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### THE PEDAGOGICAL POTENTIAL OF MEDIATION IN THE LIGHT OF PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF FUTURE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

*The paper deals with investigation of different contemporary approaches to mediation as the main conflict solving technology, in particular its practical application in professional preparation of future foreign language teachers. At modern stage of the development of conflictology it is relevant to generalize scientific approaches and reveal the pedagogical potential of mediation.*

*The purpose of the article is to analyze scientific approaches to the term mediation revealing its content and to determine its pedagogical potential for professional preparation of future foreign language teachers; to highlight the types of mediation, in particular the types of pedagogical mediation, as the factor of constant professional growth of the teachers.*

*The main types of mediation of the teachers were summarized: school mediation, mediation of contemporaries and university mediation. The models of mediators depending on the role of mediator in negotiation process: mediator-rescuer (having no special professional knowledge and skills); mediator-facilitator (the atmosphere of constructive cooperation, third part in a conflict); mediator-manipulator (using methods of manipulation in conflict situation); mediator-organizer (using collaborative conflict handling techniques) were substantiated. The following four stages of mediation: introduction, discussion of the problem, search for consensus, agreement and conclusions have been singled out. Different technologies of conducting mediation: the technology of compromise agreement (active participation in negotiations of both sides of conflict when compromise decisions are made); the technology of boat diplomacy (the division of conflict parties and constant maneuvering between them searching for compromise decision); the technology of pressure on one of the opponents (more time is spent working with one of the opponents proving his wrong position); technology of directive action (accent on weak points of the opponents and their wrong actions towards each other) have been analyzed from the point of view of practical importance for future teachers of foreign languages to be able to resolve conflicts in pedagogical process.*

**Keywords:** mediation; mediator; technology; stages of mediation; pedagogical mediation; negotiations; teachers of foreign languages.

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### ПЕДАГОГІЧНИЙ ПОТЕНЦІАЛ МЕДІАЦІЇ У ПРОФЕСІЙНІЙ ПІДГОТОВЦІ МАЙБУТНІХ УЧИТЕЛІВ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ

*У статті розглянуто використання технології медіації у вищій школі, що дає змогу ефективно врегулювати конфліктні ситуації у молодіжному середовищі. Виявлено, що оптимальним є визначення чотирьох етапів технології медіації, а саме: введення у процедуру медіації; обговорення проблеми, позицій окремих сторін; пошук взаємоприйнятних способів вирішення спору, консенсусу у розв'язанні проблеми; домовленість і підбиття підсумків. Проведено аналіз теоретичних праць вітчизняних та зарубіжних фахівців, який свідчить, що у контексті дослідження педагогічного потенціалу медіації, застосування її як сучасної технології залагодження педагогічних конфліктів у закладах вищої освіти має низку практичних переваг, оскільки володіння нею майбутніми вчителями іноземних мов відкриває нові шляхи попередження міжнаціональних конфліктів. Отже, медіація виступає конструктивною технологією створення безпечного і толерантного середовища успішної соціалізації дітей і молоді.*

**Ключові слова:** медіатор; медіація; етапи медіації; конфлікт; переговори, майбутні вчителі іноземної мови.

**A**nalysis of recent research and publications. Nowadays the system of education is facing complex challenges and disruptions due to technological change and innovation, globalization, European Union educational

perspectives, coronavirus restrictions. These challenges are having a significant impact on the teachers and students willing to limit the destructive conflict threat and to increase their level of conflictological competence. Promoting constructive

approaches to conflict, the pedagogical potential of mediation has a special role in preparation of future foreign language teachers.

In the field of conflictology many academic publications are focused on the questions of mediation in conflicts: Ch. Bestmer [1] analyzed principles, process and practice of mediation; L. Boulle, M. Nestic [12]; different aspects of school mediation R. Cohen [5]. Numerous scientific works of contemporary researchers highlight the psychological aspects of implementation of mediation technologies at schools, for instance, A. Gusev [2]; A. Karshiyeva [4] dwells on mediation in social sphere; O. Kulinchenko examines implementation of mediation in preparation of future teachers; N. Mazaraki [7], T. Podkovenko [10] examine theoretical and practical aspects of mediation in Ukraine etc. Thus, the main **purpose of the article** is to generalize scientific approaches to the term mediation revealing its structure and content and to determine its pedagogical potential for professional preparation of future foreign language teachers.

**The main material of the study.** The meaning of the term mediator is known since ancient times when someone was asked to mediate a conflict between people or groups in order to find a solution with maximum advantages to both parties with the help of continuous interaction and dialogue. Romans used different terms to name mediators: internuncios, medium, intercessor, philanthropus, interpolator, conciliator, interlocutor, interpres, and at last, mediator [3, 163].

Now we are going to analyze contemporary scientific approaches to the notion of mediation in the scope of pedagogy. System of education is vulnerable to conflicts, thus it must be flexible and rapid in implementation of new technologies such as mediation in the programs of professional preparation of future teachers. Special attention is to be paid to preparation of future foreign language teachers as future mediators not only in interpersonal or intergroup conflicts but international as well because knowing foreign languages creates a truly borderless experience of learning and they can encounter people from all over the world.

While managing pedagogical conflict the mediator's aim is to promote collaborative solution to restore the relationships of the parties of the conflict and to control the process. We fully agree with O. Kulinchenko, that personal position of mediator is of primary importance to correlate with his life values [6, 83], thus, being a mediator means having such moral qualities as humanism, tolerance, understanding, high conflict resistance level and authoritativeness for surrounding people.

Mediation is viewed by scientists as negotiations, continuous interaction and dialogue between people in order to find a solution with maximum advantages to both parties [4, 226], consequently, the main task of mediator is to conduct effective negotiation process having high level of communicative abilities with the aim of coming to consensus using peace building strategies. The following models of mediators are singled out in academic publications depending on their role in negotiation process: *mediator-rescuer* (having no special professional knowledge and skills); *mediator-facilitator* (the atmosphere of constructive cooperation, third part in a conflict); *mediator-manipulator* (using methods of manipulation in conflict situation); *mediator-organizer* (using collaborative conflict handling techniques) [8, 311].

In the scope of contemporary conflictology the following types of mediation were raised according to the sphere and participants: *criminal mediation* (mainly criminal cases; used in jurisdiction sphere); *civil mediation* (civil cases; used in jurisdiction sphere); *family mediation* (divorce cases, family misunderstandings); *pedagogical mediation* (used in education sphere, conflicts between student/pupils, teachers); *labour mediation* (labour legislation; used to solve conflicts between administration and subordinates) [9, 339]. Thus, mediation as interdisciplinary sphere combines legal, social, psychological, pedagogical professional knowledge, experience and culture, but according to the purpose of our work, pedagogical mediation will be in the focus of our attention.

The overview of existing approaches gives the right to distinguish the following types of pedagogical mediation; *school mediation* as the technology of systemic involvement in conflict work of prepared mediator who is usually the member of pedagogical staff of the school or someone from the system of education management, or independent agency; conflict situations between pupils and other participants of the educational process are regulated; *mediation of contemporaries* presupposes the programme of conflict management where specially prepared mediators-contemporaries are involved cooperating not only with pupils but with school administration and parents as well. It is worth mentioning that such programme may be considered effective under support of teachers, administration and parents [2, 122–123].

It should be noted that higher educational establishments play an important role in preventing conflicts and in supporting peace building efforts in educational sphere thus, it seems relevant to distinguish one more type of pedagogical mediation as *university mediation* aimed to manage conflicts

with the help of experience mediators: teachers, group supervisors, psychologists etc.

Practical importance and value of conflict mediation technology in high educational establishments cannot be overestimated for several reasons. We agree with T. Podkovenko that mediation is voluntary as the participants are free to leave the 'round table of negotiations' at any time; mediation demands less financial and temporal costs; mediation organized from non-opposing position is better than traditional court process; confidentiality of the mediation process. In summary, the author claims that mediation is short-term friendly and peace building approach for conflict situations [10, 28]. Taking into consideration the above said, mediation should be widely used as conflict management strategy in high educational establishments for preparation of the students to solve arguments in students' environment and in the process of future professional activity.

Experimental part of our work is based on the differentiation of the stages of mediation which are the concern of much recent scientific research. A. Karshieva, for instance, claims that the stages of mediation may be divided into two main groups: preparatory work before the meeting of conflict participants and further actions in time of official negotiations. The following five stages refer to the preparatory group and seven – to the beginning of cooperation of the mediator with conflict parties: *introductory stage; the choice of mediation strategy; collection and analysis of information; detailed outline of mediation; creation of cooperative atmosphere; the beginning of mediation; agreement of the schedule of meetings; the discussion of concealed questions; summarizing variants of solving disagreements; estimation of the variants; the end of mediation procedure; adoption of official decision* [4, 226].

According to Ch. Bestmer foreign scientists examine the following stages of mediation: seven in J. Folberg and A. Taylor's investigation (1984); twelve in Ch. Moore's investigation (1986); four in Mediation Training Institute, 1988 as introduction – the positions of the parties – problem decision – agreement. This researcher took the last model as basic though some stages were added: revealing of conflict/deepening of conflict; preparatory stage and realization phase [1, 68].

In our view the conception of V. Reznikova is relevant where the following stages of mediation are examined: *preparatory* (the first contact is established with the conflict parties, their desire for mediation is appreciated); *opening* (direct contact and communication is established, the investigation of the reasons of conflict and motivation of the

participants, division of the essence of conflict into constituents), *middle* (common search for conflict management strategies, priority questions are in the focus of attention, discussion of common interests in the argument, the search for acceptable ways of regulating the conflict for both parties), *concluding* (discussing the results of negotiations, concluding, coming to consensus) [11, 12–13]. It is worth mentioning that successful process of mediation depends on careful transference from one stage to the other only when at the previous stage all aims are reached [7, 96].

Thus, we can see that some scientists (A. Karshieva, Ch. Moore, J. Folberg, A. Taylor and others) focus on the complexity of mediation consisting of seven to twelve stages; other group of scientists (V. Reznikova, Ch. Bestmer) describe less complex four-stages structure. We fully agree with the thought of these researchers that four stages of mediation are relevant for further investigation, despite of the fact that the names of stages are different but the content is the same: introduction, discussion of the problem, search for consensus, agreement and conclusions.

Consideration of these stages by future foreign language teachers was an important part of experimental investigation: the exercise "Draw the stages of mediation" for 50 minutes was used as a group work with the aim to introduce the stages of mediation for the students. The following instruction was used: to make schemes of certain stages according to the structure What is mediator doing? What is part 1 doing? What is part 2 doing? The first group dealt with preparatory stage of mediation and singled out the main phases of mediator's work (introduction to mediation, finding out the reasons of conflict etc.); the second group investigated the next stage (discussion of the problem, working out the variants of conflict solving methods); the third group discussed the mediation meeting and the points of view of the parties of conflict; the fourth group focused on solving the conflict, agreement and conclusions. The groups presented their schemes and suggested algorithm of actions at different stages of mediation. The following questions were given for discussion: What peculiarities of mediation process can be singled out? Name the peculiarities of mediator's actions in different stages of mediation? What questions have you got as for the stages of mediation? Can you act as mediator? Explain your point.

It should be borne in mind that in the process of formation of conflictological competence of future foreign language teachers special attention has to be paid to different technologies of conducting mediation such as: the *technology of compromise agreement*

(active participation in negotiations of both sides of conflict when compromise decisions are made); *the technology of boat diplomacy* (the division of conflict parties and constant maneuvering between them searching for compromise decision); *the technology of pressure on one of the opponents* (more time is spent working with one of the opponents proving his wrong position); *technology of directive action* (accent on weak points of the opponents and their wrong actions towards each other) [8, 311–312].

On the practical level these technologies were probated with the help of the exercise “The Referee” aimed to develop skills of mediation in conflict situations in the form of a game. The participants were divided in groups consisting of three persons. Five minutes were given to think over the scenario where two people are in conflict (arguments between a wife and a husband, two friends, a teacher and a pupil, a teenager and his parent etc.) and the third person has a peace building function, a peacemaker who has to use several technologies (*the technology of compromise agreement, the technology of boat diplomacy, the technology of pressure on one of the opponents, the technology of directive action*) in order to reach an agreement between conflict parties. The following questions were suggested for discussion: What technologies were used for smoothing over the conflict? What technology was the most effective? Is it easy to act as mediator? What were the most interesting tricks used by the participants? What is the algorithm of actions of the referee who failed to solve the conflict? What technologies would you recommend to use in the case of failure?

The students had an opportunity to act as mediators while doing “The referee” exercise, thus, the point of view of M. Mamich is valuable: the usage of special technology as a new approach in mediation, where mediators worry not only about the result but also about being correct and tolerant in conflict solving situations helping the conflict parties to negotiate in positive way and satisfy all participants [9, 340].

The last item to consider in the characterization of mediation is the so called *reconciliation meetings* should be focused on as the variety of mediation procedure used in those cases when the parties of conflict situation have not equal positions and the task is not only to solve the problem but to restore the relationships of the participants [2, 122–123]. Reconciliation meetings are especially useful for educational process as they are effective in solving everyday problems involving pupils and teachers.

**Conclusions and prospects for further researches.** We can summarize this consideration of the pedagogical potential of mediation as follows:

the implementation of the technologies of mediation in high educational establishments allows solving conflict situations in youth surrounding effectively. As conflicts are unavoidable phenomena of human interaction it is advisable for every teacher to be skilled at mediation as the most important conflict management strategy. Every educational establishment should have several mediators from the teachers, psychologists, social workers that can not only perform mediation functions while managing school conflict but also teach children, their parents and administration the ways of positive thinking and modes of constructive behavior in conflict situations. It is also desirable to introduce the stages and principles of mediation at the university for future teachers not only to manage conflicts, but also to avoid them. It is especially important for future foreign language teachers because knowing foreign language and the mediation technology gives a perfect opportunity to predict international conflicts. Thus, mediation is viewed as constructive technology of creating safe and tolerant surrounding of successful socialization of young generation.

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“Навчання без міркування – даремне, міркування без навчання – небезпечне”.

Конфуцій  
давньоқытайський філософ

