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Editorial

Language Mediation as Meaning-Making, Access, and Institutional Practice

Daniel Xerri
University of Malta – Malta
daniel.xerri@um.edu.mt

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Abstract*: This editorial examines language mediation as a situated practice through which meaning, access, participation, and institutional relations are negotiated. It synthesises recent literature across four interrelated areas: intercultural mediation, multilingual mediation, mediation as a resource for learning and meaning-making, and mediation as access, power, and institutional practice. The discussion argues that mediation involves interpretative, relational, ethical, pedagogical, technological, and political work rather than neutral transfer between languages or contexts. It considers how translators, interpreters, teachers, learners, institutions, and technologies participate in the reformulation and circulation of meaning, while also shaping what becomes intelligible, legitimate, and accessible. The editorial then relates this conceptual discussion to the articles in issue 25.1 of* Traduction et Langues*, which is organised around translation studies and intercultural mediation; language teaching, pedagogy, and educational practices; language, discourse, and cultural representations; and language policy and institutional transformations. The issue's contributions examine topics including Vietnamese endearment terms, Qur'anic reciprocal ellipsis, audiovisual translation, multilingual dubbing, AI-assisted translation of greeting formulae and diplomatic texts, educational reform, classroom meaning clarification, culturally responsive literacy, teacher development, English-medium instruction listening strategies, Business German, gender representation in literary discourse, written text on cinema screens, and Algeria's shift from French to English in higher education. These studies show that mediation operates across translation, pedagogy, discourse, technology, and policy as a process through which language practices are adapted to particular audiences, purposes, histories, and institutional conditions. The editorial positions mediation as both enabling and ambivalent: it can widen participation, foster intercultural understanding, and support access to knowledge, but it can also obscure loss, reproduce asymmetry, reinforce institutional priorities, or constrain whose meanings are recognised.*

Keywords*: Situated Mediation; Interpretative Language Practices; Cross-Cultural Meaning Construction; Linguistic Accessibility; Educational Mediation; Technological Mediation in Translation; Language Policy and Institutional Change.*

1. Introduction

Language mediation has become an increasingly important concept for understanding how meaning is interpreted, reformulated, negotiated, and made accessible across linguistic, cultural, educational, institutional, and technological contexts. Although mediation is often associated with translation and interpreting, its scope extends well beyond the transfer of meaning between languages. It also includes the relational, ethical, pedagogical, and political work through which people make meanings available to others, enable participation, and manage the tensions that arise when linguistic resources, cultural expectations, institutional demands, and communicative purposes do not fully align.

This editorial takes mediation as a lens through which to read the contributions to this issue. The issue brings together work on translation studies and intercultural mediation, language teaching and educational practice, discourse and cultural representation, and language policy and institutional transformation. Across these areas, a common concern emerges: language does not simply transmit meaning, but shapes how people access knowledge, recognise identities, negotiate relationships, participate in institutions, and respond to social change. The studies included here examine this concern in diverse contexts, including literary and audiovisual translation, AI-assisted translation, classroom interaction, culturally responsive literacy, teacher development, English-medium instruction (EMI), Business German, literary discourse, cinematic text-image relations, and higher education language policy shift.

The discussion that follows synthesises current scholarly literature on language and mediation around four interrelated themes. The first section considers intercultural mediation, focusing on translation, relationality, communicative expertise, and the ethical ambivalence of mediating across cultural worlds. The second section turns to multilingual mediation, examining how meaning is negotiated through repertoires, modalities, affect, institutional conditions, and public discourse. The third section discusses mediation as a resource for learning and meaning-making, with particular attention to plurilingual pedagogy, classroom mediation, peer interaction, disciplinary access, and the role of language in shaping cognition and participation. The fourth section adopts a more critical institutional perspective, exploring mediation as a practice through which access, power, responsibility, technology, and professional judgement intersect.

By bringing these strands together, the editorial argues that mediation should be understood as a situated social practice rather than a neutral communicative procedure. Its value lies in its capacity to widen participation and deepen understanding, but this capacity is never guaranteed. Mediation can facilitate access, but it can also reproduce exclusion; it can support intercultural understanding, but it can also domesticate difference; it can empower learners and service users, but it can also subject them to institutional norms that define what

counts as intelligible, legitimate, or relevant. The articles in this issue offer a rich basis for considering these possibilities and tensions, and for asking how language professionals, educators, translators, interpreters, researchers, and policymakers might approach mediation with greater critical awareness.

2. Intercultural Mediation: Translation, Relationality, and Institutional Ambivalence

Intercultural mediation provides a useful starting point for understanding language mediation because it foregrounds the interpretative work involved in moving meaning across linguistic and cultural boundaries. Translation, in this sense, involves the interpretation of meanings embedded in particular cultural frames and their rearticulation for readers who do not necessarily share those frames (Liddicoat, 2016a). The distinction between mediation for the self and mediation for others is particularly helpful. The former refers to the translator's own effort to make sense of culturally situated meanings, while the latter involves the selective provision of resources that enable target readers to understand those meanings (Liddicoat, 2016a). Intercultural mediation is therefore both cognitive and interpersonal: the mediator first interprets meaning and then decides how much contextual, cultural, or explanatory support others require. This positions mediation as a constitutive feature of translation, embedded in the process through which linguistic transfer becomes culturally meaningful (Liddicoat, 2016b).

This broader understanding of mediation also applies to forms of translation that are not conventionally regarded as interpersonal or dialogic. Research on Robert Morrison's first Chinese–English dictionary demonstrates that lexicography can function as intercultural mediation when it provides readers with access to culturally embedded concepts, practices, and values (Scrimgeour, 2016). Morrison's dictionary connected Chinese lexical items with English equivalents while also using examples, contextual notes, and explanations to mediate between Chinese linguistic forms and the cultural worlds they indexed. Similarly, scientific translation into English can be understood as intercultural mediation because translators working with non-Anglophone scholars must negotiate linguistic accuracy alongside Anglo-American academic conventions (Aleksiejuk, 2023). In such cases, mediation concerns epistemic access: translators help writers enter disciplinary and publication cultures governed by expectations about explicitness, argument structure, metadiscourse, and reader responsibility. Intercultural mediation thus includes the explanation of cultural artefacts as well as the navigation of norms through which knowledge becomes recognisable and legitimate.

Digital and literary translation further illustrate the ethical and identity-forming dimensions of intercultural mediation. Fan translation of Spanish-language songs into Chinese shows how non-professional translators can become highly visible mediators who use domestication, euphemism, annotation, and

commentary to make culturally specific meanings accessible to new audiences (Li & Cassany, 2026). Such practices aid comprehension while also supporting ethnorelative understanding, plurilingual development, and the construction of multilingual and multicultural identities. However, mediation also entails ethical risk, especially when texts carry traumatic historical meanings. Research on literary translation in relation to Romanian antisemitism and pogroms shows that translators must negotiate fidelity, political responsibility, and cultural sensitivity when rendering painful histories across languages (Andrei, 2026). In such contexts, mediation should preserve difficult, unfamiliar, and historically charged meanings while making them intelligible to readers in another language. Its ethical value may lie precisely in resisting excessive smoothing or domestication.

Intercultural mediation also challenges narrow models of communicative expertise. Work on sign language interpreting and brokering shows that mediation involves linguistic meaning alongside relational alignment, empathy, turn-taking, and participant positioning (Napier, 2024). This perspective unsettles rigid professional assumptions about neutrality and highlights the value of lay communicative knowledge, especially among heritage signers. Mediation here is cooperative and relational, with technical skill embedded in the management of interaction and participation. However, when institutionalised, intercultural mediation can become unstable and ambiguous. In Spanish primary schools, for example, mediation is often viewed positively but remains weakly consolidated, overlaps with interpreting and support roles, and is used mainly for conflict resolution rather than broader inclusive transformation (Llevot-Calvet & Garreta-Bochaca, 2025). This suggests that mediation can easily be reduced to a reactive service unless institutions define it as part of a wider commitment to participation, equity, and intercultural learning.

The ambivalence of intercultural mediation becomes most evident in high-stakes institutional settings. Research on mediators working with undocumented migrant mothers in Spain shows that mediation can build trust and facilitate communication while also reproducing coloniality, racialisation, bureaucratic listening, and emotional control (Tulbure, 2025). Mediators occupy a tense position between institutional authorities and the people they support; as a result, their work may both enable and constrain agency. This tension is central to any critical account of language and mediation. Mediation is often presented as a bridge across difference, but bridges are never neutral structures: they are built within particular relations of power, and they regulate movement as much as they enable it. Intercultural mediation should therefore be understood as an interpretative, relational, and ethical practice whose value depends on whose meanings are recognised, whose vulnerability is defined, and whose participation is made possible.

The preceding discussion has shown that mediation is deeply implicated in the interpretation and rearticulation of culturally situated meaning. However, intercultural understanding rarely occurs through language alone. It is often

accomplished through the coordination of multiple linguistic repertoires, modalities, and semiotic resources. This makes it necessary to move from intercultural mediation to multilingual mediation, where the focus shifts from cultural transfer and relational interpretation to the ways in which meaning is negotiated across languages, varieties, modes, and institutional arrangements.

3. Multilingual Mediation: Repertoires, Modalities, and Institutional Conditions

Multilingual mediation highlights how meaning is negotiated across languages, varieties, modalities, and communicative histories. Rather than treating multilingualism as the simple coexistence of named languages, research shows that mediation often involves the flexible orchestration of semiotic resources. A study on Swedish–Swedish Sign Language school settings is especially useful in this regard because it conceptualises representation itself as mediation (Bagga-Gupta, 2010). Everyday communication in these settings involves complex chaining across spoken, signed, written, and visual forms, yet such fluid practices often sit uneasily alongside institutional discourses that construct language, bilingualism, and identity through rigid boundaries and assumptions of linguistic ownership (Bagga-Gupta, 2010). Similarly, research on online intercultural conversations shows that multilingual mediation is frequently multimodal: students use English, Chinese, other languages, gestures, laughter, images, screen sharing, and digital tools to negotiate meaning collaboratively (Liang, 2021). These studies suggest that multilingual mediation is a routine condition of meaning-making in socially and technologically complex environments, as well as a response to linguistic difference.

Multilingual mediation also plays a key role in learning, particularly when it creates conditions for participation, emotional security, and epistemological access. In early reading, mediation has affective as well as linguistic dimensions: physical closeness, attentive gaze, patient waiting, loving tone of voice, dialogue, and recognition of family linguistic repertoires help create a safe space in which children can participate and take risks (Corsi & Fons Esteve, 2023). In higher education, multilingual and multimodal mediation can support academic access when English lecture materials are translated into formal and informal varieties of Afrikaans and isiXhosa and made available in both written and oral forms (Dyers & Antia, 2019). These findings are significant because they show that effective mediation depends on translation, language expertise, subject knowledge, modality, and students' existing repertoires. In this sense, multilingual mediation can redistribute access to knowledge when it is designed with sensitivity to learners' linguistic resources and disciplinary needs.

At the same time, multilingualism does not automatically produce inclusive or transformative mediation. Research on a formally multilingual university in Kosovo cautions against assuming that multilingual presence is equivalent to pedagogical translanguaging (Sejdiu, 2026). Lecturers' multilingual practices were shaped by assessment regimes, disciplinary expectations,

professional accountability, and strategic restraint, meaning that multilingualism remained institutionally mediated rather than fully legitimised as pedagogy (Sejdiu, 2026). Work on English-medium Chinese language instruction points to another complexity: multilingual mediation can increase cognitive load when learners process English input through their first language before producing Chinese output, generating syntactic, semantic, idiomatic, and cultural-pragmatic errors (Chen, 2025). These studies complicate celebratory accounts of multilingual mediation. They suggest that the use of multiple languages can support learning and access, while also creating additional processing demands or remaining constrained by institutional norms. Hence, the key issue concerns how multilingual resources are structured, authorised, and pedagogically supported.

Multilingual mediation can also shape institutional belonging and political identification. A study of institutional translation shows that multilingual mediation affects how citizens are invited to perceive the European Union (EU), rather than merely transmitting institutional messages (Constantinou, 2020). Translators' choices can strengthen or weaken the EU's agency, emotional appeal, and relationship with citizens through affectivity, evaluation, and the construction of citizenship (Constantinou, 2020). This is an important reminder that multilingual mediation operates in classrooms and interpersonal encounters, as well as in public discourse, where language choices influence affiliation, legitimacy, and participation. This research indicates that multilingual mediation is best understood as a situated practice that connects repertoires, modalities, emotions, institutions, and identities. Its value lies in its potential to widen participation and deepen understanding, but this potential depends on whether multilingual practices are recognised as legitimate resources rather than treated as deviations from monolingual norms.

The literature on multilingual mediation shows that linguistic diversity can expand participation when repertoires and modalities are recognised as legitimate resources. Yet these possibilities are particularly consequential in educational settings, where mediation can shape how learners access texts, tasks, disciplines, peers, and forms of knowledge. The next section, therefore, considers mediation as a resource for learning and meaning-making, with attention to how it is designed, assessed, scaffolded, and enacted in classrooms and other learning environments.

4. Mediation as a Resource for Learning and Meaning-Making

Within educational contexts, mediation is increasingly understood as a resource for learning, with a scope that extends beyond compensatory responses to linguistic difference. This shift is especially visible in work influenced by the CEFR Companion Volume, where mediation is framed as part of plurilingual competence and as a legitimate object of pedagogy and assessment. Cross-linguistic mediation can challenge the monolingual assumptions that continue to shape many language assessment practices (Stathopoulou et al., 2024). METLA (Mediation in Teaching, Learning and Assessment) project tasks are a good example because they position mediation as authentic, localised, CEFR-aligned,

and often formative (Stathopoulou et al., 2024). Learners are assessed on their ability to mobilise multiple linguistic resources, reflect on mediation strategies, and bridge linguistic and cultural gaps, rather than only on their command of a single target language. This reframes assessment as a space in which plurilingual repertoires can be recognised rather than suppressed. Thus, mediation validates what learners can do across languages, moving assessment away from an idealised monolingual norm.

This pedagogical orientation is developed further in studies of mediation tasks in foreign language classrooms. Mediation offers a communicative way of reintroducing translation into language teaching without returning to grammar-translation practices (Ramey, 2023). In this view, translation becomes purposeful, situated, and audience-sensitive: learners transfer, adapt, summarise, and explain information for specific interlocutors and real-world purposes. Such tasks develop linguistic, intercultural, interactional, and strategic competences because learners must decide what a text means and how it can be made meaningful for someone else. Work on cross-linguistic mediation in the Italian classroom in Malta similarly shows that CEFR-informed mediation tasks can strengthen learners' linguistic and intercultural competence, critical thinking, problem-solving, autonomy, and ability to convey meaning across languages and cultures (Baldwin, 2024). However, the emphasis placed on time, resources, and context-specific task design is an important reminder that mediation requires careful scaffolding, clear purposes, and sensitivity to the linguistic ecology of the classroom in order to become pedagogically valuable (Baldwin, 2024).

The implementation of mediation-oriented pedagogy also depends heavily on teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and institutional support. For instance, one study shows that teachers working with the Advanced English curriculum in Madrid often have limited explicit awareness of linguistic mediation, even when they already use mediation-related practices in their teaching (Fernández Álvarez & García Hernández, 2024). This suggests that mediation may be present as tacit pedagogy before it becomes recognised as an explicit curricular construct. This has implications for teacher education: teachers need opportunities to name, analyse, and develop practices they may already be using intuitively. European language teachers have also been found to value cross-linguistic mediation tasks because they encourage collaboration, authenticity, plurilingual repertoires, and student engagement (Gerwers et al., 2022). Yet implementation was constrained by task complexity, time pressures, the need for adaptation, and persistent monolingual assumptions about the foreign language classroom (Gerwers et al., 2022). These studies suggest that mediation pedagogy involves task design alongside a deeper shift in teachers' beliefs about language learning, translation, multilingualism, and the legitimate use of students' first languages.

Mediation is also central to action-oriented and professionally oriented language learning. A study of Model United Nations contexts in Japan shows how intra-linguistic mediation can support EFL learners in collaborative problem-solving (Nfor, 2025). Students used strategies such as clarifying, simplifying,

giving details, summarising, code-switching, paraphrasing, and making comparisons in order to prevent communication breakdown and co-construct meaning. This form of mediation has linguistic, social, and epistemic dimensions: learners become more confident participants in collective reasoning about global issues. Language mediation has also been conceptualised as a competence needed by non-linguistic university students in professional, intercultural, and negotiation-based contexts (Morozova et al., 2021). A model using debates, case studies, role plays, negotiations, business correspondence, summaries, and other oral and written tasks can help develop mediation ability (Morozova et al., 2021). These studies show that mediation is closely linked to agency. Learners become intermediaries, negotiators, explainers, and co-constructors of meaning in communicative situations that resemble real social and professional activity.

Peer mediation provides another important perspective, though the literature cautions against assuming that it is automatically beneficial. A study of an after-school digital storytelling project shows how a plurilingual youth participant supported communication through translation, clarification, collaborative turn completion, and repair (Zhang, 2023). Mediation here enabled participation in real-time multilingual interaction and showed how young people can act as linguistic and social resources for their peers. However, a study of a first-grade Spanish-medium dual language classroom complicates this positive view (Lucero, 2015). Peer mediation did not always facilitate learning; unequal language proficiency, status differences, task complexity, and control over the written group response sometimes caused mediation to fail and silenced some students' contributions (Lucero, 2015). This contrast is important because it shows that mediation is shaped by classroom power relations. Peer mediation can widen participation, but it can also reproduce inequalities unless teachers attend to group dynamics, task structure, and the distribution of authority over meaning.

Mediation can also be understood more broadly as the process through which learners gain access to disciplinary, cognitive, and perceptual worlds. Kleve and Penne (2016) show how students' success in mathematics and Language 1 depends on their ability to use subject-specific language, meta-awareness, and disciplinary modes of thought. Students who remain outside these discourses interpret school subjects through everyday language and therefore struggle to participate fully in disciplinary learning (Kleve & Penne, 2016). The idea of mediation also extends to cross-language phonological development, with Cantonese lexical tone awareness contributing indirectly to English vocabulary through English lexical stress sensitivity and Cantonese–English segmental phonological awareness (Choi et al., 2019). The concept can be extended further through the argument that disciplinary training functions as a linguistic history that mediates perceptual adjustment (Carpio et al., 2021). These studies broaden the significance of mediation beyond classroom tasks. They suggest that language mediates how learners perceive, categorise, remember, explain, and participate in

knowledge practices. Mediation can therefore be understood as a condition of meaning-making itself.

Educational research highlights the value of mediation for learning, agency, and participation, but it also reveals that mediation is never detached from questions of authority, legitimacy, and inclusion. These concerns become even more pronounced in institutional settings where mediation affects access to services, rights, healthcare, legal recognition, professional communication, and public participation. Hence, the next section turns to mediation as an institutional practice, examining how access, power, responsibility, technology, and professional judgement shape what mediation can make possible.

5. Mediation as Access, Power, and Institutional Practice

A critical account of language mediation needs to consider how access is organised, regulated, and sometimes withheld within institutional settings. Mediation is frequently presented as a neutral mechanism for facilitating communication, yet the literature suggests that it is always shaped by decisions about who mediates, what is mediated, how meanings are reformulated, and whose interests are served. In translation studies, mediation has been conceptualised as a broad process that includes translators' interventions in response to linguistic, cultural, ideological, and interpersonal gaps between source and target contexts (Wang, 2022). Such interventions can be identified in non-obligatory discursive deviations from the source text, especially when information is selected, configured, or presented in ways that reveal the translator's ideological positioning and communicative aims (Wang, 2022). This framing is useful because it shifts attention from technical procedure to discursive action. Meaning travels across contexts through processes of reorganisation shaped by asymmetry, purpose, and accountability.

Public service interpreting makes these issues especially visible because mediation often occurs in encounters where access to rights, services, and recognition is at stake. Language mediation can promote participation and enable new narratives through reflexive coordination, but it can also become hierarchical when it reproduces gatekeeping, marginalisation, or ethnocentric assumptions (Baraldi, 2017). This ambivalence is central to understanding mediation as institutional practice. Mediators may open communicative space for those whose voices would otherwise be excluded, yet they may also align with institutional logics that define what counts as relevant, credible, or admissible. Interpreter selection practices in Flemish municipal investigations into suspected sham relationships illustrate this point clearly. The use of sworn, community, professional, or ad hoc interpreters reflected different assumptions about monolingualism, language rights, cost, legal risk, and responsibility, producing practices of judicial fencing, institutional accommodation, and institutional omission (Snoeck et al., 2026). Access, therefore, depends on the availability of mediation as well as the ideological and procedural conditions under which mediation is provided.

The institutional distribution of responsibility is equally important. In psychotherapeutic healthcare for refugees in Germany, the lack of stable funding for language mediation prevents many patients from accessing adequate treatment (Reiter & Walter, 2023). Responsibility is shifted between federal authorities, health insurance bodies, Länder, municipalities, and civil society actors, producing uneven and precarious arrangements (Reiter & Walter, 2023). This shows that mediation should be understood as part of the infrastructure of access rather than as an optional add-on to service provision. Similar concerns arise in accessible communication for adults with intellectual disabilities. Research on 'easy read' health information found that neither linguistic simplification nor standardised mediation independently improved comprehension, suggesting that accessible texts require contingent mediation attuned to readers' vocabulary knowledge, language-processing capacity, and lived experience (Buell et al., 2020). Institutional access therefore requires responsive practices that recognise the situated capacities, histories, and needs of service users, alongside simplified texts or interpreter provision.

Professional mediation also entails emotional, ethical, and relational labour. In asylum and refugee settings, Arabic–Spanish interpreters are exposed to traumatic narratives that generate predominantly negative emotions, often without adequate psychological support (Mahyub-Rayaa & Baya-Essayahi, 2021). This raises questions about the well-being of mediators, the sustainability of interpreting work, and the potential impact of emotional burden on professional performance. Workplace interpreting provides another example of mediation as active relational management. In Sino-Malaysian corporations, in-house interpreters reduce communication friction by reframing confrontational remarks, clarifying technical and cultural meanings, managing power dynamics, de-escalating tension, and supporting cooperation across differing communicative norms (Wong et al., 2026). These studies challenge narrow definitions of professional mediation as linguistic transfer. They show that mediators frequently manage affect, institutional hierarchy, face, conflict, and trust. Such work requires judgement as well as linguistic competence, and it should be recognised as skilled professional practice rather than invisible support labour.

The changing technological environment further complicates the relationship between mediation, professionalism, and human expertise. ICTs, CAT tools, neural machine translation, human-assisted translation, remote interpreting, and computer-assisted interpreting are reshaping translation and interpreting work, while expanding the roles of language mediators as language service providers (Horváth, 2019). However, human capacities such as judgement, interpersonal communication, cultural intelligence, and creativity remain central to forms of mediation that require ethical sensitivity and situated decision-making (Horváth, 2019). Research on mediation training and moral decision-making adds another dimension to this discussion. Trained language mediators may respond differently from untrained bilinguals when moral dilemmas are presented in a foreign language, although the exploratory nature of the evidence means that

further research is needed (Marín García, 2024). These studies suggest that mediation is an institutional practice in which access, power, technology, ethics, and professional judgement intersect. Its democratic value depends on whether institutions treat mediation as a condition for meaningful participation rather than as a marginal service to be improvised when communication breaks down.

6. The Issue in Perspective

The articles in issue 25.1 of *Traduction et Langues* illustrate why mediation is a productive lens for understanding contemporary work on language. The issue is organised around four axes: translation studies and intercultural mediation; language teaching, pedagogy, and educational practices; language, discourse, and cultural representations; and language policy and institutional transformations. Across these areas, the contributions examine how language practices are shaped by global mobility, technological change, multilingual realities, institutional pressures, and historically sedimented relations of power. Read through the lens developed in this editorial, the issue shows that mediation is not confined to translation or interpreting. It also operates through pedagogy, literary discourse, film, AI-assisted communication, professional training, policy reform, and the everyday work of making meaning accessible across social and cultural boundaries.

The first axis, devoted to translation studies and intercultural mediation, foregrounds the interpretative, rhetorical, ethical, and technological dimensions of translation. Vo et al.'s article on Vietnamese endearment terms in *Oxford Thương Yêu* shows how culturally and emotionally charged expressions often resist direct equivalence. Strategies such as literal translation, paraphrase, omission, borrowing, and the use of superordinates demonstrate that translation involves choices about intimacy, relationality, and affective meaning. Aljahsh's study of *iḥtibāk*, or reciprocal ellipsis, in Qur'anic discourse extends this concern to sacred rhetoric. By examining how English translations render a structure that depends on omission, symmetry, and reader inference, the article presents translation as a hermeneutical practice shaped by rhetorical density, theological sensitivity, and the limits of explicit reformulation. These studies remind us that mediation often concerns what cannot be fully carried across languages without interpretative negotiation.

A second set of articles within this axis examines audiovisual and cinematic mediation. Ajadi's study of subtitles in African films with German subtitles and German films with English subtitles demonstrates that subtitling participates in the transmission, attenuation, or recalibration of ideological and cultural meanings. Subtitles can simplify culturally bound expressions, neutralise political resistance, reshape identity constructions, and guide audience perceptions of power and belonging. Ridene's article on the multilingual dubbing and international circulation of *Dachra* shifts attention to the role of audiovisual translation in the global visibility of national cinema. It shows how subtitling and dubbing help culturally specific films travel across linguistic and cultural

environments, while also shaping reception in target markets. These contributions are significant because they connect mediation to circulation: translation enables movement across borders, yet it also modifies how cultural products are understood, valued, and positioned.

The same axis also engages directly with AI, a growing concern across translation and language studies. López-Simó's article on French–Spanish greeting formulae translated by DeepL Pro and ChatGPT-4o shows that AI systems continue to struggle with pragmatic phraseology, contextual interpretation, sociolinguistic variation, and appropriate reformulation. Its typology of errors is valuable because it demonstrates that technologically mediated translation still depends on human awareness of context, register, and interpersonal meaning. Akgün et al.'s empirical study of ChatGPT in diplomatic translation provides a complementary perspective. In that study, ChatGPT outperformed student translators on formal diplomatic texts, a result attributed to the formulaic and convention-driven nature of diplomatic correspondence. However, the implications are not simply celebratory. Diplomatic translation requires ideological sensitivity, rhetorical restraint, and political awareness, and these remain areas in which human supervision and ethical judgement are indispensable. These AI-focused articles show that technological systems can mediate language with increasing fluency, while raising urgent questions about responsibility, quality, authorship, and the boundaries of professional expertise.

The second axis, language teaching, pedagogy, and educational practices, extends the issue's concern with mediation into classrooms, institutions, and teacher development. Djouima's comparative study of EFL/ESL educational reform in Algeria, Uganda, and the United States shows that reforms are often experienced as top-down processes marked by limited teacher involvement, inadequate professional development, increased workload, and weak alignment between policy intentions and classroom realities. This article connects strongly with the editorial's argument that mediation depends on institutional conditions. The effects of reform are shaped by the beliefs, resources, agency, and professional support through which teachers interpret and enact policy in classrooms. Similarly, Mostefaoui and Mokhtari's study of newly recruited university teachers at the University of Tiaret examines how training and mentoring can shift pedagogical postures from transmissive conceptions towards more learner-centred and reflective approaches. Yet it also points to persistent tensions between innovative intentions and institutional constraints, especially assessment pressures and difficulties transferring training into practice.

Several pedagogical contributions focus more explicitly on classroom mediation. Bălan and Vlad's article on meaning clarification practices among native and non-native language teachers in Romanian secondary schools examines translation, reformulation, paraphrasing, code-switching, and verbal or non-verbal strategies as resources for comprehension and knowledge transmission. Its comparative perspective is valuable because it avoids reducing pedagogical expertise to native-speaker status and instead foregrounds differentiated practices

shaped by experience, linguistic background, and classroom representation. Ismail et al.'s article on culturally responsive literacy in Indonesian elementary schools similarly shows that literacy access depends on contextual mediation. Urban, semi-urban, and rural schools differ in material and digital resources, but meaningful participation depends on teachers' ability to draw on culturally familiar texts, oral storytelling, visual support, community-based examples, and dialogic routines. In both studies, mediation is a practical means of inclusion: teachers adapt language, materials, interaction, and cultural references to make learning possible in unequal educational ecologies.

Other contributions in this axis examine mediation in higher education and professional language learning. Missoum's article on EMI in Algeria highlights the importance of listening strategies for students' readiness to learn through English. Its findings suggest that EMI success depends on strategic listening, academic literacy, learner engagement, and targeted instruction, rather than on policy adoption alone. Betka and Cheikh's article on Business German in the Maghreb presents specialised language learning as an integrated, action-oriented competence involving authentic economic texts, scenario-based simulations, digital tools, intercultural awareness, and professional agency. Particularly important is its treatment of students' multilingual repertoires, including Arabic, Darija, Tamazight, and French, as didactic resources. These studies reinforce a key argument of this editorial: effective mediation works through local repertoires to support participation in academic and professional domains, even when learners are engaging with global languages.

The third axis, language, discourse, and cultural representations, broadens the scope of mediation beyond translation and pedagogy. Shchyhlo et al.'s article on verbal markers of gender roles in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *The Handmaid's Tale* examines how lexical, stylistic, and semantic choices construct gendered identities and reproduce or challenge social expectations. It reminds readers that language mediates cultural norms even within monolingual literary discourse. Busto Núñez's study of written text and overlapping screens in cinema similarly highlights the semiotic complexity of contemporary visual culture. By treating written text on screens as part of cinematic discourse, the article shows how text-image relations shape diegetic reality, audience perception, and multimodal meaning-making. These two contributions are especially useful because they extend mediation to representation itself. Language helps people communicate across differences while also structuring how identities, bodies, technologies, and social worlds become visible and interpretable.

The final axis, language policy and institutional transformations, is represented by Adnane et al.'s article on Algeria's higher education language policy shift from French to English. This contribution is particularly resonant with the themes of access, power, and institutional practice discussed in the preceding section of the editorial. The article traces how Algeria's language debate has moved from an ideological struggle rooted in colonial history and Arabisation towards a more technical discussion centred on pedagogical effectiveness,

academic visibility, and institutional readiness. However, the article rightly avoids treating English as a self-sufficient solution to internationalisation. Its argument that English functions as a mediator variable is instructive: English may support global scientific participation and university visibility, but its effects depend on research funding, infrastructure, linguistic preparation, and integration into international academic networks. In this sense, language policy is a form of institutional mediation whose consequences depend on the broader ecology in which it is implemented.

The issue makes several contributions to current debates in language studies by bringing together translation, audiovisual communication, AI, pedagogy, discourse, and policy as interconnected sites of mediation. Its translation and audiovisual studies foreground the ways in which affect, ideology, rhetoric, culture, and identity are reformulated for new audiences, while the articles on AI examine a rapidly expanding mediational force without losing sight of pragmatic nuance, ethical oversight, and human expertise. The pedagogical contributions position teaching and learning as mediational processes in which teachers, learners, curricula, resources, and institutions shape access to knowledge. The studies of literary discourse, cinematic text, and language policy further show how language mediates gender, screen-based experience, national planning, and higher education transformation. The geographical and disciplinary range of the issue strengthens its significance, with contributions engaging contexts including Algeria, Uganda, the United States, Indonesia, Romania, Vietnam, Turkey, Tunisia, Spain, Germany, and wider transnational media and educational spaces.

The issue's broader value lies in its refusal to treat language as a transparent channel. Whether the focus is a greeting formula translated by AI, a Qur'anic rhetorical structure, a subtitled film, a literacy classroom, a Business German module, a literary representation of gender, or a national shift towards English in higher education, each article shows that language practices are embedded in relations of history, culture, technology, institution, and power. This is precisely why mediation provides a useful organising concept. It allows the issue's diverse contributions to be read together as studies of how meaning is made available, transformed, constrained, or legitimised. At the same time, the issue invites a critical stance: mediation can widen participation, but it can also obscure loss, reinforce hierarchy, or naturalise institutional priorities. The task for scholars and practitioners is therefore to examine mediation critically by asking how it operates, what it enables, what it filters out, and whose interests it ultimately serves.

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Author's Biodata

Daniel Xerri is an Associate Professor in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at the University of Malta and the Chairperson of the ELT Council. He has published widely on different areas of English language education. His main research interests are teacher research and professional learning. His most recent book is *The Rise of English as a Glocal Language: Reimagining its Role in an Era of Deglobalisation* (Springer, 2026). www.danielxerri.com

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