

**Familiarization of English and French student teachers
with Council recommendations (CEFR) for developing language assessment
literacy (Ukrainian context)**

Olga Ukrayinska

PhD (FLT), Associate Professor, Kharkiv Skovoroda National Pedagogical University,

Doctoral student, Kyiv National Linguistic University

Ukraine

Targeted group of learners: master's degree students (English and French)
approximately 85-150 students per year
since 2009

Ultimate goal: to develop classroom language assessment literacy

Objective: to build competency in designing

- tasks for assessing reading, listening, speaking and writing skills of the students of the 1st – 4th years (Foreign Languages Department)
- speaking and writing rating scales
- self- and peer assessment grids for speaking and writing
in compliance with CEFR descriptors across levels B2-C1

Reference materials under consideration:

- European Language Portfolio: Guide for Teachers..., 2001
- The Common European Framework of Reference, 2001, 2018
- A training Guide for Quality Assurance in Language Education, 2007
- Developing and assessing intercultural communicative competence..., 2007
- European Language Portfolio – Adult version, 2007
- Evaluation and assessment within the domain of Language(s) of Education, 2007
- Insights from the Common European Framework, 2007
- DVD “Spoken performances illustrating the 6 levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages”, 2008
- Relating language examinations to the Common Framework of Reference for Languages..., 2009, 2011
- Guidelines for task-based university language testing, 2011
- Pathways through assessing, learning and teaching in the CEFR, 2011
- Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages, 2011
- Manual for Language Test Development and Examining, 2011
- etc.

Constraints:

- time limit
- students' limited professional experience
- lack of understating of importance
- low motivation in self-assessment

Requirements to activities:

- student-oriented
- practical
- interactive
- curriculum-based
- fitting the local context

Knowledge to acquire:

- the role of the CEFR
- its basic terminology
- descriptive rating scales
- ways of employment of the CEFR

Skills to develop:

- how to discriminate between the different CEFR levels
- how to align classroom tests with the CEFR (tasks / scales)

Stages:

- familiarization with the role of the CEFRL, basic terminology, the 6 main levels (comprehension and production scales)
- application of CAN-DO statements

Common activities to internalize the CEFR:

- ordering (jumbled descriptors)
- gap-filling (filling descriptors with adjectives, adverbs, verbs)
- matching (matching descriptors to skills, assigning levels to sample performances)
- self-assessment

Activities to internalize the CEFR vocabulary:

- matching,
- supplying antonyms / synonyms,
- grouping,
- grading,
- collocation grids,
- odd man out

Collocation grid. Find the nouns in the descriptors that collocate with the following adjectives.

Adjective	Noun
complex	texts, writings
familiar	words, matters, ...
active	vocabulary
different	texts, purposes, ...
subtle	distinctions

True/False (sample for Cooperating grid):

- By repeating back we are trying to make other people change their mind. (*F*)
- We help steer the interaction towards an outcome by repeating what the others said. (*F*)
- Low level FL speakers normally confirm their understanding of what other people say. (*T*)

Multiple choice (sample for Taking the floor grid):

‘Can intervene appropriately’ means that the speaker ...

A can round off the conversation

B can take his/her turn politely when needed

C can initiate a conversation with a stranger

Matching activities:

- matching jobs to levels

(history teacher, English teacher (school teacher, lecturer), pilot, waiter, the President's interpreter, visiting lecturer, IT project manager, software developer, journalist, computational linguist, ...)

- assigning sample performances to levels (different people, the same person)
- matching activities to levels

(writing an article to a journal, application letter, commenting in Instagram, ...)

- matching audios and videos to levels
- matching the descriptors of actual rating scales to levels
- matching skills to levels

Checklist Method

- numerous checklists
- filled by a student, their peer, the teacher
- to guide + to evaluate
- effective but not efficient

Challenge:

- elaboration of descriptors in the horizontal dimension
- one year – one target level
- need to assess the progress through the year
- not just pass/fail
- collect enough evidence

Data collection

Self-assessment: Overall Speaking Production
(Curriculum target level: C1)

Level CEFR – Number of students

- C2 – 2
- C1 – 2
- B2 – 13
- B1 – 6
- A2 – 12
- A1 – 6

Self-assessment: Overall Speaking Interaction
(Curriculum target level: B2)

Level CEFR – Number of students

- C2 – 1
- C1 – 3
- B2 – 1
- B1 – 13
- A2 – 15
- A1 – 10

Retrieving components from the descriptors

(sample for *Overall Listening Comprehension*: factors contributing to the difficulty of listening tasks)

Audiotext characteristics	Vocabulary Grammar Subject Nature Type of discourse Prepared / spontaneous
Conditions of audiotext provision	Speed Speakers' articulation Pauses Volume Language Mode of delivery Duration Number of audio text delivery Clarity of sounding Visual aids
Speakers' characteristics	Origin Sex Age Number of speakers
Task characteristics	Task format Type of task

FACTORS	Lower level of proficiency	Higher level of proficiency
AUDIOTEXT CHARACTERISTICS		
Vocabulary		
everyday		
shared international vocabulary		
idiomatic expressions		
colloquial		

Retrieving components from the descriptors
(sample for *Overall Reading Comprehension*)

- Length
- Complexity
- Vocabulary
- Subject
- Nature
- Degree of independence

Students' remarks

- Understanding conversation between other speakers: *'Can identify the sociocultural implications of most of the language used in colloquial discussions that take place at a natural speed'*
- Listening as a member of a live audience
- Listening to announcement and instructions: *'Can extract specific information from poor quality, audibly distorted public announcements, e.g. in a station, sports stadium'*
- Reading instructions: *'Can understand ... instructions on a new machine ... not relate to his/her area of specialty'*
- Sustained monologue: *'Can give clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable descriptions'*

Conclusion:

- guided familiarization (plans, prompting questions, TLU situations)
- training needed
- detailed scheme of application
- less theory more practice

Thank you!