

WRITTEN MEDIATION TASK DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS

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'Mediation' between languages....

.....an unexplored area

Mediating activities and strategies [...]
No illustrative scales are yet available. (CEFR, 2001: 88)

“[The CEFR] provides validated, scientifically calibrated *descriptors* of [the] different aspects of its descriptive scheme, except for intercultural competences and mediation. (North, 2011:6)

What users complain about in relation to the CEFR descriptors are [...]: The **absence of descriptors** for socio-cultural aspects and reading literature (both tried) and for **mediation (not attempted)**. (North, 2007: 657)

Mediation in the KPG exams

Defining mediation

- It entails **relaying of messages** from one language to another for a given communicative purpose
- It is a **social practice**, involving
 - (a) the interpretation of meanings articulated in source texts & (b) the making of new meanings in the target language expressed appropriately for the context of situation in which they are embedded.

(Dendrinos, 2006)

Mediation in the KPG exams

Testing mediation

- The KPG exam battery tests *oral* and *written* mediation from B1 level onwards.

Mediation in the KPG exams

Assessing mediation performance

- Candidates are required to have the necessary competences & skills to:
 - **understand** (multimodal) texts in Greek
 - selectively **extract information** from the Greek source text and use it to produce a message in the target language

Aim of the presentation

- ✦ to present the results derived from the systematic analysis and description of the **written mediation tasks** included in the national exams for language proficiency (KPG).



- ✦ What **differentiates** mediation tasks across levels?

Why task description and analysis?

- Language output is dependent on the task which triggers it (cf. Bae and Bachman, 2010; Tavakoli, 2009; Kuinen and Vedder, 2008; Carr, 2006; Iwashita, McNamara and Elder, 2001; Way et al, 2000; Li, 2000; Robinson, 2001, 1995; Foster and Skehan, 1996; Skehan and Foster, 1997; Skehan, 1996, 1998, 2001; Koda, 1993; Bachman, 1990)

Task characteristics inevitably influence test scores to some extent and for that reason it is essential to understand the effect of that influence
(Bachman and Palmer, 1996: 45)

Why task description and analysis?

To answer to the following question:

- What language is likely to be produced by candidates of different proficiency levels?



- What **types of mediation tasks** are appropriate for each level of competence?

See complete tasks in
the handout

Mediation tasks across levels

Imagine your friend Chloe, who has been complaining about feeling down, asks you for help. Using information from the text below, send her an **email** (about 100 words). **Tell her what she can do**, so as to feel better. Sign as Alex.

B1, May 2010

You and your friend Martin have decided to spend part of your summer vacation doing volunteer work. Use information from the site below and write an **email** (150 words) to Martin. Try to **convince** him that it's a good idea for the two of you to take part in the Syros project of the Greek Ornithological Society.

B2, May 2007

Imagine you have been involved with the work of "SOS Villages Greece" and that you have been asked to write a brief **report** (190-200 words) for SOS Villages International. The aim of the report is to **promote** the work being done in Greece by the particular organization, and to **stress its importance**. Your report may help "SOS Villages Greece" to get some funding from abroad.

C1, November 2006

Task description in terms of:

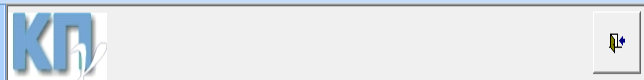
Parameter	Examples
Topic what is the text about?	<i>environment, friendship, animals</i>
Discourse environment where?	<i>magazine, newspaper, leaflet</i>
Text-type what type of text?	<i>article, email, report</i>
Generic process what text process?	<i>describe, argue, narrate, explain, instruct</i>
Communicative purpose for what purpose?	<i>to urge, advise, disagree</i>
Role relationships who is writing to whom?	<i>friend - friend, student - teacher</i>

Home Create External Data Database Tools

View Paste Copy Format Painter Views Clipboard Font Rich Text Records Sort & Filter Window Find

Read-Only This database has been opened read-only. You can only change data in linked tables. To make design changes, save a copy of the database. Save As ...

- All Access Objects
- Tables**
- Paste Errors
 - tblexamination
 - tbloralactivity1
 - tbloralactivity2
 - tbloralactivity3
 - tbloralcomprehension
 - tbloralmediationtext
 - tbloralopticaltext
 - tbloraltext
 - tblreadingcomprehension
 - tblreadingcomprehensiontext
 - tblwritingactivity1
 - tblwritingactivity2
 - tblwritingmediationtext
 - tblwritingtext
 - tlanguage
 - tlevel
 - tmodule
 - tmactivitygoals
 - tmaddressee



ΑΝΑΖΗΤΗΣΗ ΕΞΕΤΑΣΕΩΝ

Ημερομηνία:

Γλώσσα:

Επίπεδο:

Αναζήτηση

Αποτελέσματα αναζήτησης

Ημερομηνία εξέτασης	Γλώσσα	Επίπεδο
1/5/2007	Αγγλικά	B2
1/11/2006	Αγγλικά	B2
1/5/2006	Αγγλικά	B2
1/11/2005	Αγγλικά	B2
1/4/2005	Αγγλικά	B2
1/11/2004	Αγγλικά	B2

Record: 1 of 1 No Filter Search

Data

- 35 written mediation tasks
- 14 examination periods
- B1, B2 and C1 level tasks

Mediation task description has led us...

to predict

...what type of language Greek users of English (of different levels) may produce.

to develop

a list of **descriptors**

- ultimately determine what types of mediation tasks can be used in order to measure mediation competence across levels

1. Topics

The **B1** level Greek user of English is likely to relay information about ...

personal and everyday topics

The **B2** level Greek user of English is likely to relay information about ...

more of general interest related to everyday life

The **C1** level Greek user of English is likely to relay information about ...

more specialized, sophisticated and abstract topics

2. Text-types and generic processes

The **B1** level Greek user of English is likely to produce

texts of a familiar text-type (*email*) fulfilling a limited number of generic processes (e.g., *describe, explain*)

The **B2** level Greek user of English is likely to produce ...

texts of various types (e.g., announcements, film presentations, articles) which may fulfill multiple generic processes (e.g., describe and explain)

The **C1** level Greek user of English is likely to produce ...

texts of a wide range of types (e.g., *report, text for a leaflet, letter*) fulfilling generic processes which require the use of complex grammatical structures (e.g., *arguing, which involves reasoning, evaluation & persuasion*)

3. Discourse environments

The **B1** level Greek user of English is likely to produce ...

language related to the personal domain (private discourse)

The **B2** level Greek user of English is likely to produce ...

texts appearing in different discourse environments (e.g., school newspaper, leaflet, magazine, webpage)

The **C1** level Greek user of English is likely to produce ...

texts appearing in a wider range of discourse environments (e.g., radio, newspaper, university prospectus)

4. Communicative purposes

The **B1** level Greek user of English is likely to ...

perform some basic communicative acts (e.g., *informing, explaining*)

The **B2** level Greek user of English is likely to ...

perform a greater variability of communicative acts

The **C1** level Greek user of English is likely to ...

produce texts in which s/he may *express doubt, evaluate, promote* etc

5. Communicative roles

The B1 level Greek user of English is likely to ...	The B2 level Greek user of English is likely to...	The C1 level Greek user of English is likely to ...
address only 'personally known' audiences (e.g., <i>friends</i>)	address a variety of audiences (e.g., <i>magazine or newspaper readers, editors, customers</i>)	address a wide range of audiences (but <u>not</u> 'personally known') (e.g., <i>book, newspaper, magazine reader etc</i>)
<input type="checkbox"/> The style of the target text is likely to be: -informal and personal	<input type="checkbox"/> The style of the target text is likely to be: -semi-formal or informal -personal or impersonal	<input type="checkbox"/> The style of the target text is likely to be - semi-formal or formal - mainly impersonal

Summing up: What differentiates mediation tasks?

LINGUISTIC REQUIREMENTS

- Topic familiarity or abstractness
- Genre variability
- Variety of discourse environment
- Variety of communicative goals to be met
- Role relationships and type of interaction between interlocutors

....and **MEDIATORY
REQUIREMENTS....**

**TASK
ANALYSIS**



**SCRIPT
ANALYSIS**

predicting language

analyzing performance

Implications

- The results of the **written mediation task description**
 - a. contribute to an understanding of what types of tasks are **appropriate for each level**
 - b. lead us to decide through what types of tasks **mediation performance can be tested** at each level.
- The **'can-do' statements** may:
 - a. help **test designers**
 - b. constitute a basis for **syllabus** design
 - c. prove useful for **teachers** preparing students for the KPG exams
 - d. facilitate students/candidates

Usefulness of the work

So far, these results have been creatively exploited for the grading of **illustrative descriptors** relevant to mediation in the new *Greek Curriculum for Foreign Languages*, which among other things, demonstrates what learners of different levels are expected to do when mediating
(<http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/xenesglosses/>)

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