

Mediation in Action: Building Bridges Across Disciplines

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Project presentation: Aims



- **Examine the concept of mediation as defined by the Council of Europe**, with particular focus on the CEFR Companion Volume descriptors for mediating **texts**, mediating **concepts**, and mediating **communication**.
 - **Investigate how mediation operates beyond language learning**, exploring its relevance and application across different academic disciplines and professional contexts.
 - **Explore the role of inter- and intralinguistic mediation** in facilitating understanding between individuals with diverse linguistic, cultural, and disciplinary backgrounds.
 - **Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration** by bringing together students from different fields to reflect on how knowledge is reshaped, recontextualised, and made accessible for new audiences.
 - **Develop students' awareness of their role as social agents and mediators**, fostering a sense of social responsibility, inclusivity, and global citizenship.
 - **Create practical, creative mediation-based learning activities** that translate theoretical concepts into hands-on experiences for the wider student community.
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Project presentation: Expected outcomes



- **A clearer understanding of mediation** as a key communicative and cognitive competence, grounded in the CEFR Companion Volume but extended to interdisciplinary academic contexts.
 - **Enhanced student skills in collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving**, particularly in relation to negotiating meaning, managing perspectives, and communicating complex ideas accessibly.
 - **Increased student awareness of inclusive communication practices**, highlighting the importance of mediation for participation in diverse, multilingual, and multidisciplinary societies.
 - **Insights into the pedagogical potential of mediation** for higher education, with implications for curriculum design, interdisciplinary teaching, and employability-focused skill development.
 - **A set of collaboratively designed mediation activities or resources** that can be used in teaching, outreach, or student development contexts, contributing a lasting output to the university community.
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Project presentation: Starting points



Students: History, Economics, Business & Management, English Literature



Project aim: work together as a single interdisciplinary group to **understand the concept of mediation** and **illustrate how it operates across different fields**.



Discipline-specific lenses (but one shared objective)

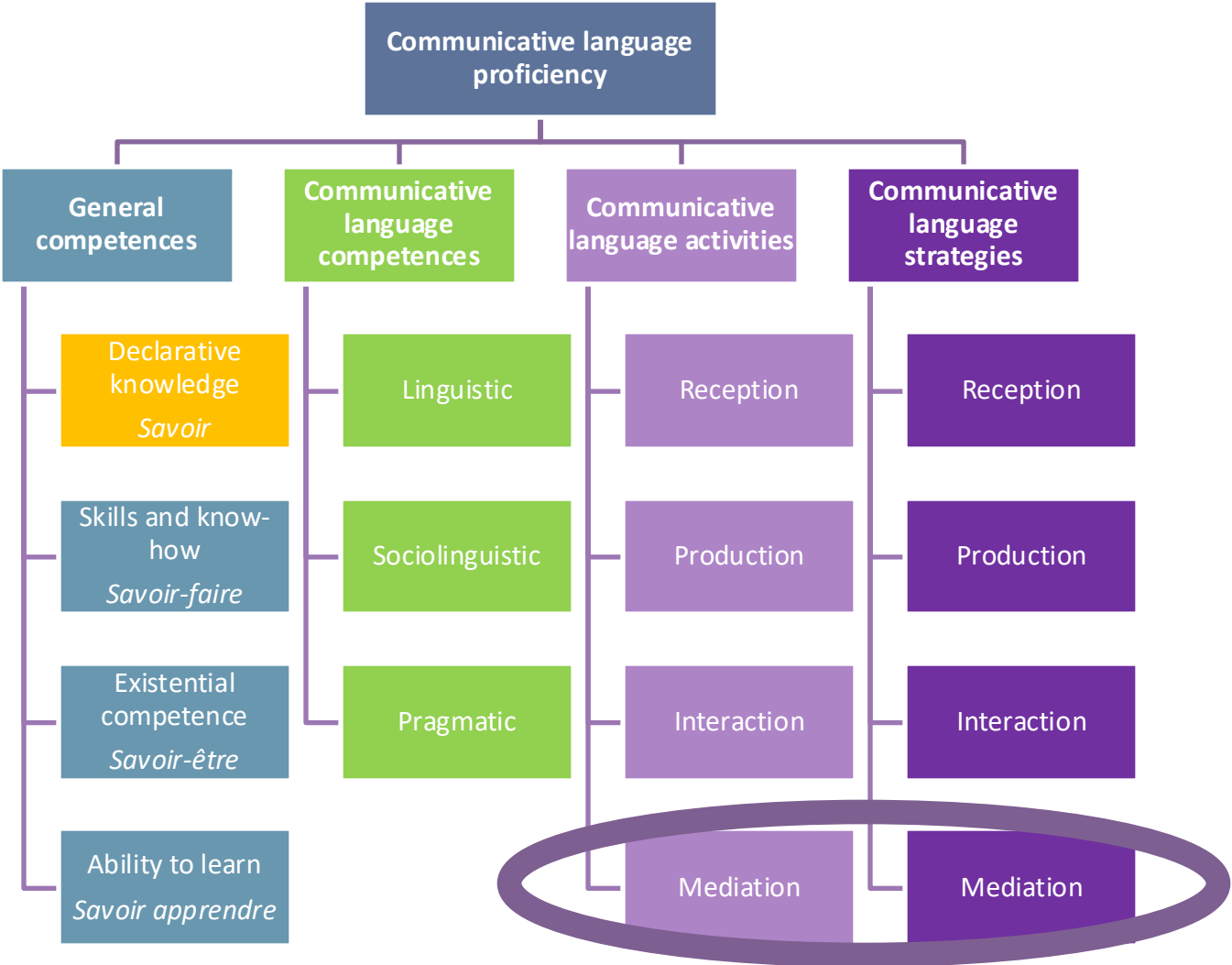


Mediation according to the **Companion Volume of the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR)**



The CEFR pioneered the introduction of mediation...

to indicate communicative language activities, which are not covered by reception and production



**COMMON EUROPEAN
FRAMEWORK
OF REFERENCE
FOR LANGUAGES:**
LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT
Companion volume

This publication updates the CEFR 2001,
the conceptual framework of which remains valid.

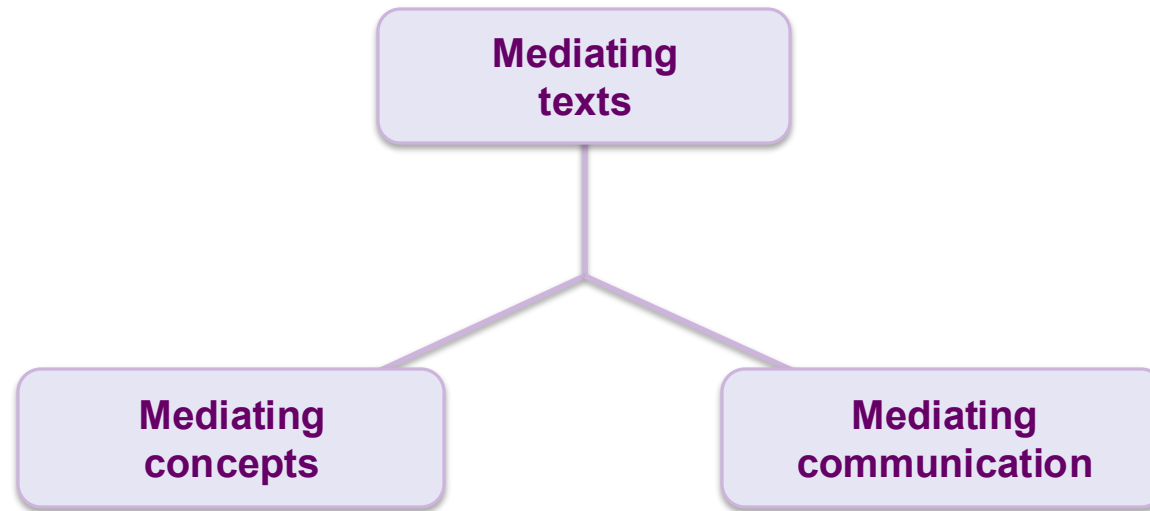
Coordinator: **Brian North**
Authoring group for the development of
mediation descriptors: **E. Piccardo, T. Goodier, M.
Stathopoulou**

35 new scales
in the CV
(24 for
mediation)

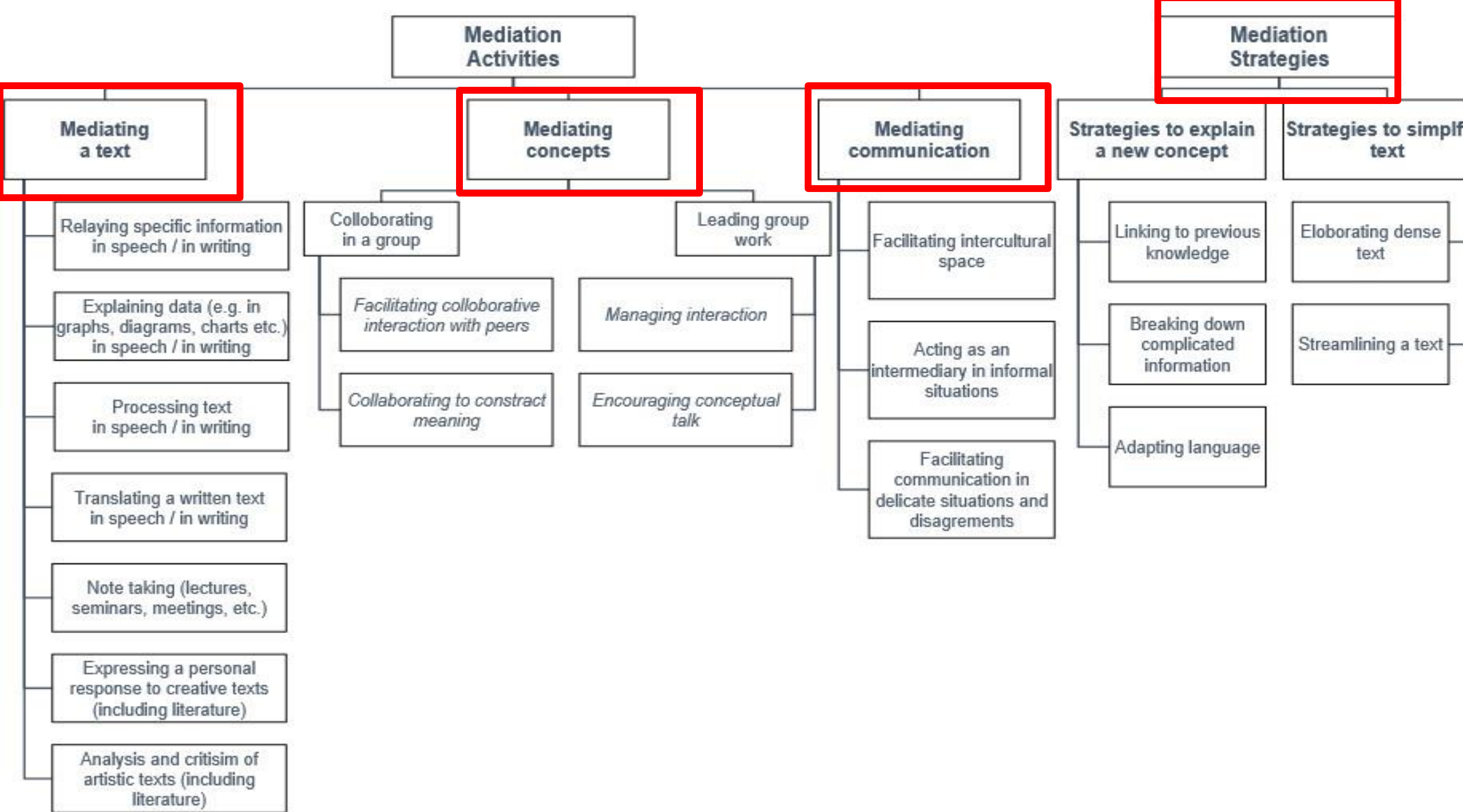
Project presentation: Starting points



How the CEFR CV frames mediation



- Learner = **social agent** who builds bridges and facilitates the construction or transmission of meanings, either in the same language or from one language to another (cross-linguistic mediation).



Broader concept of mediation

Mediation interpreted as "any procedure, arrangement or action designed in a given social context to reduce the distance between two (or more) poles of otherness between which there is tension" (Coste & Cavalli 2015).

Mediation as the creation of a **'third space'** (Bhabha 1992) that allows us to negotiate differences and promote understanding – > intercultural mediation

PROJECT STRUCTURE



- SESSION 1: Get to Know Each Other: *Your Mediation Snapshot*
- SESSION 2: Framing Mediation
- SESSION 3: Choosing topic
- SESSION 4: Problem definition and question framing

{Students to submit project design form and research question(s) to project lead > Feedback on design and questions returned by project lead}

- SESSION 5: presentation of research findings & draft/practice presentation

Before the second session students had to



1. Explore mediation: Read briefly about mediation in the CEFR Companion Volume (mediating texts, concepts, and communication).



2. Find one starter article: Choose a current, real-world case where mediation between different disciplines, perspectives, or groups is relevant.



3. Post on Group Homepage → Discussions.
Include:

a **1–2 sentence summary** of the case

a **short note** on *why mediation matters here*



SUPPORT IN THE PROCESS: MEDIATION IN RELATION TO STUDENTS' OWN DISCIPLINES

History (Beatrice –law & Roshan)

- Mediation in historical conflicts (e.g. treaties, diplomatic intermediaries, colonial mediators)
- Who mediated? With what power? With what consequences?
- **Possible sub-question:**
How have mediators influenced the outcome of historical conflicts?

Economics (Charles -politics)

- Mediation in labour disputes, trade negotiations, or market regulation
- Mediators as agents reducing transaction costs or asymmetries
- **Possible sub-question:**
How does mediation affect economic efficiency or inequality?

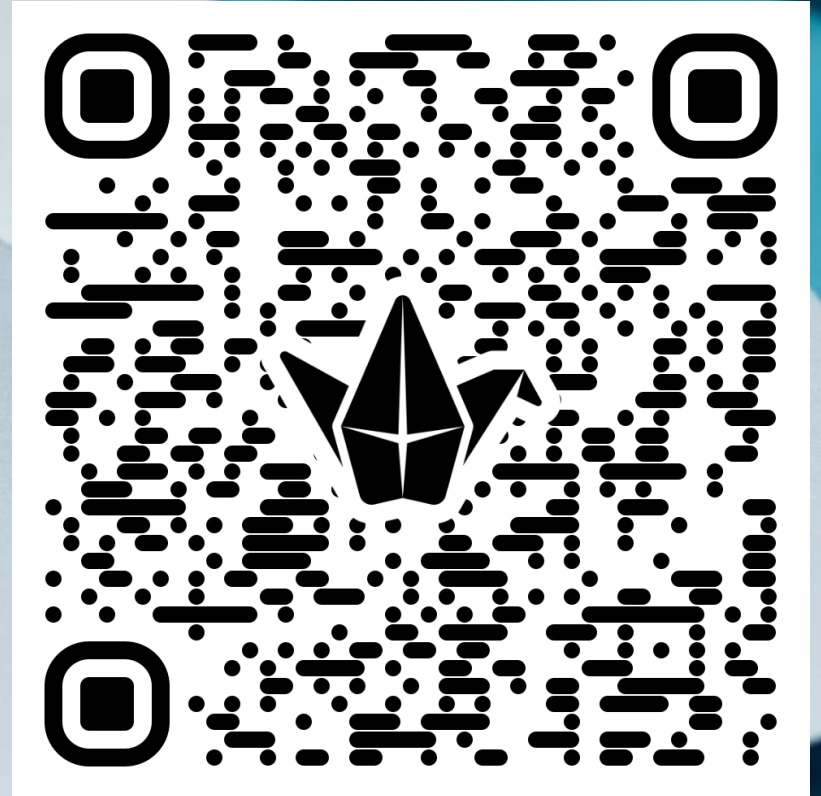
Business & Management (Rimaz)

- Mediation in organizational conflict, leadership, HR, or stakeholder management
- Case studies of corporate or workplace mediation
- **Possible sub-question:**
How does mediation function as a management tool within organizations?

English Literature (Isabella)

- Mediation through narrative: narrators, translators, unreliable voices
- Literature as a space where conflicts are symbolically mediated
- **Possible sub-question:**
How do literary texts mediate conflict, power, or identity through language and narrative form?

SUPPORT IN THE PROCESS:
BRAINSTORMING THROUGH PADLET



SUPPORT IN THE PROCESS: INTERDISCIPLINARY UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GUIDELINES

Concise project roadmap

Core idea: define → research → question → method → integrate → present.

1 Define

Frame a focused societal problem and mediation link.

2 Research

Build a shared bibliography across disciplines.

3 Question

Agree one central question plus sub-questions.

4 Method

Choose methods and allocate clear group roles.

5 Integrate

Compare tensions, complementarities and evidence.

6 Present

Synthesize findings into recommendations and limits.

SUPPORT IN THE PROCESS: INTERDISCIPLINARY UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GUIDELINES



Project example provided



Bibliographic research through
Kortext

An aerial view of a modern, circular atrium with a curved, grey, ribbed ceiling. In the center, five people are standing on a white, pebbly floor, holding hands in a circle. The people are dressed in casual business attire. The surrounding floor is made of light-colored tiles.

STUDENTS' PROPOSAL

Fashion. Media.

Conflict.

Who decides who wears history?



Students' summary of project

“We are looking at the use of mediation to solve conflicts at all stages arising from cultural appropriation by western fashion brands. Using a case study where Emma Chamberlain wore part of the restored Patiala piece at the 2022 Met Gala. However, two years later Cartier denied giving the piece of jewellery to Diljit Dosanjh, even though he wanted to represent his heritage, and his music has very proud Punjabi lyrics. Our project will explore the negative implications of this western negligence, looking further into the ways successful mediation can prevent and solve cultural tensions, specifically those of historical or post-colonial origin. Thus, our project attempts to educate our listeners on the positive impacts successful mediation can have and encourage people to look into the ways they can engage with mediation further.”

Project aims:

“To demonstrate the gap in communication between the Western fashion industry and global ethnic communities, and how mediation can be used to raise awareness of issues such as cultural appropriation in order to bridge that gap and avoid such recurrences.”

Improving the students' project proposal

Reframe the proposal from “mediation as solution” to an analytical account of different forms of mediation.

Revision priorities

- 1 Clarify the aim**
Show how mediation works in multiple forms, rather than treating it as a single solution.
- 2 Ground the proposal**
Incorporate CEFR mediation descriptors to connect the project to language pedagogy and research.
- 3 Strengthen analysis**
Move towards an integrated group argument that synthesises perspectives across the case study.
- 4 Collaborate as one project**
Avoid a fragmented “frankenproject” by shaping the material into a cohesive 10-minute group presentation.
- 5 Clean up structure**
Place the full bibliography at the end of the proposal.

Improved abstract: analytical lens

Use the 2022 Met Gala and cultural appropriation case study to make mediation visible as a multifaceted practice.

texts

concepts

communication

Output: a cohesive 10-minute group presentation

Improved abstract

This project explores the role of mediation in addressing conflicts arising from cultural appropriation by Western fashion brands. Rather than presenting mediation solely as a solution, the project aims to illustrate and analyse its different forms, in line with the **CEFR (Companion Volume) descriptors**: mediating **texts**, mediating **concepts**, and mediating **communication**.

The study draws on a case study involving the 2022 Met Gala, where the American influencer Emma Chamberlain wore part of the restored Patiala necklace, contrasted with Cartier's subsequent refusal to lend the piece to the Punjabi singer and actor Diljit Dosanjh, despite his intention to represent his Punjabi heritage.

Through this comparison, the project examines the broader implications of such decisions, particularly in relation to historical and post-colonial power dynamics. In doing so, it highlights how mediation can function in different ways: mediating texts by interpreting and relaying culturally situated narratives, mediating concepts by facilitating understanding of culturally specific meanings, and mediating communication by managing and resolving intercultural tensions.

Ultimately, the project aims to raise awareness of the multifaceted nature of mediation, as conceptualised in the CEFR, and its potential to foster more informed, critical, and respectful cultural engagement.

Students' feedback

5. Which aspect of the project helped you learn the most about mediation?

3 Respuestas

ID ↑	Nombre	Respuestas
1	anonymous	Researching the core issue of our project which was about cultural appropriation
2	anonymous	The group work
3	anonymous	The part that helped me learn the most about mediation was studying how Cartier handled the controversy. It showed me that mediation can happen indirectly through company decisions and communication, not just through formal negotiation between different parties.

Students' feedback

● No improvement at all ● Slight ● Moderate ● Significant ● Very high improvement

Mediation and communication skills

Research and Information skills, including developing a coherent research focus

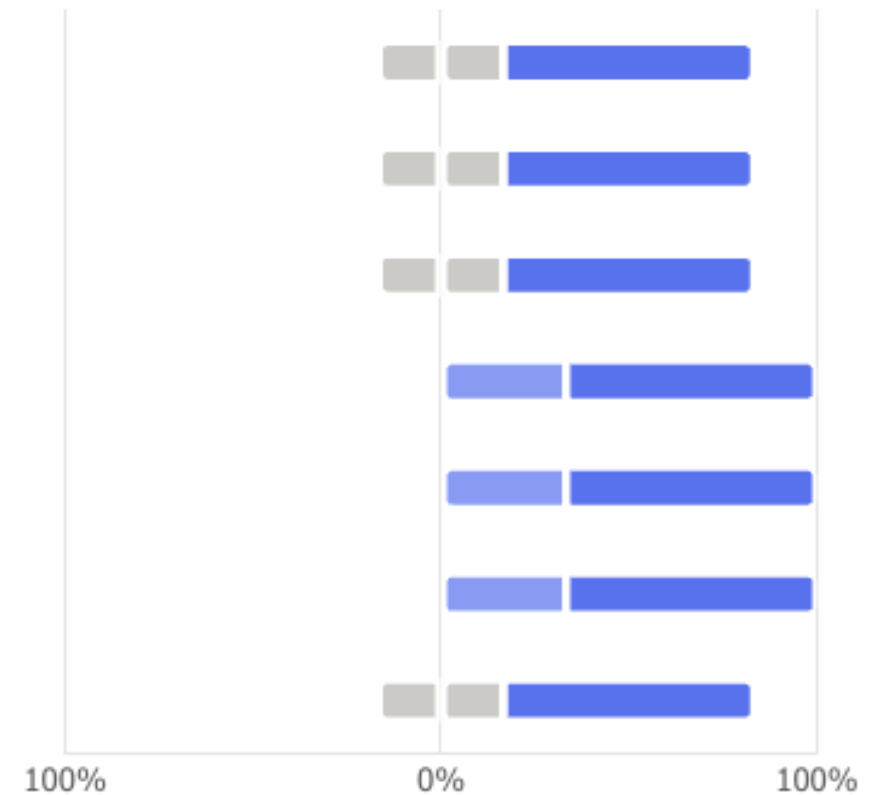
Academic writing and production (writing a research proposal)

Presentation skills

Collaboration and Interdisciplinary Work

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

Digital and Project Skills (including managing time)



Conclusion: Lessons learned

- Students did not engage with all modalities of mediation, despite initial theoretical input.
- Communication gaps within the group regularly disrupted continuity, as missed information delayed progress between sessions.
- Completion of mandatory Canvas training on group work did not translate into effective collaborative practice.

Further support is needed in:

- **Initial idea generation** to establish a clear project foundation
- **Collaborative writing**, including structured guidance on developing a team research proposal

Bibliography

- Bhabha, Homi K. “‘Post-colonial Authority and Post-modern Guilt.’” *Cultural Studies*, edited by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler, Routledge, 1992, pp. 56–66.
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