates back to the 1970s and 1980s, influenced by the civil rights movement and the growing interest in alternative conflict resolution methods, including peer mediation programs. Early models of school mediation focused on training students to mediate conflicts among their peers. Studies from the 1980s showed that peer mediation programs were effective in reducing conflict and improving the overall school atmosphere. These programs originated in the U.S. and aimed to equip students with essential communication, negotiation, and problem-solving skills.

In the 1990s, research into school mediation grew as conflict resolution became a more established field of study. Researchers began to rigorously assess the impact of mediation programs on various aspects of the school environment, such as reducing violence and bullying and improving students' social skills. By the 21st century, research became even more sophisticated, focusing on the long-term benefits of mediation and its implementation across different educational contexts. Mediation programs gained global recognition, with countries in Europe, Australia, and Africa adopting peer mediation and conflict resolution initiatives. Organizations like UNESCO also championed mediation as part of peace education, particularly in regions affected by conflict.

Mediation skills are crucial in language learning because they help learners navigate and bridge gaps in understanding, whether due to linguistic, cultural, or contextual differences. These skills enable learners to interpret, rephrase, and convey information effectively between different languages or contexts, facilitating communication and fostering mutual understanding. By developing mediation skills, learners enhance their ability to collaborate, negotiate meaning, and resolve misunderstandings in diverse situations, making language learning more dynamic and applicable to real-world interactions. Additionally, these skills promote empathy, cultural awareness, and adaptability, which are essential for effective communication in a globalized world.

According to CEFR Companion Volume (2020), the concept of mediation focuses on three main categories:

- mediating a text
- mediating concepts
- mediating communication

“Mediating a text” involves conveying information to someone who cannot access the original text due to linguistic, cultural, or social barriers. The term “texts” encompasses both written materials (such as articles, emails, leaflets, and reports) and visual content (like videos, photos, and graphics). The central practice here is “passing on” the content of a text to someone else.

“Mediating concepts” primarily focuses on the educational aspects of mediation. The scales associated with this category pertain to areas in education that involve teachers managing interactions, collaborating to create meaning, and facilitating collaborative engagement, among other elements.

The “mediating communication” scales pertain to the process of helping participants understand each other, particularly in tense situations, disputes, or disagreements. The main practices involved include negotiating, creating shared spaces, and resolving conflicts.

“Mediation strategies are the techniques employed to clarify meaning and facilitate understanding. As a mediator, the user/learner may need to shuttle between people, between texts, between types of discourse and between languages, depending on the mediation context.” (Council of Europe, 2020: 117)

Educators distinguish the following mediation strategies according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages:

1. Strategies to explain new concepts:

#### **Linking to previous knowledge**

Explaining new information can be more effective by drawing comparisons to things the recipient is already familiar with and showing how the new ideas connect to their existing knowledge. By relating new concepts to something they already understand, it becomes easier for them to grasp the unfamiliar material. This method helps make the new information clearer and more relatable.

#### **Sample Task. New Content:**

Radar and AIS (Automatic Identification System)

“Radar is a navigation tool that uses radio waves to detect the position, speed, and course of other vessels or objects. AIS is an automated tracking system used on ships to identify vessels and provide information such as their name, position, speed, and cargo.”

Recall Prior Knowledge:

Before diving into the new content, think about navigational tools you have already learned, such as compasses, nautical charts, and GPS.

How do these tools help in ensuring safe navigation?

What safety communication systems have you learned about, such as VHF radio?

How is radar similar to or different from GPS in terms of functionality?

How does AIS complement the use of VHF radios in communication between vessels?

### Adapting language

This refers to the use of synonyms, simplification, paraphrasing, and other language adjustments, such as changes in style or tone, to reshape the content of one text into a new text belonging to a different genre.

**Sample task.** Newcomer Manager of a crewing company has written a letter of confirmation of travel for the purpose of a crew change. He is lack of experience and he has written a letter in an informal style. Help him solve the problem and transform the letter into formal style.

Hi there,

TRAVEL CONFIRMATION FOR CREW CHANGE

I'm writing on behalf of TPA Crewing to confirm that Liosha Nechyporenko is a crew member traveling for a ship's crew change.

Liosha Nechyporenko, ME 675180 is on their way to join MV Acavus 5001633 in the port Rijeka, Croatia, to relieve a current crew member.

Crew changes are essential for keeping ships safe and ensuring that they continue transporting critical supplies and goods globally.

We appreciate your support in helping with their travel for this crew change. If you need any more information, feel free to reach out.

Best regards,

Max Fedorov

### Breaking down complicated information

This refers to the method of dividing a process into a sequence of steps or organizing ideas and instructions into bullet points for clearer presentation.

**Sample task.** Read the abstract and identify the steps in the process of painting.

Before an area is painted, proper preparation is important. The area must be cleaned from rust and scales, swept with a deck broom and washed with a cleaning solution to remove all salt, dirt and oil. The paintwork must be rinsed with clean fresh water and all the cleaning solution removed. The base material can be cleaned (loose scales and rust removed) in the following ways:

- with hand tools;
- mechanical cleaning (with machines)
- chemical cleaning, especially degreasing
- thermal cleaning
- sandblasting / gritblasting
- waterjets (hydroblasting)



2. Strategies to simplify a text:

### Amplifying a dense text

This involves the use of repetition, elaborating on the original input, and adding comments, details, reasoning, or examples to further clarify or expand upon the information.

**Sample task.** Read the following dense text: “Effective communication on board is essential to ensure safety and efficiency. Standardized procedures like SMCP are used to prevent misunderstandings, particularly between non-native English speakers.”

**Amplify** the text by breaking it down into simpler parts:

- Explain the importance of communication on ships.
- Define what SMCP is and give an example of how it's used.
- Provide reasons why standardized communication procedures are vital in a multicultural crew environment.

### Streamlining a text

This refers to the process of condensing or omitting source information by removing unnecessary details or repetitive expressions.

**Sample task. Read the following text:** “The Master of the vessel has overall responsibility for the ship and all persons on board, including the crew, passengers, and any others who may be on board. He is also responsible for ensuring the ship complies with all relevant laws and regulations, both national and international, as well as any port-specific requirements. In case of any emergencies, the Master is the person who must make all final decisions regarding the safety of the ship, its crew, and passengers.”

**Streamline** the text:

Remove unnecessary details and focus on the key points. Be sure to maintain the essential information.

To effectively teach mediation in Maritime English, it is essential to design a curriculum that incorporates mediation tasks. These tasks should be practical and relevant to real-world maritime scenarios. For example, students can be assigned to summarize complex maritime regulations (annexes of MARPOL, chapters of SOLAS, etc.), interpret technical documents (interpreting checklists into precautions to be taken), or paraphrase safety manuals for crew members with varying levels of English proficiency. By engaging in these tasks, students develop the skills needed to facilitate clear and accurate communication on board.

To provide students with relevant and practical mediation experience it is essential to use real-life handouts such as ship logs, safety instructions, and communication logs. Teachers of our department also include videos, audio recordings, and shipboard communication examples where mediation is required that we collect thanks to our students during their shipboard training.

Role-playing and simulations are powerful tools for teaching mediation. By simulating maritime scenarios, students can practice mediating between parties with differing linguistic abilities. For instance, a role-play could involve a situation where a non-native English-speaking crew member needs assistance understanding a safety procedure. The student acting as the mediator would need

to explain the procedure clearly and ensure that the crew member fully comprehends the instructions. Such activities not only build mediation skills but also prepare students for real-life situations they will encounter in their maritime careers.

#### Sample tasks

Task 1. You are an officer of watch. You received navtex warning, but unfortunately it was a bad day and you spilled coffee on your printed message. You called the captain to the bridge. Familiarize him with the navigation situation and warning information.

Task 2. Work in pairs.

Student A. You are a ship's master. The shipowner demands the crew to work 16 hours per day without paying overtime, which breaches Maritime Labour Convention. Convey the attitude of the crew to the shipowner and negotiate better conditions of work. Then inform the crew about results of negotiations.

Student B. Agree with master's arguments because you are interested in a well-qualified crew. Explain the situations when additional working time is required.

Task-based learning is another effective approach which allows to integrate mediation strategies into Maritime English education. This method involves assigning students tasks that require them to mediate between different languages or levels of proficiency. For example, students might be asked to relay information from a technical manual written in English to a crew member who speaks a different language. The focus is on accuracy, clarity, and ensuring that the message is understood correctly. Task-based learning helps students develop practical mediation skills that are directly applicable to the maritime context.

#### Sample task.



Watch the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtbLLBDfXY4> and tell your groupmates about:

the main reason for chipping and painting  
PPE that should be used while painting work  
pneumatic tools used to chip rust  
ban to use electrical tools  
storage of paints  
usage of roller

Action-Oriented Approach is crucial for integrating mediation in education. It emphasizes learners as active participants in real-life tasks, where communication and problem-solving are integrated within a specific social context. Applying this approach to mediation highlights the interactive and purposeful nature of mediation tasks, enabling learners to develop practical communication skills that are directly relevant to real-world situations.

- Social dimension: As participants in a social setting, learners engage in interactions shaped by the particular environment they are in, which presents both limitations and possibilities. The way they communicate is influenced by the context and the range of available communication options ("meaning potential").

- Agent dimension: Learners utilize all their resources—cognitive, emotional, linguistic, and cultural—and continuously apply strategies to plan, reach their objectives, and reflect on their actions throughout the learning process.

This approach focuses on collaborative, goal-driven tasks where:

- Learners actively engage and strategically apply their skills and abilities.
- The learners work toward a defined objective, often resulting in the creation of a product or tangible outcome.
- The process requires co-construction of meaning through interactive mediation.
- The context establishes certain conditions and limitations.
- A specific "language policy" is outlined, guiding when and how to use different languages or switch between them during communication.

In mediation, language serves several important functions:

- It fosters a communicative and learning environment that supports plurilingualism and pluriculturalism.
- It aids in lowering emotional barriers and alleviating tensions.
- It establishes connections to new ideas and perspectives, promoting a deeper understanding of others.
- It facilitates the (co-)construction of new meanings.
- It enables the transfer of information by simplifying, elaborating, illustrating, or adapting content.
- It acts as a bridge between individuals and concepts.

In real-life scenarios, learners utilize all available resources and tools to express meaning, both within a single language and across multiple languages, to access and comprehend ideas, messages, and cultures. The core principles of an action-oriented approach include:

- Utilizing one or more languages to accomplish a task while exercising one's agency throughout the process.
- Understanding and interpreting meaning (reception).
- Collaborating with others (interaction).
- Producing artefacts or outcomes (production).
- Creatively leveraging authentic, locally relevant materials.
- Acknowledging the significance of strategies in completing tasks.
- Taking into account varying proficiency levels, such as recognizing the different expectations for a B2 learner versus a B1 learner.

To illustrate the importance of mediation in Maritime English, teachers can apply case studies of real maritime incidents where communication breakdowns occurred. Analyzing these incidents provides valuable lessons on how mediation could have altered the outcome and prevented misunderstandings.

### Conclusion

The implementation of mediation strategies in teaching Maritime English is essential for preparing students to navigate the complex communication challenges of the maritime industry. By integrating mediation into the curriculum, providing intercultural communication training, utilizing authentic materials, and leveraging technological tools, educators can equip future maritime professionals with the skills needed to mediate effectively. These strategies not only enhance communication and safety at sea but also contribute to a more inclusive and collaborative maritime work environment. As the maritime industry continues to evolve, the role of mediation in Maritime English education will remain critical to ensuring operational success and the well-being of all crew members.

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