Approaches to Using the CERFL to Aid the Syllabus Development Project in Sabancı University, School of Languages

Sabancı Üniversitesi

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

2

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

3

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
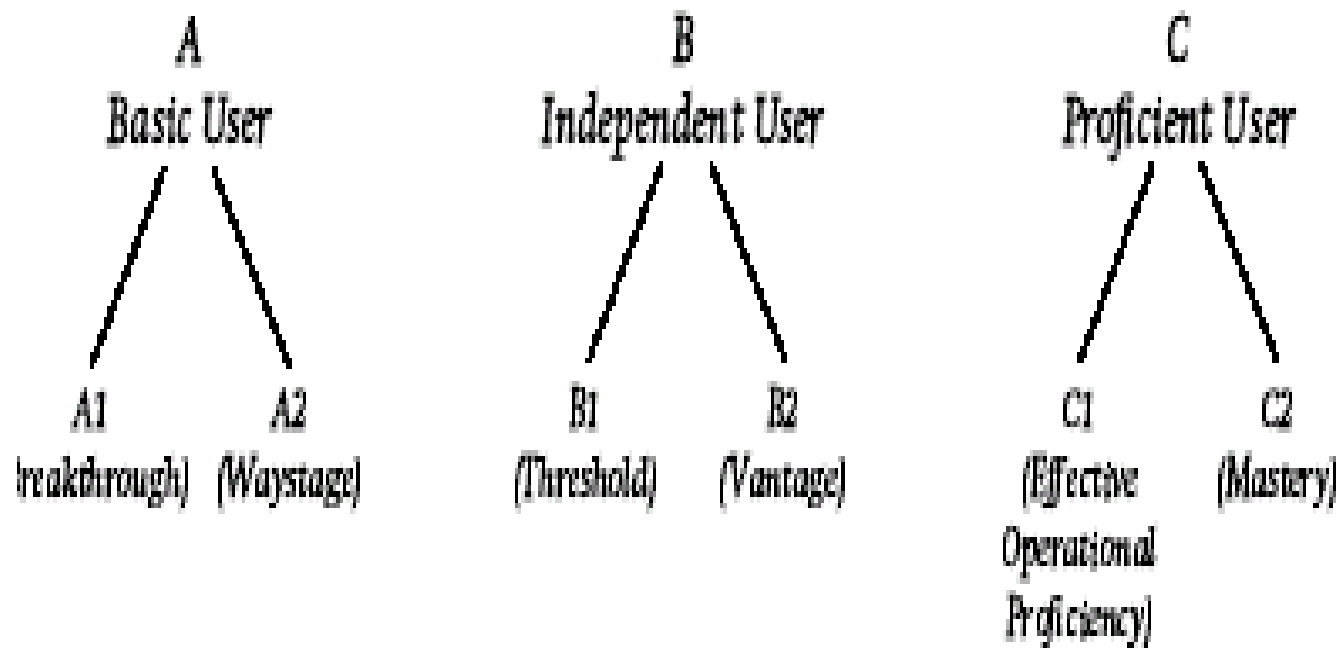
The principles behind the CEF

- 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)

6

Common Reference Levels

	A		B		C	
	Basic User		Independent User		Proficient User	
	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
	(Breakthrough)	(Waystage)	(Threshold)	(Vantage)	(Effective Operational Proficiency)	(Mastery)

What the CEFRL scales is <u>not:</u>

- – A division of language knowledge into six separate and independent boxes
- – A label to stick on learners
- – An assessment system

8

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)

10

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

- For applications of Council of Europe language policies www.ecml.at

- For DIALANG Scales

  www.dialang.org

- For EAQUALS & ALTE (Association for Language Testers in Europe) and downloading e-portfolio

  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

14

Background

- 2003/4 – Needs Analysis
- 2004/5 – Syllabus Objectives
- Feb & June 2005 – Frank Heyworth
- Summer 2005 – Task group
- 2005/… - Implementation & ongoing feedback collation

15

CEFRL Broad Equivalents for SL Levels

BASIC	INTER	UPPER
≈ A2+	≈ B1	≈ B2

Syllabus Group at Work!!

SL DOCUMENTS

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

18

Exit Level Descriptors

- For all stakeholders (Turkish translation available)
- University catalogue
- Sets out overall aims of the program clearly

19

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

21

"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 apropriateness of objectives at particular levels
- To inform assessment (i.e. Speaking and Writing criteria)

23

Some Challenges

- Writing the descriptors
- Translation
- Learner training
- Instructor training
- Clarifying aims

24

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