

Adapting linking procedures and involving stakeholders in relating a teaching programme to the CEFR

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Project background

- **Aims:** To link an English spoken communication course to the CEFR; to suggest how the course can be improved.

Key outcomes

For those who are involved in the teaching programme:

- to be **fully aware of the CEFR** and what it represents
- to **critically reflect on the suitability of the current programme** for the communication needs of their students
- to **understand its relationship to the CEFR**

Example CEFR linking projects

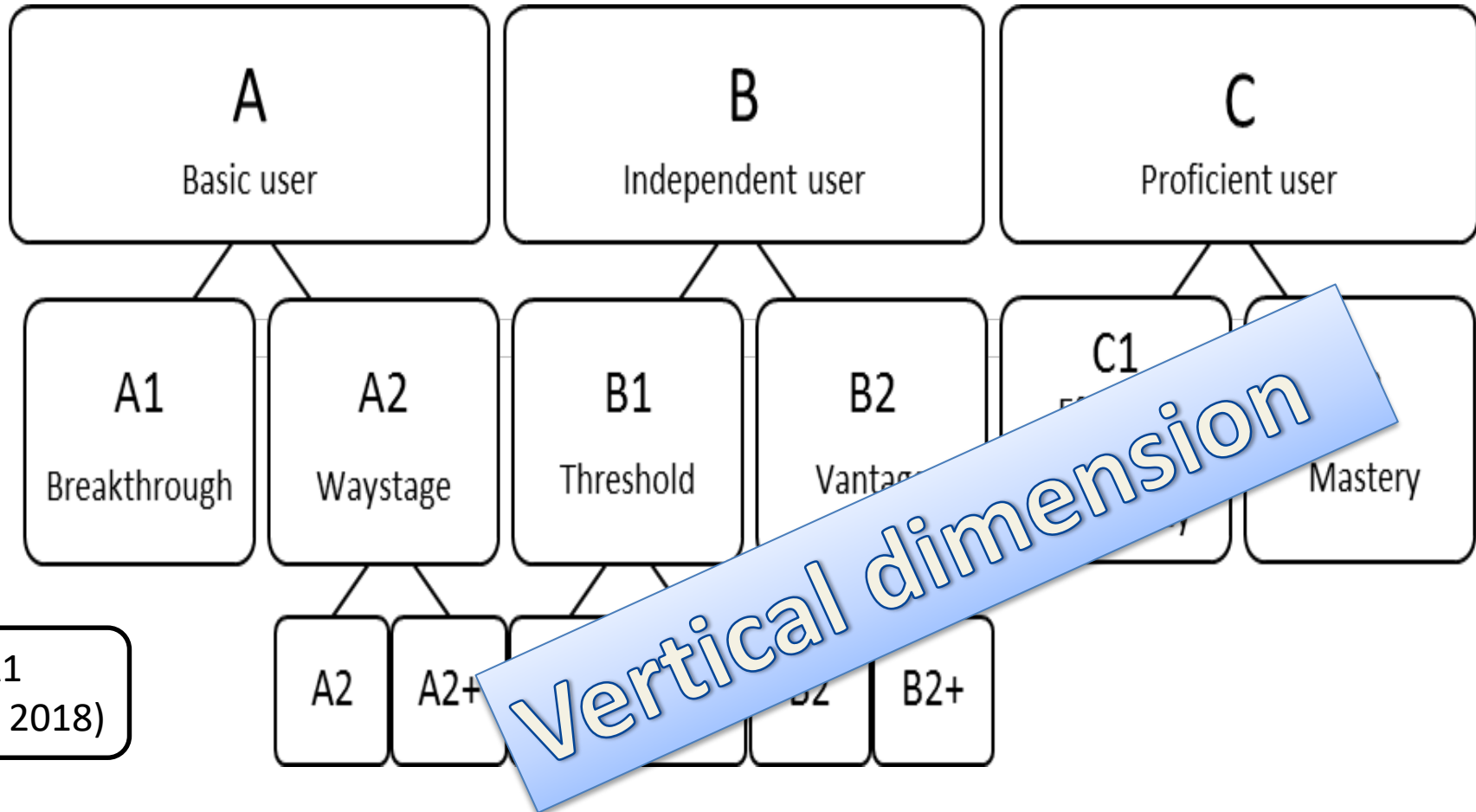
Cambridge English

Is the CEFR only about language assessment? **NO!**

*Common European Framework
of Reference for Languages:
Learning, teaching, assessment*

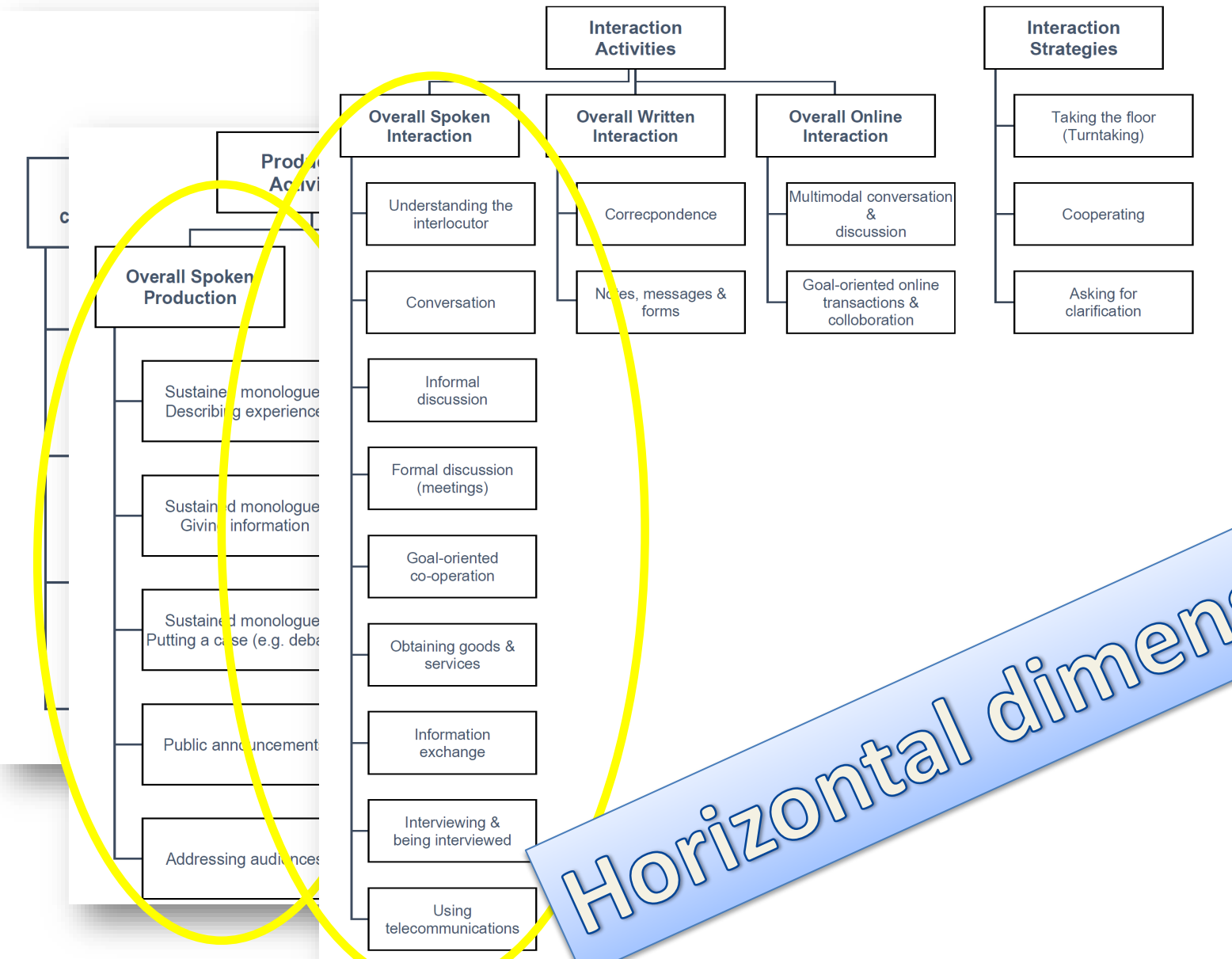
**How would we link a teaching
programme to the CEFR?**

The branching system of levels in the CEFR (based on Council of Europe 2001: 32)



Pre A1
(CoE, 2018)

The structure of the CEFR descriptive scheme (CoE, 2018)



Horizontal dimension

Summary of procedures adopted

Familiarisation

Before the panel: Self-study online; Read relevant CEFR extracts and scales; Descriptor rating via SurveyMoneky

During the panel: Descriptor sorting; Presentations on CEFR and on the course syllabus



Specification

Before the panel: The course tutors/programme director complete CoE forms; CRELLA staff review forms with iterative feedback

During the panel: Panel review claims and judge a relevant CEFR level of each assessment activity



Standardisation/Benchmarking

Before the panel: Applying CEFR scales to CEF-train, CoE and other samples

During the panel: Training in applying CoE and Cambridge English samples; Discussion and consensus building on applying CoE scales to the course samples

Standard setting

During the panel: Independent rating of performance samples using CEFR scales



Validation

Procedural: Qualifications of panellists; Documentation of procedures; Feedback and questionnaire

Internal: Outcomes of Familiarisation; Reliability of judgements; Feedback and questionnaire

In addition...CEFR Chapters 6 and 7

- Programme information was requested based on questions taken from Chapters 6 and 7 of the CEFR (CoE, 2001), in terms of
 - a) its language learning & teaching principles, and
 - b) tasks and their roles in language teaching.

e.g.

Q. What learning approach(es) does the XXX programme follow?

Select one or more approaches (or specify others) from Section 6.4.1 (p.143).

Q. Read Section 6.4.2 (p.144-145) and describe:

what are the relative roles and responsibilities of teachers and learners in the organisation, management, conduct and evaluation of the language-learning process?

Q. Read Section 6.4.7.3 (p.150-151) and describe

- according to which principle(s) lexical selection has been made.

Q. Read Chapter 7 (p.157-165) and briefly describe

- the criteria for selecting tasks which are purposeful and meaningful for the learner

Familiarisation

- **Training activities to ensure participants in linking process have detailed knowledge of CEFR**
- Familiarisation activities:
 - Section 3.6 in the CEFR (English pp. 33–36) describes salient features of levels.
 - Review sample tasks for relevant CEFR level (if available)
 - Sorting descriptors
 - Self-assessment of own language level in a foreign language – using CEFR Table
- Discussion with colleagues

Specification

- Self-audit of coverage of speaking activities profiled in relation to the categories presented in CEFR Chapter 4 “Language use and the language learner” and CEFR Chapter 5 “The user/learner’s competences”.
- As well as serving a **reporting function**, these procedures also have a certain **awareness-raising function** that may assist in further improving the quality of the examination/teaching programme concerned.

2 **TASK INPUT/PROMPT** – Rubric and prompts (verbal, iconic) or other forms of input designed to elicit the required response(s) in the target language.

0	To which task in the component of the information
9	Language of instructions/rubric
10	Instructions spoken or written (channel)
11	Level of language of instructions/rubric
12	Task duration (minutes)
13	Nº. of assessors (tutors) present
14	Recorded?
15	Control/guidance by the task (flexibility of task frame ²)
16	Control/guidance by tutor (flexibility of interlocutor frame ³)
17	Specification of content
18	Interaction type
19	Discourse mode (genre)

3 **RESPONSE (the expected spoken response elicited by the prompt(s)/input)**

26	Length of response expected
27	Text type
28	Rhetorical function(s) CEFR p126
29	Register CEFR p120
30	Domain CEFR p45
31	Grammatical level CEFR, p114
32	Lexical level CEFR, 112
33	Discourse features (e.g. cohesion) CEFR, p125
34	Situational authenticity ⁴
35	Interactional authenticity
36	Cognitive processing ⁵
37	Content knowledge

4 **RATING OF TASK**

Which CEFR activity scales apply?

For each assessment task, choose between A3.2 (Interaction) and A3.3 (Production)

CEFR Linking Manual Form A11: Spoken Interaction

Spoken Interaction	Short description and/or reference		
1. In what contexts (domains, situations, ...) are the learners to show ability? Table 5 in CEFR 4.1 might be of help as a reference.			
2. Which communication themes are the learners expected to be able to handle? The lists in CEFR 4.2 might be of help as a reference.			
3. Which communicative tasks, activities and strategies are the learners expected to be able to handle? The lists in CEFR 4.3, 4.4.2.1, 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 might be of help as a reference.			
4. What kind of texts and text-types are the learners expected to be able to handle? The lists in CEFR 4.6.2 and 4.6.3 might be of help as a reference.			
5. After reading the scale for Overall Spoken Interaction, given below, indicate and justify at which level(s) of the scale the subtest should be situated. The subscales for spoken interaction in CEFR 4.4.3.1 listed after the scale might be of help as a reference.	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Level</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Justification (incl. reference to documentation)</td> </tr> </table>	Level	Justification (incl. reference to documentation)
Level			
Justification (incl. reference to documentation)			

needs

study-related, sometimes

Specification activity during the panel: Task Review

Step 1: Review the assessment task and specification document.

Step 2: Agree on the CEFR level that is most suitable to describe the task. Justify your decision by referring to relevant CEFR descriptors.

Agreed CEFR level	Justification (please write down relevant CEFR scales, levels and keywords)		
	Scale	Level	Keywords

Example task (modified from Doff et al., 2015: 94)

Discuss the statements below with your partner.
Which advice do you think is most relevant? Why?

The reason people get into financial trouble is that they're not taught how to manage personal finance. This needs to be introduced as a subject in school.



Financial experts tend to oversell the need to save money. They forget that people need to enjoy life and that often means

Agreed CEFR level	Justification (please write down relevant CEFR scales, levels and keywords)		
	Scale	Level	Keywords
B2	Information exchange	B1+	Can exchange, check and confirm accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence.
	Overall spoken interaction	B2	Can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanations and arguments.
	Informal discussion	B2+	Can express his/her ideas and opinions with precision, present and respond to complex lines of argument convincingly.

Content coverage of textbooks (example)

		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Interaction Activities	Overall Spoken Interaction	√	√		√	
	Understanding an Interlocutor		√			
	Conversation	√	√			
	Informal Discussion		√	√		√
	Formal Discussion (Meetings)				√	√
	Goal-oriented Co-operation		√	√		
	Obtaining Goods and Services				√	
	Information Exchange	√	√			
	Interviewing & Being Interviewed			√		

Is this in line with the students' communication needs?

Standard setting

Data:

CEFR ratings given by the panel members to each of a collection of students' performances (Both CiEP performances and actual students' performances)



Anchoring (Linacre, 2013) using:

- cut-off logit value for each CEFR level (North & Jones, 2009)
- ability measure value for each CiEP sample (North, 2016, personal communication)

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THANK YOU!

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