

What does the CEFR imply for teaching?

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The CEFR: True or False?

1. CEFR developed by EU to harmonise levels
2. Levels of CEFR, ALTE, Cambridge are same
3. CEFR B1+/B1.2 & CEFR-J B1.2 are the same
4. Descriptors developed in UK by Cambridge
5. Recommends real-world orientation
6. Sees user/learner as a social agent carrying out tasks – which require some language



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CEFR Aims

Provide Common Reference Points

- CEFR levels, illustrative descriptors

Stimulate Reflection

- Consider relevant aspects
- Evaluate current practice: Does it make sense?



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The CEFR:

A heuristic

not

an answer
to all problems



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Not Harmonisation

“We have NOT set out to tell practitioners what to do or how to do it. **We are raising questions not answering them.** It is not the function of the CEF to lay down the objectives that users should pursue of the methods they should employ”.
(CEFR: ii)



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Not a Method

The CEFR’s “action-oriented approach” is:

- not a method
- not the communicative approach
 - does not privilege message communication over development of linguistic competence
 - does not ban use of mother tongue

BUT

- does imply:
 - active, functional as well as linguistic competence



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Common Reference Levels



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Common Reference Levels



Common Reference Levels

We simplify to communicate



Descriptors - Informal discussion

- A2+** Can generally identify the topic of discussion around her which is conducted slowly and clearly.
 Can discuss what to do in the evening, at the weekend.
 Can make and respond to suggestions.
 Can agree and disagree with others.
- A2** Can discuss everyday practical issues in a simple way when addressed clearly, slowly and directly.
 Can discuss what to do, where to go and make arrangements to meet.



Profiling

not

Levelling



My profile for Spanish

SPANISH	A1	A1+	A2	A2+	B1	B1+	B2	B2+	C1
Listening									
Reading									
Spoken Interaction									
Written Interaction									
Spoken Production									
Written Production									



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The label "A2" is always a convenient summary of a complex profile.



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CEFR Aims

Provide Common Reference Points

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Stimulate Reflection & Reform

- Evaluate current practice: Does it make sense?
- Action-oriented approach



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Learner focus

- Learner as social user: needs analysis
- Learner as subject: learner experience as starting point; "teaching unplugged"
- Learner as partner: transparency, consultation
- Creativity: dreams and hopes, literature, creative writing, music
- Steps towards self-direction (European Language Portfolio)



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Joined-up thinking

- **Planning:**
 - "Sign-posting" with Can Dos
- **Teaching:**
 - Action-oriented approach: language and activity
 - Practice and error
- **Assessment**



Signposting with Can Do's

- learners see why they are learning things
- learners and teachers set priorities
- teachers select appropriate communicative tasks
- learners focus on form during communicative tasks
- learners and teachers to assess progress
- schools to report progress to parents



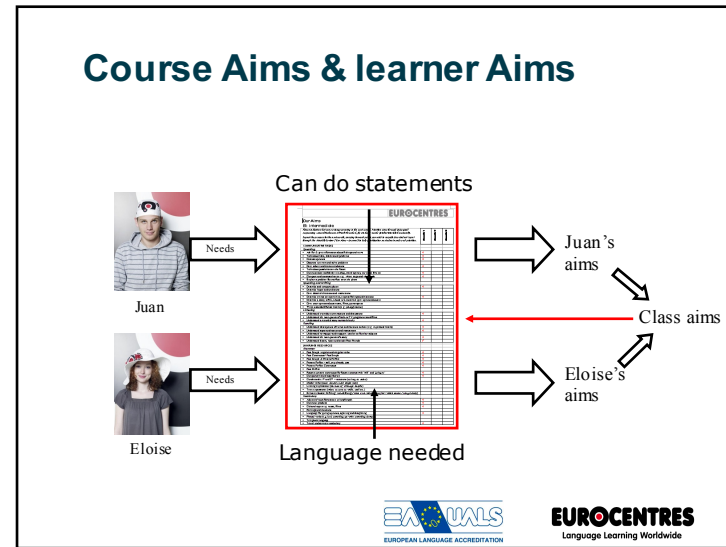
Levels Our Aims Weekly Plan

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EUROCENTRES Scale of Proficiency Our Aims Weekly Plan

<p>Communicative Tasks</p> <p>The most important things you need to do in the language at this level.</p>	<p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand everyday conversations and discussions • Understand a recorded story narrated clearly <p>Spoken Interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for & give information about feelings and news • Talk about likes, dislikes and problems • Discuss opinions • Organise an event and solve problems • Give advice and recommendations • Talk about possibilities in the future • Communicate confidently during travelling and sightseeing • Compare and contrast choices, e.g. where to go and what to do • Explain a problem face-to-face or on the phone <p>Spoken Production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and compare places • Describe hopes and ambitions • Give detailed directions and instructions • Describe events or experiences, express feelings and reactions <p>Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand descriptions of events and reactions to them (e.g. in personal letters) • Understand signs and notices and instructions • Understand the main points of a story • Understand letters, notes and emails from friends <p>Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a short letter (e.g. postcard) • Write 400 Chinese characters
<p>Language Resources</p> <p>The grammar and vocabulary you need to communicate successfully in the communicative tasks listed above.</p>	<p>Grammar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use different adverbs like just • Use different expressions: besides, some... others, • Make questions with <i>by</i> and <i>rang</i> • Make comparisons (<i>bi</i>) and <i>not as good as</i> <p>Vocabulary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural topics e.g. music, films • Feelings and emotions • Professions and work • Products • Language for giving opinions, agreeing and disagreeing • Telephone language • Travel and services vocabulary

Communicative Tasks	<p>Listening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand everyday conversations and discussions Understand a recorded story narrated clearly <p>Spoken Interaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for & give information about feelings and news Talk about likes, dislikes and problems Discuss opinions Organise an event and solve problems Give advice and recommendations Talk about possibilities in the future Communicate confidently during travelling and sightseeing Compare and contrast choices. e.g. where to go and what to do Explain a problem face-to-face or on the phone <p>Spoken Production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and compare places Describe hopes and ambitions Give detailed directions and instructions Describe events or experiences, express feelings and reactions
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Joined-up thinking

- **Planning:**
 - "Sign-posting" with Can Dos
- ➔ **Teaching:**
 - Action-oriented approach: language and activity
 - Practice and error
- **Assessment**

Action-oriented Approach

The user/learner is a social agent who need to develop the **competences** and **strategies** to perform, in the real world, **tasks** involving language.

General competences (incl. Intercultural)
 Communicative language competences:

- Pragmatic
- Linguistic
- Socio-linguistic

Action-oriented Approach

- Language learning is not an intellectual pursuit to train minds.
- Language is not an abstract thing learnt because one day you may use it
- Language is a **practical skill** to communicate with others. Learning by doing.
- **Purposeful action** in the language is therefore central. = **TASKS**



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Tasks

A **task** is defined as any purposeful action considered by an individual as necessary in order to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfil or an objective to be achieved.

This definition would cover a wide range of actions such as moving a wardrobe, writing a book, obtaining certain conditions in the negotiation of a contract, playing a game of cards, ordering a meal in a restaurant, translating a foreign language text or preparing a class newspaper through group work. (CEFR p10)



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Tasks

Tasks in the classroom are central

- but the tasks must have a relevant context
- tasks are usually collaborative, with other learners
- And, in carrying out the task, the learners must have a goal (not just a language goal)
= there must be an **outcome**



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Tasks

- A task is not a mechanical prompt to generate speech.
- A task is not an exercise.

Groups often produce something, e.g:

- a brochure for tourists, a blog entry,
- a list of suggestions to improve something,

Groups often plan something, e.g:

- a restaurant design & menu,
- an outing
- a party



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Tasks & Groupwork – in Japan?

- How much would traditional expectations of teachers and students need to change?
- Is that feasible?
- Is that desirable?
- How could it be achieved anyway?
- How could the “innovation gap” be overcome, between:
 - what new teachers are taught to do in college?
 - the reality of practice in the schools?



Tasks - summary

- Goal (purposefulness)
- Meaning (not mechanical)
- Interactive (collaborating)
- Cognitive processes (framing, structuring)
- Outcome (report; evaluation)



Tasks - types

	Real World	Pedagogic
Focus on form (e.g. past tense)		
Focus on meaning		



Tasks - examples

	Real World	Pedagogic
Focus on form (e.g. past tense)	X	
Focus on meaning		X



Tasks - examples

	Real World	Pedagogic
Focus on form (e.g. past tense)	Holidays (lower sec – first lesson after holiday)	
Focus on meaning		Story of a marriage (adult)



English Conversation : HOLIDAYS

Here you can find possible answers to the questions about your summer holiday:

Where did you spend your holiday?	I stayed at home I went to
Where did you go on holiday?	
Who did you go with?	I went with ...my parents / my family ...my best friend
How did you travel ?	I / We travelled ... by car ...by train ...by coach ...by plane ...by ship
Where did you stay?	We stayed ... in a hotel ...in a youth hostel ...on a campground
What did you do?	I went ...swimming / jogging / hiking / cycling / ...sightseeing / dancing ... to the disco / to the beach I sunbathed on the beach I learned to ... sail / dive / windsurf I played ... tennis / football / beach volleyball with I visited ... Greek ruins / a museum / an interesting old town I met ... a nice boy / girl from
What was the weather like?	very good , the sun was always shining terrible , it was raining all the time
Did you enjoy the holiday?	Yes, very much, especially Not so much, because I liked the place, because But



Mini Presentation: MY SUMMER HOLIDAYS (2-3 minutes)

Now tell the story of your holiday to the class. Use the questions from the last activity as a guideline (Where? Who with? How?etc).
When telling a little story about something you experienced, you often use these words or expressions to structure your story:

- At the beginning of the holiday ...
- In the first few days.....
- In the first week.....
- In the second week
- And then
- Later
- At the end of the holiday
- In the mornings
- In the afternoons
- In the evenings

Achtung: Die Wortstellung nach diesen Ausdrücken ist nicht gleich wie im Deutschen

Example: In the evenings I went to the disco.
Abends ging ich in die Disco

At the end of your little presentation you should tell the others if this holiday was a good experience for you and if you could recommend this place or this kind of holiday to others.

+	-
I liked this holiday very much.	I didn't like this holiday, because
It's an exciting place for young people because	It's boring for young people, because
I'd like to go back there, because	I wouldn't like to go back there, because
I would recommend this place to you, because	I wouldn't recommend this place to you because



The Story of a Marriage:

Groups of 4, each group with a photo of a man and woman.

Collaboration Phase (planning)	Each group has to construct the love story which led up to Janet and John's marriage. They should then decide how things changed after marriage, describing the character defects and bad habits of each partner which would eventually lead to their divorce. Each group should provide as much detail as possible.
Exchange Phase (reporting)	Re-group the students so that there is one representative of each of original groups in each new group. The representatives of each of the first groups take it in turns to tell their version of the drama of Janet and John to the rest of the group.
Discussion Phase (evaluating)	Groups discuss their "ideal family". Suggested prompts: - what age should men/women get married? - how many children would you like to have? - conventional families vs. communal living? - is marriage an out-of-date idea?



Tasks in the teaching sequence

One difference between good & bad teaching = the **connections** between Language+ Activity

Task-oriented:



Task-based:



Joined-up thinking

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Tasks & Practice

- Task-orientation does not at all make practice obsolete
- Learning a sport/skill requires controlled practice, plus knowledge; players go jogging, study tactics
- Learning a sport requires realistic experience
- Contextualised practice (a) shifts new things into “stable” competence; (b) enables automaticity



Interlanguage: CEFR (Westoff 2007)

“The scales of the CEFR ... *start* with emphasis on the lexical repertoire, counterbalanced by decreasing tolerance of deviations of grammatical norms.

At the lower level formal correctness is mainly based on the lexicon. Only from B2 onwards is conscious use of rule knowledge expected and perceived to be helpful.

FL teaching, however, (...) is perceived as a linear process, in which discrete grammatical issues are presented one after another, and the assumption is made that the next item is introduced only once mastery of the preceding item has occurred.”



Interlanguage: Non linear accuracy

- Around A2 learners use lots of “scripts” for situations – sometimes extremely accurately
- Some problems are unavoidable, and just stay, despite teaching, until much later (Eng –s)
- Around B1 learners are using far more language and making more creative use of resources = more errors (Klein, Fulcher)
- Task complexity (even narrative) reduces capacity for processing = more formulaic, less creative + more errors
- Around B2 learners begin to have spare capacity for self-monitoring – reflected in CEFR descriptors



Implications

- Don't focus on errors; use of new structures, fluency, are more important
- Don't race through the book. Learners need space, meaning-negotiation for transfer
- Do give fluency practice linking and activity (grammar games, broader tasks)
- Do demand accuracy with what should be “scripts” learnt as a chunk for certain scenarios
- Do encourage a student to focus on their “favourite” mistakes, but don't expect miracles



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➔ **Assessment**



Descriptors for Assessment

Distinguish between:

- Descriptors of communicative activities: Ch. 4
- Descriptors of aspects of proficiency related to particular competences: Chapter 5

“The former are very suitable for teacher- or self-assessment with regard to real-world tasks. Such teacher- or self-assessments are made on the basis of a detailed picture of the learner's language ability built up during the course concerned. They are attractive because they can help to focus both learners and teachers on an action-oriented approach.”
(CEFR p 180)



CEFR Scales: Chapter 5

Linguistic Competence

- General Linguistic Range
- Vocabulary Range
- Grammatical Accuracy
- Vocabulary Control
- Phonological Control
- Orthographic Control

Pragmatic Competence

- Flexibility
- Turntaking
- Thematic Development
- Cohesion and Coherence
- Propositional Precision
- Spoken Fluency

Sociolinguistic Competence

Sociolinguistic Appropriateness



CEFR Table 3

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY	INTERACTION	COHERENCE
C2	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey fine shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity. Also has a good command of idiomatic expressions and collocations.	Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (eg. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions).	Can express him/herself spontaneously & length with a natural colloquial flow, and a good backing-up, sound, as if fully so, smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.	Can interact with ease and skill, participating and using non-verbal and rhetorical cues appropriately. Can intervene in a contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural, fluid, and relevant references, allusion making etc.	Can create coherent and cohesive discourse making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of connectors and other cohesive devices.
C1	Has a good command of a broad range of language allowing him/her to select a formulation to express their level of certainty in an appropriate style of a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy, errors are rare, difficult to spot and generally corrected when they occur.	Can express him/herself fluently and approximately, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.	Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his remarks in order to get or to keep the floor and to state his/her own contributions skillfully to those of other speakers.	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B2+					
B2	Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much complex searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors which cause much misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes.	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although he/she can be held up as he or she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses.	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate, and can conversate, when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this skilfully. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some "jumpiness" in a long contribution.
B1+					
B1	Has enough language to get by with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events.	Uses resources accurately a repertoire of frequently used "routines" and patterns, associated with more predictable situations.	Can keep going comprehensively, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.	Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of general interest. Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding.	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected linear sequence of points.



CEFR Table 3

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY	INTERACTION	COHERENCE
B2	Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much complex searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors which cause much misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes.	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although he/she can be held up as he or she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses.	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate, and can conversate, when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this skilfully. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some "jumpiness" in a long contribution.
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A2+					
A2	Uses basic sentence patterns with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulae to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations.	Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.	Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.	Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can include when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.	Can link groups of words with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because".
A1	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations.	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire.	Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication.	Can ask and answer questions about personal details. Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition, rephrasing and repair.	Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like "and" or "but".



Selected Criteria (A2)

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY
A2+ (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> routine, everyday transactions familiar situations and topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use some simple structures correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adapt memorised simple phrases to particular situations handle short routine exchanges without undue effort, hesitation and false starts.
(4)			
A2 (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communicate limited information simple everyday situations. basic sentence patterns memorised phrases groups of a few words and formulae 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses some simple structures correctly, systematically makes basic mistakes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> makes him/herself understood very short utterances, pauses, false starts and reformulation
(2)			
A1 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> words and simple phrases personal details particular concrete situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> memorised repertoire, limited control a few simple grammatical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> very short, isolated, utterances mainly pre-packaged much pausing to search for expressions, articulate less familiar words, repair communication



Selected Criteria at A2

RANGE ▪ communicate limited information ▪ simple everyday situations ▪ basic sentence patterns ▪ memorised phrases ▪ groups of a few words and formulae	1	2	3	4	5
ACCURACY ▪ Uses some simple structures correctly, BUT ▪ systematically makes basic mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
FLUENCY ▪ makes him/herself understood ▪ very short utterances, BUT ▪ pauses, false starts and reformulation	1	2	3	4	5
GLOBAL Overall impression mark	1	2	3	4	5



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Key Issues on Teacher Assessment

- Use short checklists of 'Can do's for continuous assessment
- Use tasks to assess level
- Use criteria to assess performance in the tasks
- Make the criteria transparent with descriptors
- Communicate the criteria to the learners

- Use grammar tests for diagnosis and feedback



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Thank you

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