Approaches to Using the CERFL to Aid the Syllabus Development Project in Sabancı University, School of Languages
PART 1: The Common European Framework of References for Languages: What’s in it for us?

- An overview: What is the CEFRL?
- Main Aims & Intended Uses
- Familiarization with level descriptors
- Familiarization with ‘can do’ statements
- Questions
What is it?

A document produced by the Council of Europe which “provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe.”

CEFRL p1
Main Aims

- To promote better understanding between member states
- To promote greater mobility of individuals
- To raise standards of language teaching and learning
- To make it easier for practitioners to tell each other and their clientele what they wish to help learners to achieve and how they attempt to do so.
- To reflect on what we can do to help ourselves and other people to learn a language better
- To promote methods of modern language teaching which will strengthen independence of thought, judgment and action, combined with social skills and responsibility
The principles behind the CEF

- It’s not prescriptive:
  - “we do not set out to tell practitioners what to do, or how to do it”

- It’s not neutral:
  - The CEF “supports methods which help learners build up attitudes, knowledge and skills they need to:
    - Become more independent in thought and action
    - Be more responsible and co-operative in relation to other people”
Intended Uses

- To guide curriculum design and assessment
- To provide a common language to talk about learners’ language ability
- For self-directed learning (E.g. “Can do” statements, the Dialang Scales)
Common Reference Levels

A
- Basic User
  - A1 (breakthrough)
  - A2 (Waystage)

B
- Independent User
  - B1 (Threshold)
  - B2 (Vantage)

C
- Proficient User
  - C1 (Effective Operational Proficiency)
  - C2 (Mastery)
What the CEFRL scales is not:

- A division of language knowledge into six separate and independent boxes
- A label to stick on learners
- An assessment system
The CEF isn’t just the scale

- It gives a detailed, coherent description of:
  - Language use and language users
  - Competences and strategies
  - Processes of learning and teaching
  - Tasks
  - Diversification of the curriculum
  - Assessment

- In the appendices, there are more specialised scales, “can do” statements, DIALANG descriptors
‘Can do’ statements

- I can understand questions and instructions and follow short, simple directions (A1 Listening)
- I can understand any correspondence with the occasional use of a dictionary (C1 Reading)
How much is it being used?

- Mainstream education in many European countries as a basis for school language certification (France, Italy, Finland)
- Some institutions in Turkey
- It’s been adopted by ALTE (UCLES, Goethe, Alliance Française etc.) and will be used as the level descriptor for their exams and equivalences
- Publishers e.g Longman, OUP
- The European Language Portfolio is based on it and the self-assessment scale
- It will affect the levels used in course-books etc.
European Language Portfolio

- Language Passport
- Language Biography
- Language Dossier

- e-portfolio
Where to find resources; Useful websites

- For the CEFRL (complete text) and Portfolios – Application for Validation and Accreditation of an ELP Model & Guide for developers of an ELP:
  [www.culture2.coe.int/portfolio](http://www.culture2.coe.int/portfolio)
- For applications of Council of Europe language policies
  [www.ecml.at](http://www.ecml.at)
- For DIALANG Scales
  [www.dialang.org](http://www.dialang.org)
- For EAQUALS & ALTE (Association for Language Testers in Europe) and downloading e-portfolio
  [www.eaquals.org/about/portfolio.asp](http://www.eaquals.org/about/portfolio.asp)
Part 2: How the CEFRL was used to aid the SL Syllabus Development

- Background
- Broad Equivalents
- Extracts from the documents
- Challenges
- Present
- Future
- Questions
Background

- 2003/4 – Needs Analysis
- 2004/5 – Syllabus Objectives
- Feb & June 2005 – Frank Heyworth
- Summer 2005 – Task group
- 2005/… - Implementation & ongoing feedback collation
## CEFRL Broad Equivalents for SL Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASIC</th>
<th>INTER</th>
<th>UPPER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≈ A2+</td>
<td>≈ B1</td>
<td>≈ B2</td>
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Syllabus Group at Work!!
SL DOCUMENTS

- The Curriculum Framework
- Exit Level Descriptors
- The Objectives Document
- The Teaching Program
- “Can do” Statements
Exit Level Descriptors

- For all stakeholders (Turkish translation available)
- University catalogue
- Sets out overall aims of the program clearly
LANGUAGE: General Linguistic Range

- Has a repertoire of basic language which enables him/her to deal with predictable classroom situations. Can give *short descriptions* and relay main ideas on factual topics related to his/her studies.

- Has sufficient language to be able to give *clear descriptions and opinions* on factual topics related to his/her studies, using some complex structures to do so.

- Has sufficient language, including *a range of complex structures*, to be able to give *clear detailed descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments* in most academic situations.
The Teaching Program

- Enabling skills/learning points
- Materials
- Self study
- Vocabulary
- Study skills
- Additional Integrated Skills Practice
- Homework
- Academic Language Use
“CAN DO” Statements

- Purpose
- Intended Uses
- Turkish translation available for basic
- Discussed with Teachers in tutorials 2/3 times a semester
Main Uses made of CEFRL for syllabus Project

- To describe exit levels for stakeholders
- To write sets of “can do” statements to increase learner awareness of own progress
- As an additional check of the appropriateness of objectives at particular levels
- To inform assessment (i.e. Speaking and Writing criteria)
Some Challenges

- Writing the descriptors
- Translation
- Learner training
- Instructor training
- Clarifying aims
The Present and the Future

- The Curriculum Framework Document
- SFLs
- Implementation of documents;
- Piloting & collating feedback
- Identifying materials needs and producing them
- Refining the documents
- Strategies for further exploitation