



Relating language curricula, tests and examinations  
to the Common European Framework of Reference  
(RELANG)

# CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors (CV)

This initiative is carried out within the framework of the **Innovative Methodologies and Assessment in Language Learning** cooperation agreement between the European Centre for Modern Languages and the European Commission  
[www.ecml.at/ec-cooperation](http://www.ecml.at/ec-cooperation)



## Focus in the CV Project

To update the CEFR illustrative descriptors by:

- Highlighting CEFR areas for which no descriptor scales had yet been provided, especially mediation and plurilingual/pluricultural competence.
- Extended definition of 'plus levels' and a new 'Pre-A1' level.
- More elaborate description of listening and reading in existing scales.
- Enriching the description at A1, and at the C levels, particularly C2.

# CEFR Illustrative Descriptor Scales

- Pre-A1 represents a ‘milestone’ half way towards Level A1, a band of proficiency at which the learner has not yet acquired a generative capacity, but relies upon a repertoire of words and formulaic expressions.
- Extended descriptor scales for mediation, given the increasing relevance of this area in education. Descriptors for exploiting plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires were also added.
- For *Phonological Control* a completely new set of descriptors was developed.

# Pre-A1 level Descriptors

The following descriptors relate to simple, general tasks, which were scaled below Level A1 (Pre-A1), but can constitute useful objectives for beginners:

- can make simple purchases where pointing or other gesture can support the verbal reference;
- can ask and tell day, time of day and date;
- can use some basic greetings;
- can say yes, no, excuse me, please, thank you, sorry;
- can fill in uncomplicated forms with personal details, name, address, nationality, marital status;
- can write a short, simple postcard'. (CEFR Section 3.5)

# Mediation

- Treatment of mediation in the CEFR is not limited to cross-linguistic mediation, passing on information in another language.
- Some aspects of the mediation scales, particularly at lower levels, are reminiscent of the kinds of activities described in existing CEFR scales. This is because some aspects of mediation are already present in the original illustrative descriptor scales.

# Mediation Scales (1)

## Mediation strategies

- Linking to previous knowledge
- Breaking down complicated information
- Adapting language
- Elaborating a dense text
- Streamlining a text

## Mediating communication

- Facilitating pluricultural space
- Acting as an intermediary
- Facilitating communication in delicate situations / disputes

# Mediation Scales (2)

## Mediating concepts

- Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers
- Collaborating to construct meaning
- Managing interaction
- Encouraging conceptual thought

## Mediating a text

- Relaying specific information
- Explaining data (e.g. in graphs)
- Processing text
- Translating written text
- Listening & note-taking
- Expressing a personal response to creative text (including literature)
- Analysis and criticism of creative text (including literature)

## Pluricultural Competence.

The practical functional ability to exploit plurilingualism. Example at B2:

- *Can make use of different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire during collaborative interaction, in order to clarify the nature of a task, the main steps, the decisions to be taken, the outcomes expected.*

Might be presented as:

- *Can make use of English, Spanish and French during collaborative interaction, in order to clarify the nature of a task, the main steps, the decisions to be taken, the outcomes expected.*

# Plurilingual Comprehension

The practical functional ability to exploit plurilingualism for comprehension. Example at B1:

- *Can deduce the message of a text by exploiting what he/she has understood from texts on the same theme written in different languages (e.g. news in brief, museum brochure, online reviews)*

Might be presented as:

- *Can deduce the message of a text in German by exploiting what he/she has understood from texts on the same theme written in French and English (e.g. news in brief, museum brochure, online reviews.)*

## Building on Plurilingual Repertoire

The practical functional ability to exploit plurilingualism. For example the B2 descriptor:

- *Can make use of different languages in his/her plurilingual repertoire during collaborative interaction, in order to clarify the nature of a task, the main steps, the decisions to be taken, the outcomes expected.*

Might be presented as:

- *Can make use of English, Spanish and French during collaborative interaction, in order to clarify the nature of a task, the main steps, the decisions to be taken, the outcomes expected.*

# Profiles

## A Proficiency Profile - overall proficiency in one language

SPANISH	Pre-A1	A1	A2	A2+	B1	B1+	B2	B2+	C1
Listening comprehension									
Reading comprehension									
Spoken interaction									
Written interaction									
Spoken production									
Written production									
Mediation									

**Figure 9 – A proficiency profile – overall proficiency in one language**

## Defining curriculum aims

- **Step 1:** Select the *descriptor scales* that are relevant to the needs of the group of learners concerned.
- **Step 2:** Determine a *target level* for each relevant descriptor scale, the level on the scale(s) selected that the learners should reach.
- **Step 3:** Collate the descriptors for the target level(s) from all the relevant scales into a list. This gives the very first draft of a set of communicative aims.
- **Step 4:** Refine the list, possibly in discussion with the stakeholders.