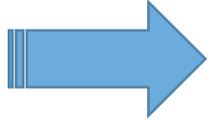


Assessment in L2: historical perspectives and current research

Enrica Piccardo
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Plan of my presentation



- Second language learning and teaching... and assessment?
- Lost in assessment? the CEFR as a possible compass
- Curricular planning, definition of objectives and assessment: a triadic relationship
- Criteria and descriptors: creating a trail of evidence
- Objectivity and responsibility in assessment: the teacher, the learners or both?
- Conclusion: role and place of assessment: 'coming full circle'

Teaching and assessment : separate or connected?

Language teaching: a 50-century old activity

- Reflection on teaching methods since the end of the 19th century
- Scientific/scholarly research on teaching methodologies over half a century old

Assessing: also a very old endeavor but....

- Reflection on testing
- Teach first assess later
- Assessment in the pedagogical action: the elephant in the room

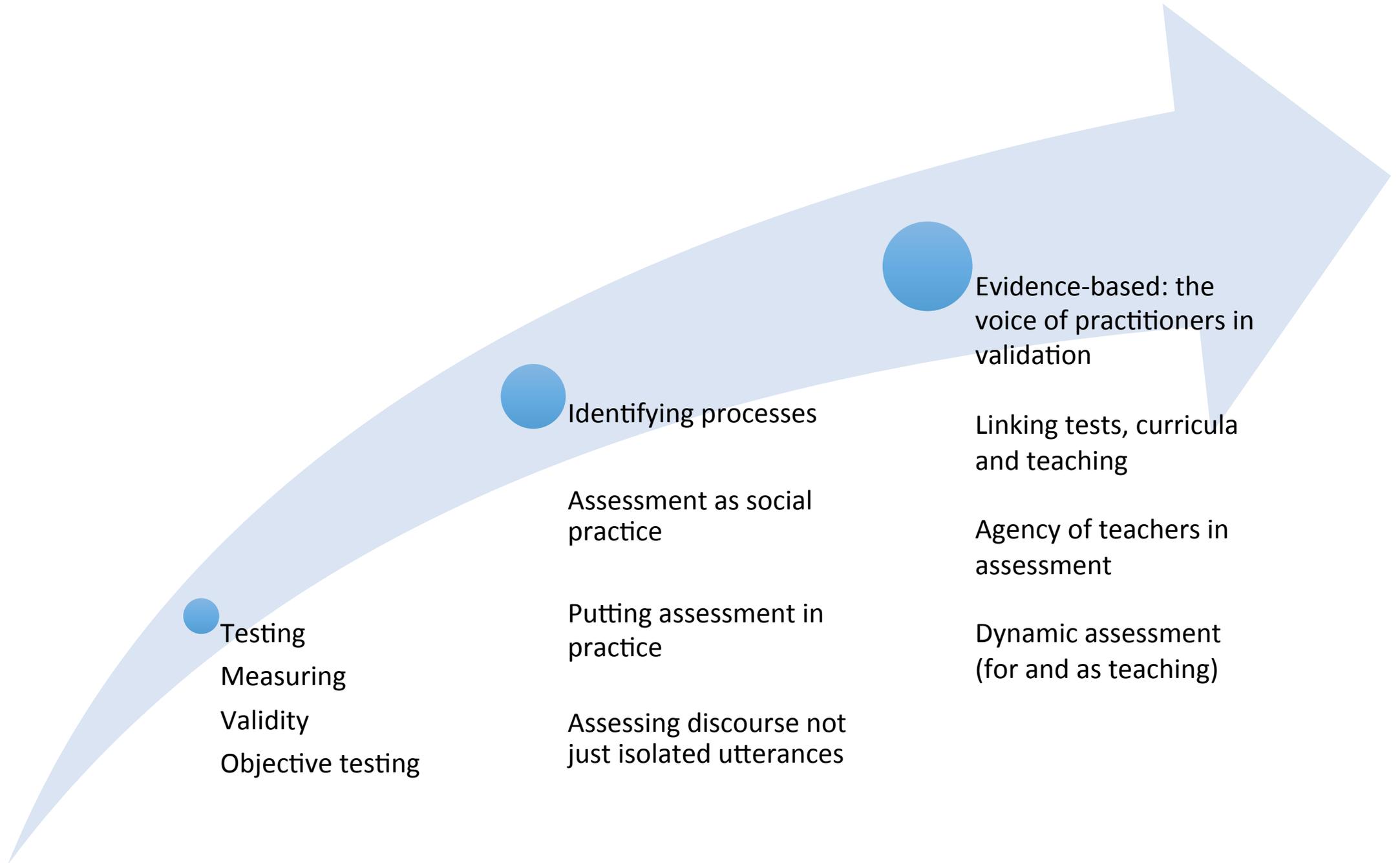
Not only measuring, testing, classifying, pass or fail.....

- Assessment was conceived in relation to selection > tests and exams
- Shift in the late 80s
- Since the 90s it has become central to pedagogical reflection
- It is presently conceived as a way of guiding/scaffolding and enhancing/optimizing learning

Some fundamental publications in L2 assessment

- Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Spolsky, B. (1995). *Measured words: The development of objective language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McNamara, T. (1996). *Measuring second language performance*. London: Longman.
- Chapelle, C. (1999). Validity in language assessment. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 19, 254-272.
- McNamara, T. (2001). Language assessment as social practice: Challenges for research. *Language Testing*, 18(4), 333-349.
- Rea-Dickins, P. (2001). Mirror, mirror on the wall: Identifying processes of classroom assessment. *Language Testing*, 18(4) 429-462.
- McNamara, T. (2002). Discourse and assessment. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 22, 221-242.
- Rea-Dickins, P. (2004). Understanding teachers as agents of assessment. *Language Testing*, 21(3), 249-258.
- Weir, C. J. (2005). *Language testing and validation: An evidence based approach*. Houndsmill, UK: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Leung, C. (2007). Dynamic assessment: Assessment for and as teaching. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 4(3), 257-278.
- Cumming, A. (2009). Language assessment in education: Tests, curricula and teaching. In B. Spolsky (Ed.), *Language policy and assessment*. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 29, 90-100.
- Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. S. (2010). *Language assessment in practice* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*.
- Spolsky, B. (1995). *Measured words: The development of objective language testing*.
- McNamara, T. (1996). *Measuring second language performance*.
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Testing

Measuring

Validity

Objective testing



Identifying processes

Assessment as social practice

Putting assessment in practice

Assessing discourse not just isolated utterances



Evidence-based: the voice of practitioners in validation

Linking tests, curricula and teaching

Agency of teachers in assessment

Dynamic assessment (for and as teaching)

The shift in the 90s not only in L2 assessment

- A sense of frustration vis-à-vis assessment as pure measuring, testing, classifying, pass or fail.....
- The Assessment Reform Group (ARG) (1989 – 2010): study of the implications of assessment policy and practice
- Summative assessment: just one of the functions (William & Black, 1996)
- Focus on achievement and motivation (Perrenoud, 1991; Weston, 1991)
- **Growing awareness of complexity of assessment**

The classroom as a black box?

A growing need for transparency and awareness



Inside the black box (Black & William, 1998)

Assessment for learning: Beyond the Black Box (ARG, 1999)

Working inside the Black Box: assessment for learning in the classroom (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall & William, 2002)

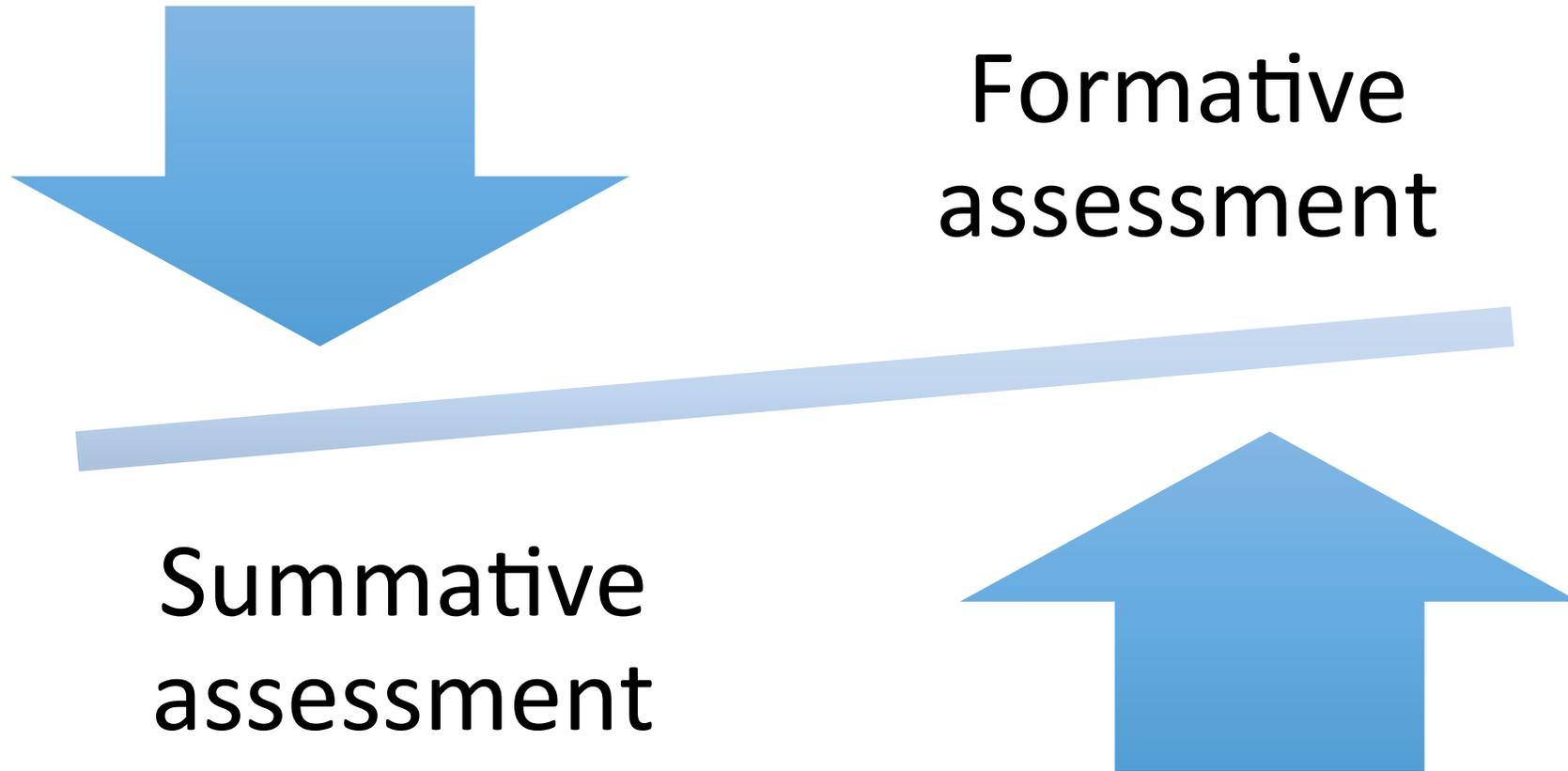
Inhibiting factors (ARG, 1999: 5)

- a tendency for teachers to **assess quantity of work** rather than the quality of learning;
- greater attention to **marking and grading** than to providing advice for improvement > risk of lowering self-esteem;
- emphasis on **comparing pupils** with each other > risk of demoralization;
- teachers' **feedback** to pupils **for managerial purposes** rather than for more effective learning;
- teachers **not knowing** enough about their pupils' **learning needs**.

Characteristics of assessment that promotes learning (ARG, 1999: 7)

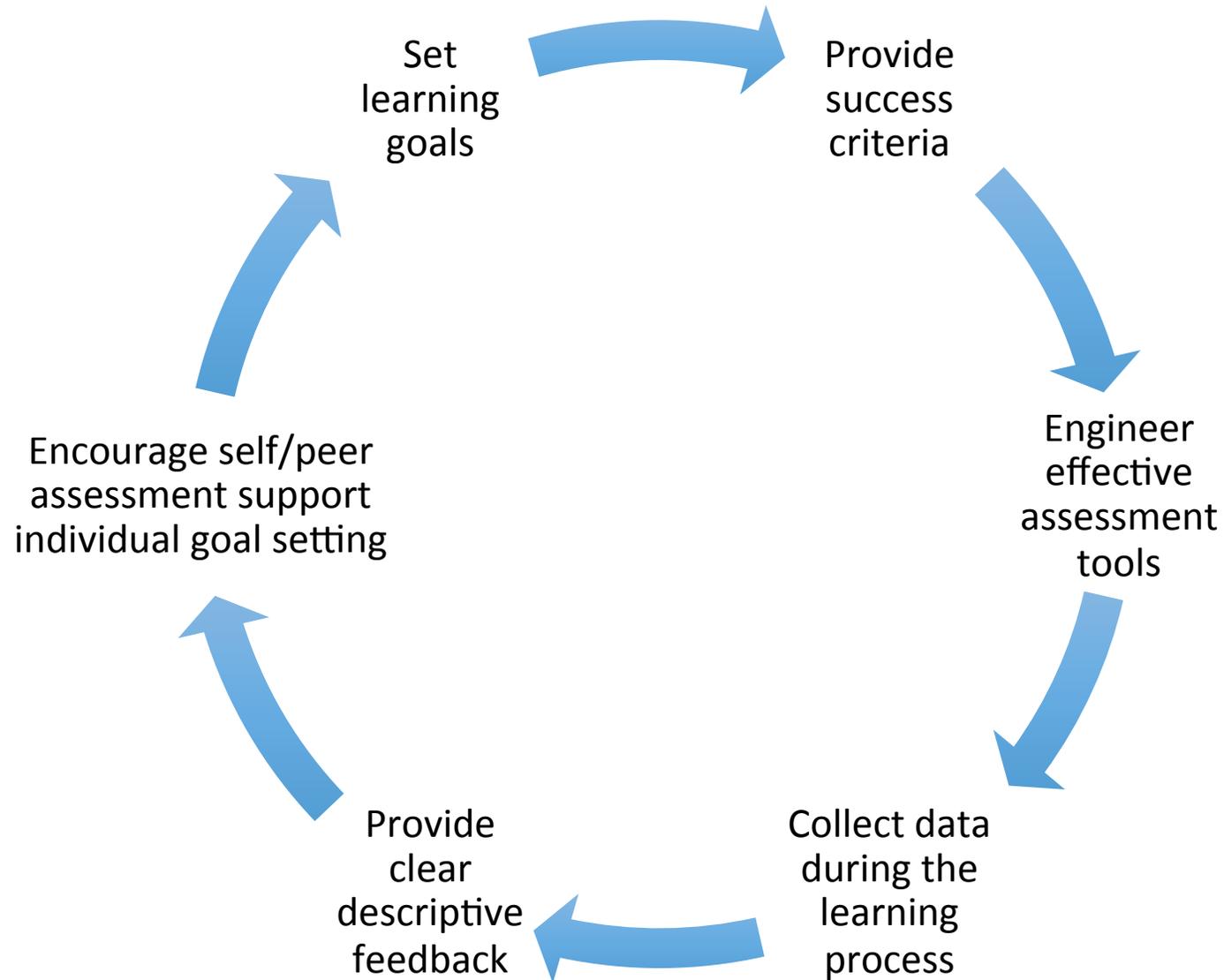
- it is **embedded in** a view of **teaching and learning** of which it is an essential part;
- it involves **sharing learning** goals with pupils;
- it aims to **help pupils to know and to recognize the standards** they are aiming for;
- it involves pupils in **self-assessment**;
- it provides feedback which leads to **pupils recognizing their next steps** and how to take them;
- it is underpinned by confidence that **every student can improve**;
- it involves both teacher and pupils **reviewing and reflecting on assessment data**.

Raising awareness of the value of formative assessment



Formative assessment is not a 'quick fix'!

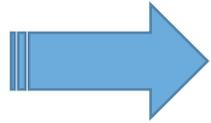
Away from the linear vision of assessment: a participatory, cyclical process



Purpose of assessment	Nature of assessment	Use of information gathered
<p>Assessment for learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there (ARG, 2002: 2)</p>	<p>Diagnostic: To <u>gather information before</u> the teaching/learning process starts about proficiency level, knowledge and learning styles, to respond to students' needs.</p>	<p>to determine what students already know in relation to expectations, in order for teachers to plan appropriate and realistic learning goals and to plan support if necessary</p>
	<p>Formative : <u>To gather information during</u> the teaching/learning process. Can be more or less formal and ongoing</p>	<p>to monitor students' progress, provide timely and targeted feedback, receive feedback on the instruction process</p>
	<p>Formative: <u>frequent and ongoing</u>, with support, modelling, and guidance from the teacher</p>	<p><u>Used by students</u> for peer-assessment, self-assessment and self-monitoring, reflect on their learning, foster autonomy</p>
<p>Assessment of learning focuses on the achievement level, has a reporting function (certifications, tests, reporting card). It often is high stake for learners</p>	<p>Summative: <u>at the end of a period of learning</u>. May be used to inform further instruction.</p>	<p>To provide a summary of the learning at a given time. To make a judgment, to assign a value, to report inside and outside the school.</p>

Purpose of assessment	Nature of assessment	Use of information gathered
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<p>Assessment as learning focuses on the explicit fostering of students' capacity over time to be their own best assessors (Western and Northern Canadian Protocol, p. 42)</p>	<p>Formative: frequent and ongoing, with support, modelling, and guidance from the teacher</p>	<p>Used by students for peer-assessment, self-assessment and self-monitoring, reflect on their learning, foster autonomy</p>
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Plan of my presentation



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Tools able to help teachers in the complexity of assessment: Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) & Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)

- **ΧΛΒ:** αξσεσμεντ τοολ, πυβλισηεδ ιν 1996, υπδατεδ ιν 2012, οφφιχιαλλψ υσεδ βψ Ιμμιγρατιον Χαναδα (εξιστο αλσο α χορρεσπονδεντ ΝΧΛΧ φορ Φρενχη ασ α Σεχονδ Λανγυαγε)
- Χονσιστο οφ 3 μαχρολεπελο, συβδιωιδεδ ιντο 4 λεπελο εαχη
- Προπιδεο γενεραλ προφιλε οφ τηε λεπελ, δεσχριπτορσ φορ 4 σκιλλο, σπεχιφιχατιον οφ κνωωλεδγε (γραμματιχαλ, τεξτυαλ, φυνχτιοναλ ανδ σοχιολινγυιστιχ) ανδ οφ στρατεγιχ χομπετενχε πλυσ εξαμπλεο οφ τασκο
- **ΧΕΦΡ:** τοολ προπιδινγ δεσχριπτιπε σχημε φορ λανγυαγε λεαρνινγ/ τεαχηινγ/αξσεσμεντ χρεατεδ 1994–1996, πυβλισηεδ ιν 2001, εξιστο ιν 40 λανγυαγεο, υσεδ εξτενσιωελψ ιν Ευροπεαν (ανδ νον– Ευροπεαν)χουντριεο, ιο βεινγ ιντροδυχεδ ιν Χαναδα
- Προφιχιενχψ οργανιζεδ ιντο 3 μαχρολεπελο ανδ συβδιωιδεδ ιντο 2 λεπελο εαχη (+ φυρτηερ βρανχηινγ)
- Προπιδεο γενεραλ προφιλε οφ τηε λεπελ, δεσχριπτορσ φορ χομμυνιχατιπε αχτιπιτιεο ανδ χομπετενχεο αλονγσιδε χονχεπτυαλ ανδ μετηοδολογιχαλ δισχυσσιον

The CEFR as a compass

CEFR: Contexts of Use

Certifications

Assessment

Education

Pedagogy



The CEFR organizes second/foreign language proficiency

- Around **six levels**, in turn referring to three macrolevels (basic/independent/proficient user)

A1

A2

B1

B2

C1

C2

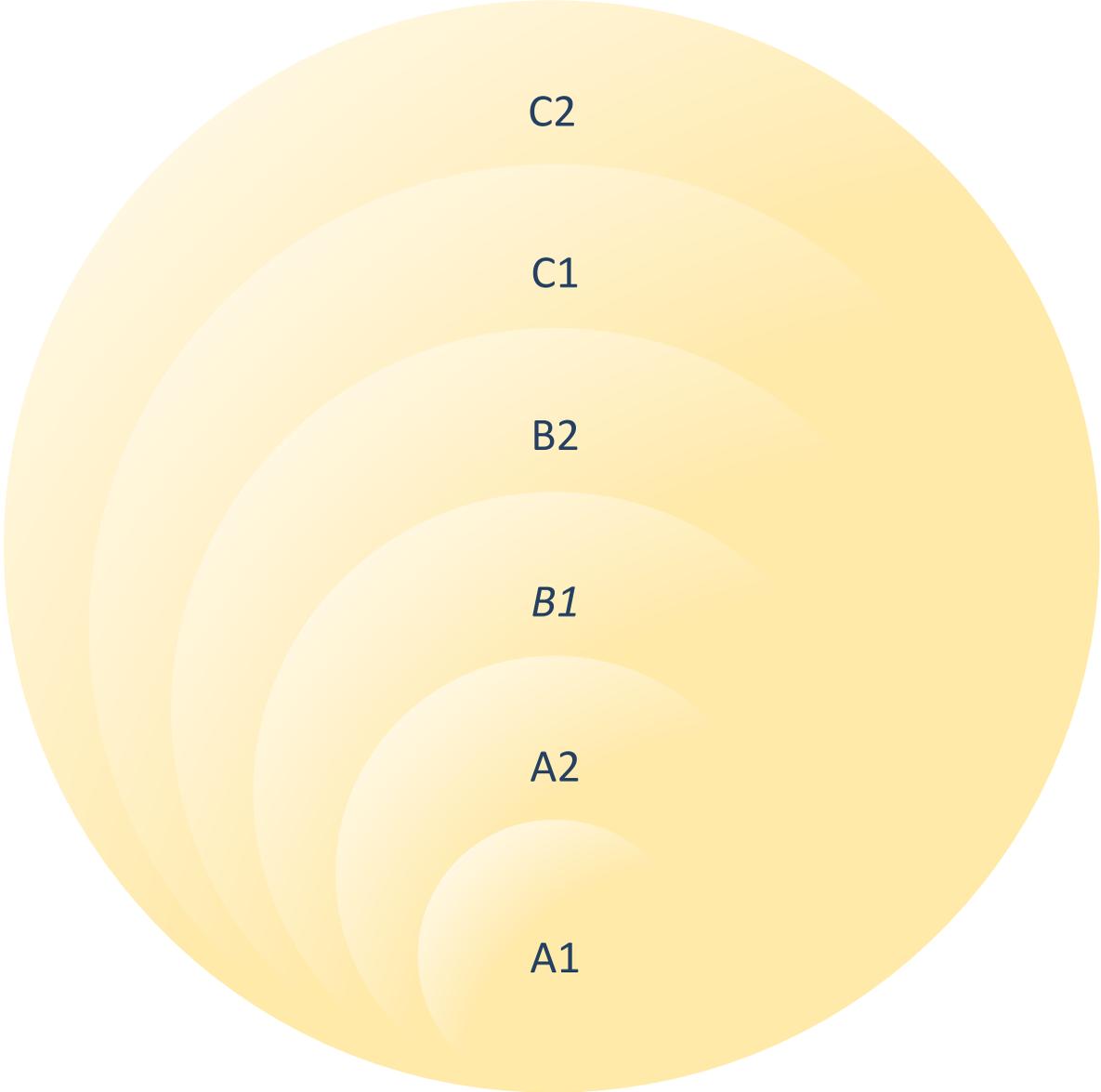
- in the form of “**can do**” statements
- used for describing activities of **comprehension, production, interaction and mediation**, both written and oral
- accomplished in real-life **tasks**
- to which different **competences** (both linguistic and general) contribute

CEFR: the global scale

C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

	immediate need.
A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.



C2

C1

B2

B1

A2

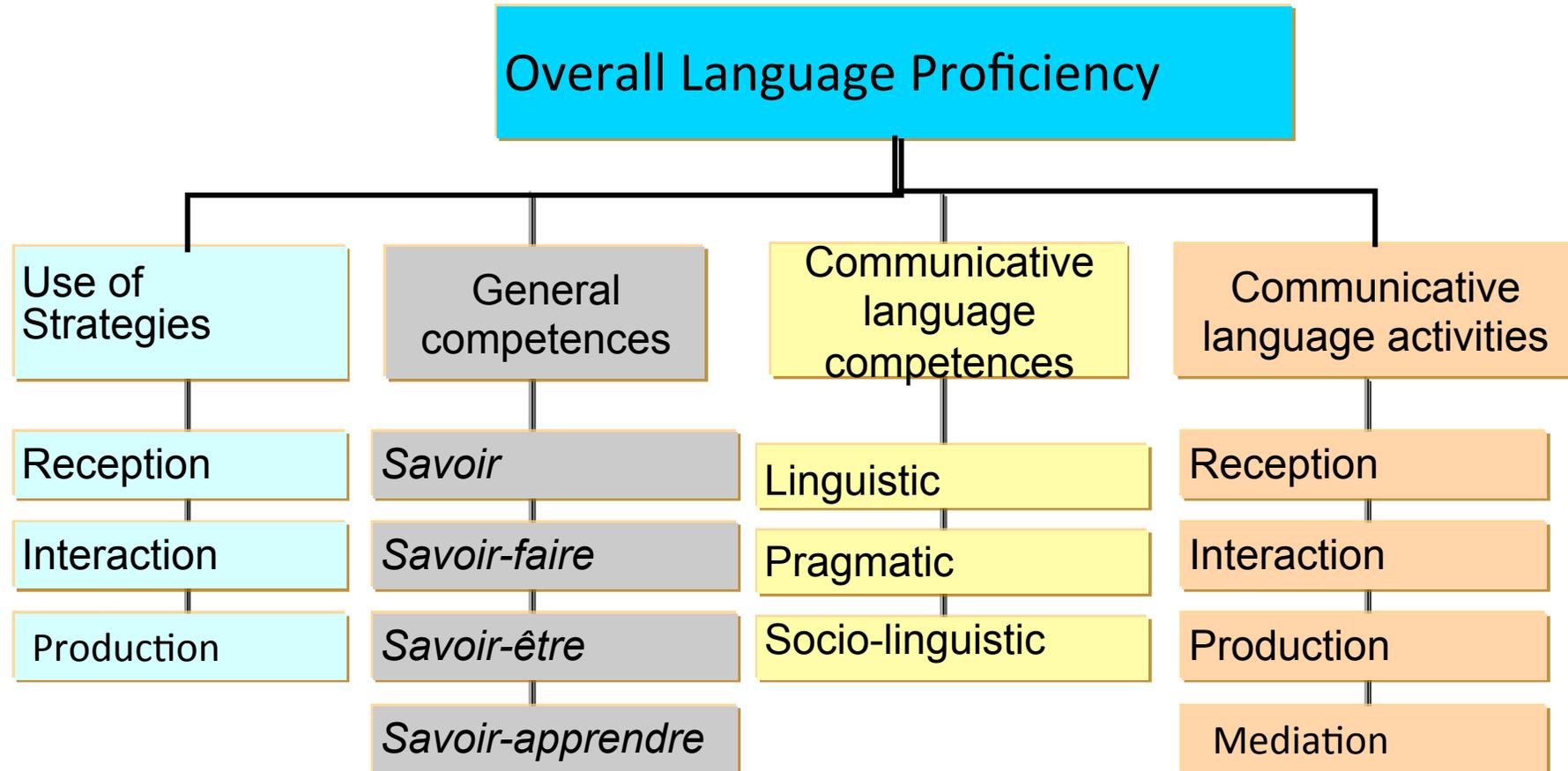
A1

Self-assessment grid

	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Understanding  Listening	I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
 Reading	I can understand familiar words and very simple texts, for example notices and catalogues.				I can understand extended and complex texts, appreciating simple to complex arguments and longer technical texts when they do	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
Speaking  Spoken interaction	I can interact in a simple way with people whose first language is not mine, provided the other person is prepared to help me. I can rephrase things at a slower rate if I do not understand what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate personal interest in areas of immediate personal interest.				I can interact fluently and spontaneously on most topics without much obvious preparation. I can use a range of expressions to describe experiences and opinions. I can express my views and opinions on most topics.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
 Spoken production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.				I can present clear, detailed descriptions of people, places and objects integrating relevant information and presenting it with an appropriate style.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
Writing  Writing	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

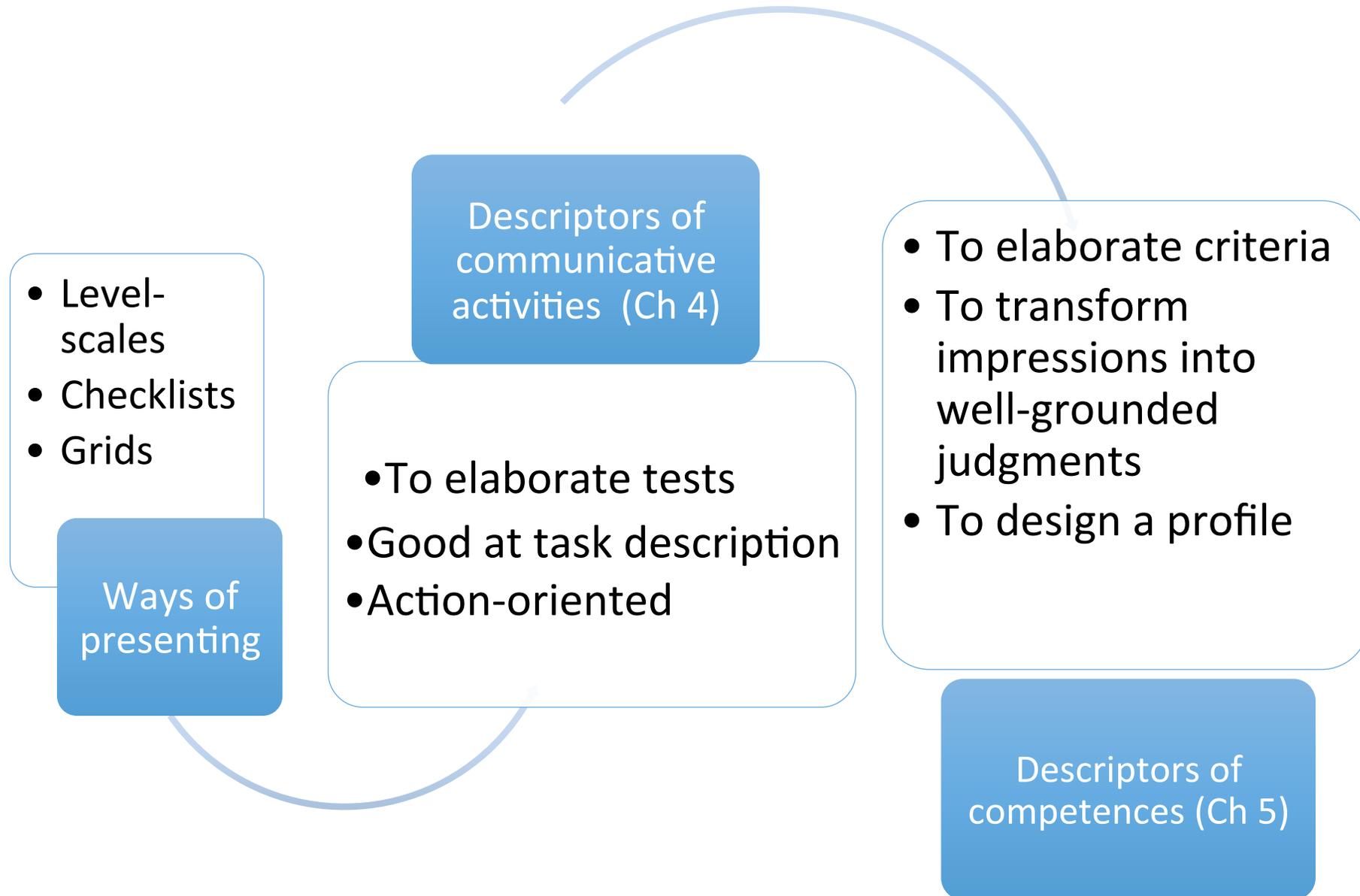
I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).

CEFR: descriptive scheme



Main uses of assessment

- To specify the content of tests
- To formulate criteria capable of discriminating
- To describe levels allowing comparison
- **What** is assessed
- **How to interpret** the performance
- **How to compare**



Assessment tools and resources

- [Global scales](#) of levels
- Descriptors of [communicative activities](#)
- Descriptors of [competences](#)
- Grids with [combined](#) ([selected](#)) criteria
- [Checklists](#)
- ...and also:
 - Descriptors of [strategies](#)
 - [Empty grids](#) to visualise profiles

	OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION
C2	<i>Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured speech with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.</i>
C1	<i>Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.</i>
B2	<i>Can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.</i>
	<i>Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.</i>
B1	<i>Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within his/her field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.</i>
A2	<i>Can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes, etc. as a short series of simple phrases and sentences linked into a list.</i>
A1	<i>Can produce simple mainly isolated phrases about people and places.</i>

Table 3. *Common Reference Levels: qualitative aspects of spoken language use*

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY	INTERACTION	COHERENCE
C2	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity. Also has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.	Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions).	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly. Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turntaking, referencing, allusion making, etc.	Can create coherent and cohesive discourse making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of connectors and other cohesive devices.
C1	Has a good command of a broad range of language allowing him/her to select a formulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style on a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare, difficult to spot and generally corrected when they do occur.	Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.	Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his remarks in order to get or to keep the floor and to relate his/her own contributions skilfully to those of other speakers.	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B2+					

Self-assessment Checklist

Level **B1** **2**
3.3

Language: _____

Use this checklist to record what you think you can do (Column 1). Ask someone else, for example your teacher, to also assess what they think you can do (Column 2). Use Column 3 to mark those things that you cannot yet do which you feel are important for you (Column 3 = Objectives). Add to the list – perhaps with your teacher – other things that you can do, or that are important for your language learning at this level.

Use the following symbols:

In columns 1 and 2

✓ I can do this under normal circumstances

✓✓ I can do this easily

In column 3

! This is an objective for me

!! This is a priority for me

If you have over 80% of the points ticked, you have probably reached Level B1.



Listening

I can follow clearly articulated speech directed at me in everyday conversation, though I sometimes have to ask for repetition of particular words and phrases.

I can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around me, provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect.

I can listen to a short narrative and form hypotheses about what will happen next.

I can understand the main points of radio news bulletins and simpler recorded material on topics of personal interest delivered relatively slowly and clearly.

I can catch the main points in TV programmes on familiar topics when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.

I can understand simple technical information, such as operating instructions for everyday equipment.



Reading

I can understand the main points in short newspaper articles about current and familiar topics.

I can read columns or interviews in newspapers and magazines in which someone takes a stand on a current topic or event and understand the overall meaning of the text.

I can guess the meaning of single unknown words from the context thus deducing the meaning of expressions if the topic is familiar.

I can skim short texts (for example news summaries) and find relevant facts and information (for example who has done what and where).

I can understand the most important information in short simple everyday information brochures.

I can understand simple messages and standard letters (for example from businesses, clubs or authorities).

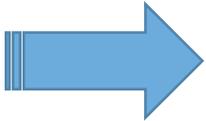
In private letters I can understand those parts dealing with events, feelings and wishes well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.

I can understand the plot of a clearly structured story and recognise what the most important episodes and events are and what is significant about them.

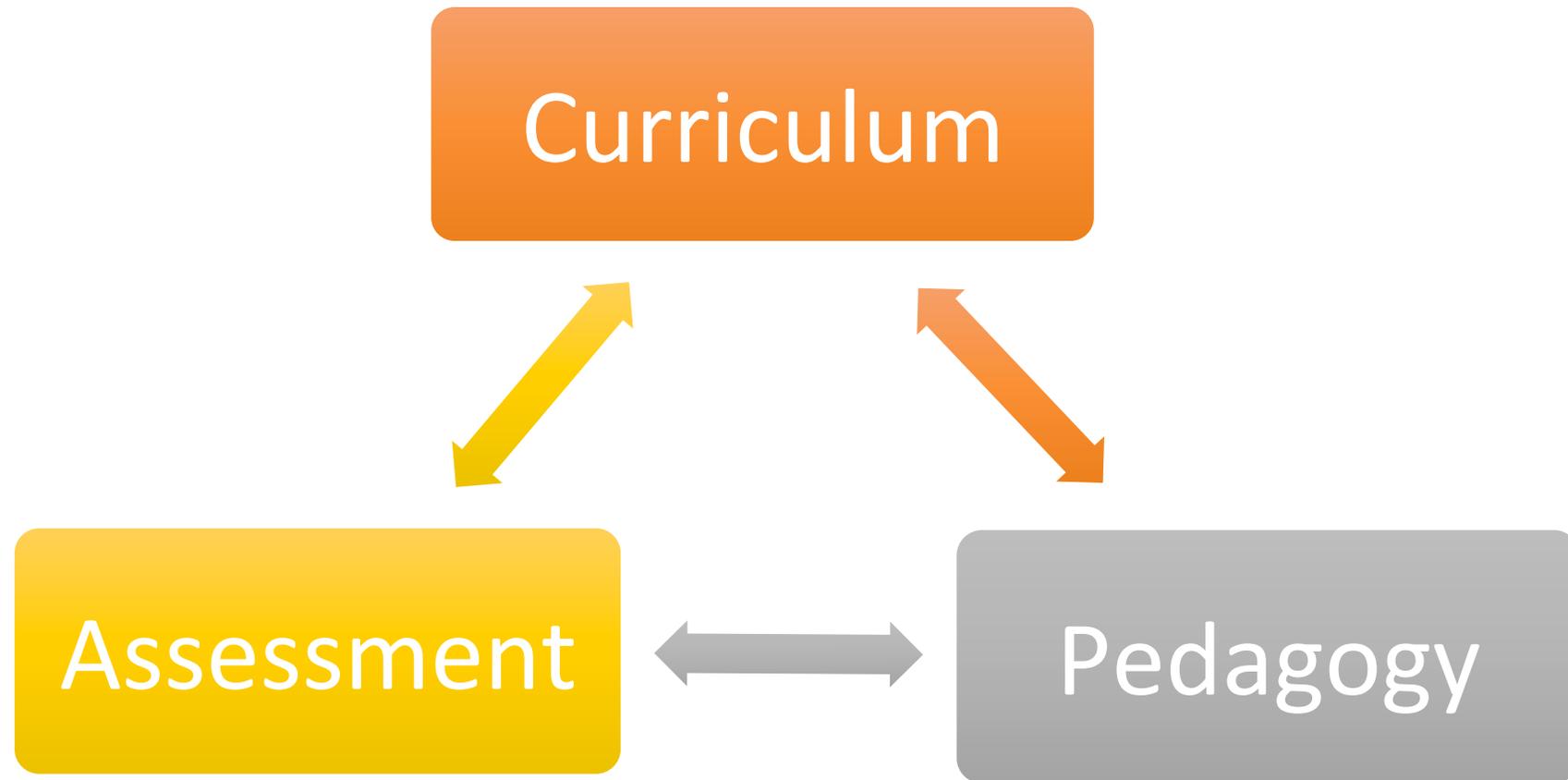
	Me	My teacher/another	My objectives
	1	2	3
Listening			
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I can generally follow the main points of extended discussion around me, provided speech is clearly articulated in standard dialect.			
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I can understand the most important information in short simple everyday information brochures.			
I can understand simple messages and standard letters (for example from businesses, clubs or authorities).			
In private letters I can understand those parts dealing with events, feelings and wishes well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.			
I can understand the plot of a clearly structured story and recognise what the most important episodes and events are and what is significant about them.			

Plan of my presentation

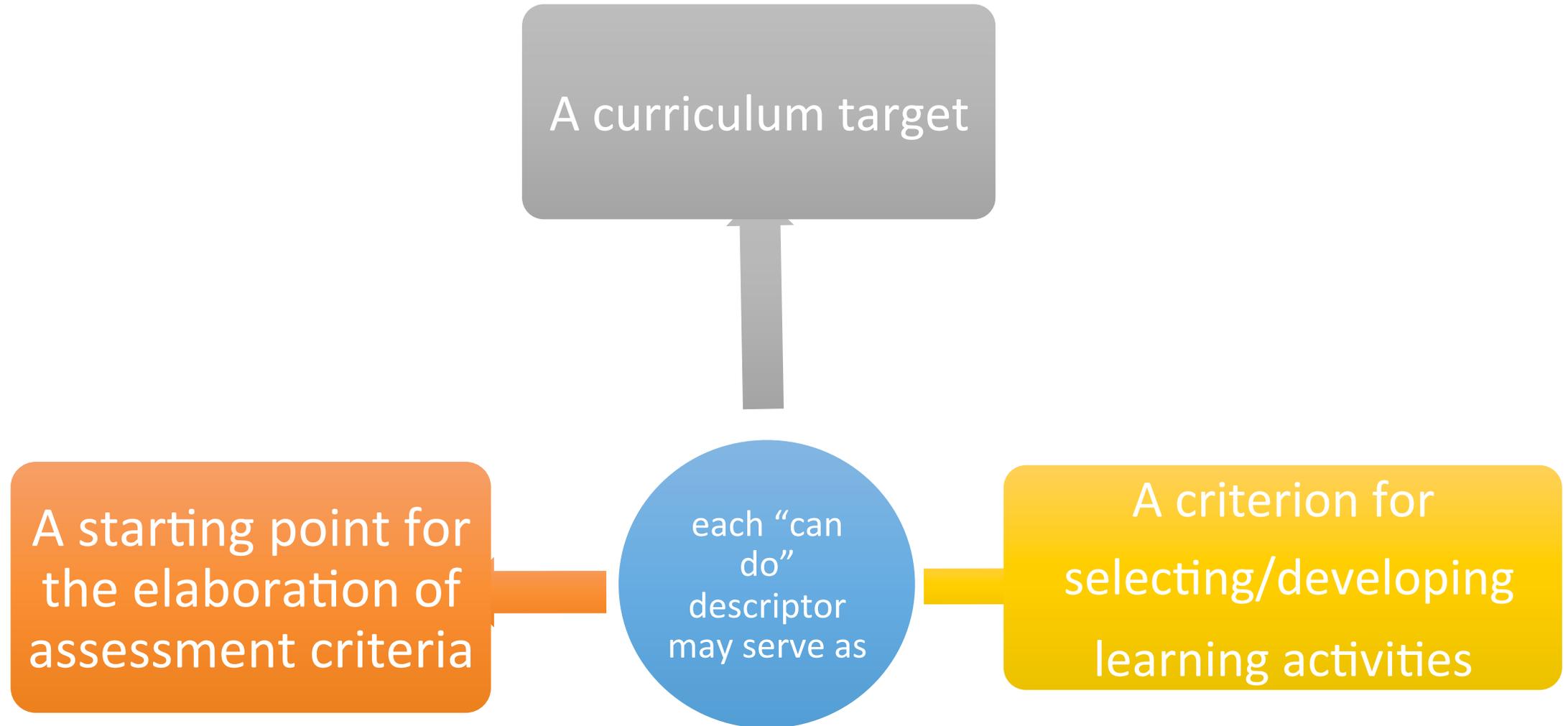
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The CEFR's action-oriented approach allows to bring curriculum, pedagogy and assessment into close interrelation.



Assessment: not just a final phase



Assessment detailed in the CEFR: teachers can select appropriately
The global scale and the self-assessment grid are not enough

- More specific scales:

- CEFR Ch 4: **descriptors of communicative activities**

- Illustrative scales for various dimensions of LISTENING, READING, SPOKEN INTERACTION, SPOKEN PRODUCTION, WRITING (Ch. 4)
- Strategic scales: PLANNING, COMPENSATING, MONITORING/REPAIR, IDENTIFYING CUES AND INFERRING, TURN-TAKING, COOPERATING, ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION (Ch. 4)

- CEFR Ch 5: **descriptors of linguistic competence**

- Scales of linguistic competence, language quality: GENERAL LINGUISTIC RANGE, VOCABULARY RANGE, VOCABULARY CONTROL, GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY, PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL, ORTHOGRAPHIC CONTROL, SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROPRIATENESS, FLEXIBILITY, TURN-TAKING, THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT, COHERENCE AND COHESION, SPOKEN FLUENCY, PROPOSITIONAL PRECISION (Ch.5)

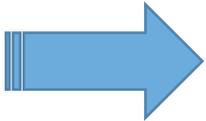
These scales are complementary

- **A2 speaking:** Can use simple descriptive language to make brief statements about and compare objects and possessions.
- **A2 grammatical accuracy:** Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes – for example tends to mix up tenses and forget to mark agreement; nevertheless, it is usually clear what he/she is trying to say.
- **A2 compensating:** *Can use an inadequate word from his/her repertoire and use gesture to clarify what he/she wants to say.*

- Objectives should specify the **what** and the **how**
- Objectives should include both communicative activities and competences (CECR)
 - In turn, activities and competence descriptors should provide
 - **specification** of the content (of both course and tests) in terms of objectives
 - **criteria** to determine whether the objectives have been met
- Objectives are meant
 - to specify
 - to guide
 - to detail
 - to explain
 - to exemplify
 - **and later to assess**
- ...eventually to constitute the backbone of your syllabus design

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- Objectivity and responsibility in assessment: the teacher, the learners or both?
- Conclusion: role and place of assessment: 'coming full circle'



Progression through qualifiers: inadequate (and useless) descriptors

(North, 2000)

Understanding of content <i>(e.g., concepts; ideas; opinions; relationships among facts, ideas, concepts, themes)</i>	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Thinking – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
	The student:			
Use of planning skills <i>(e.g., generating ideas, gathering information, focusing research, organizing information)</i>	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness

ACHIEVEMENT CHART: ENGLISH, GRADES 9–12

Categories	50–59% (Level 1)	60–69% (Level 2)	70–79% (Level 3)	80–100% (Level 4)
Knowledge and Understanding – Subject-specific content acquired in each course (knowledge), and the comprehension of its meaning and significance (understanding)				
	The student:			
Knowledge of content <i>(e.g., forms of text; strategies used when listening and speaking, reading, writing, and viewing and representing; elements of style; literary terminology, concepts, and theories; language conventions)</i>	demonstrates limited knowledge of content	demonstrates some knowledge of content	demonstrates considerable knowledge of content	demonstrates thorough knowledge of content
Understanding of content <i>(e.g., concepts; ideas; opinions; relationships among facts, ideas, concepts, themes)</i>	demonstrates limited understanding of content	demonstrates some understanding of content	demonstrates considerable understanding of content	demonstrates thorough understanding of content
Thinking – The use of critical and creative thinking skills and/or processes				
	The student:			
Use of planning skills <i>(e.g., generating ideas, gathering information, focusing research, organizing information)</i>	uses planning skills with limited effectiveness	uses planning skills with some effectiveness	uses planning skills with considerable effectiveness	uses planning skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of processing skills <i>(e.g., drawing inferences, interpreting, analysing, synthesizing, evaluating)</i>	uses processing skills with limited effectiveness	uses processing skills with some effectiveness	uses processing skills with considerable effectiveness	uses processing skills with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of critical/creative thinking processes <i>(e.g., oral discourse, research, critical analysis, critical literacy, metacognition, creative process)</i>	uses critical/creative thinking processes with limited effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with some effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with considerable effectiveness	uses critical/creative thinking processes with a high degree of effectiveness

Categories	50–59% (Level 1)	60–69% (Level 2)	70–79% (Level 3)	80–100% (Level 4)
Communication – The conveying of meaning through various forms				
	The student:			
Expression and organization of ideas and information <i>(e.g., clear expression, logical organization) in oral, graphic, and written forms, including media forms</i>	expresses and organizes ideas and information with limited effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with some effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with considerable effectiveness	expresses and organizes ideas and information with a high degree of effectiveness
Communication for different audiences and purposes <i>(e.g., use of appropriate style, voice, point of view) in oral, graphic, and written forms, including media forms</i>	communicates for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	communicates for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness
Use of conventions <i>(e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage), vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline in oral, graphic, and written forms, including media forms</i>	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with limited effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with some effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with considerable effectiveness	uses conventions, vocabulary, and terminology of the discipline with a high degree of effectiveness
Application – The use of knowledge and skills to make connections within and between various contexts				
	The student:			
Application of knowledge and skills <i>(e.g., literacy strategies and processes; literary terminology, concepts, and theories) in familiar contexts</i>	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with limited effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with some effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with considerable effectiveness	applies knowledge and skills in familiar contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Transfer of knowledge and skills <i>(e.g., literacy strategies and processes; literary terminology, concepts, and theories) to new contexts</i>	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with limited effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with some effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with considerable effectiveness	transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a high degree of effectiveness
Making connections within and between various contexts <i>(e.g., between the text and personal knowledge and experience, other texts, and the world outside school)</i>	makes connections within and between various contexts with limited effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with some effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with considerable effectiveness	makes connections within and between various contexts with a high degree of effectiveness

Effective descriptors need to (CEFR, appendix A)

- Be brief
- Be clear and transparent
- Be positively formulated
- Describe something definite
- Have independent, stand-alone integrity (not relying on the formulation of other descriptors for their interpretation)

Option 1

Detailed specification

Hodel, H. P. Linking assessment to the ELP/CEFR. ECML project (ELP_TT)
Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio

- Method 1 (principal): descriptors of communicative activities (ELP/CEFR) + competence scales (ELP/CEFR)
- Method 2 (supplementary): break down the descriptor (sentences, implicit components)
- Very often a combination of the two
- Let's see some examples

General specification

Written production B2 – sample

- Can write summaries of articles on topics of general interest
- Can discuss a topic in a composition or “letter to the editor”, giving reasons for or against a specific point of view
- Can write a short review of a film or book
- Can report the news of the day making clear what in his/her opinion are the important aspects of an event

(detailed specification)

Written production B2 – sample

- Can write a short review of a film or a book, using a variety of formulations in order to avoid frequent repetition and using complex sentences (< vocabulary range B2; general linguistic range B2)

(detailed specification)

Written production B2 – sample

- Can report the news of the day making clear what in his/her opinion are the important aspects of an event **using a variety of linking words efficiently to mark clearly the relationships between ideas. (< coherence and cohesion B2+)**

Deconstruction of an activity descriptor

- Descriptor: “I can give and request personal information”
- Deconstruction: “I can introduce myself; I can say where I live: I can say my address; I can say how old I am, etc.; I can ask someone what their name is; I can ask someone where they live; I can ask someone how old they are, etc.” (CEFR 9.2.2.1)

Option 2 (CEFR Table 3)

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY	INTERACTION	COHERENCE
C2	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity. Also has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.	Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions).	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly. Can inter-weave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turntaking, referencing, allusion making etc.	Can create coherent and cohesive discourse making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of connectors and other cohesive devices.
C1	Has a good command of a broad range of language allowing him/her to select a formulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style on a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare, difficult to spot and generally corrected when they do occur.	Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.	Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his remarks in order to get or to keep the floor and to relate his/her own contributions skilfully to those of other speakers.	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
B2+					
B2	Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes.	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although he/she can be hesitant as he or she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses.	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some "jumpiness" in a long contribution.
B1+					
B1	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events.	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used "routines" and patterns associated with more predictable situations.	Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.	Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can re-peat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding.	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY	INTERACTION	COHERENCE
B2	Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes.	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although he/she can be hesitant as he or she searches for patterns and expressions, there are few noticeably long pauses.	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some "jumpiness" in a long contribution.
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A2+					
A2	Uses basic sentence patterns with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations.	Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.	Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.	Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.	Can link groups of words with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because".
A1	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations.	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire.	Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication.	Can ask and answer questions about personal details. Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition, rephrasing and repair.	Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like "and" or "then".

Selected Criteria (A2)

	RANGE	ACCURACY	FLUENCY
A2+ (5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ routine, everyday transactions ▪ familiar situations and topics BUT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ compromise the message ▪ search for words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ use some simple structures correctly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ adapt memorised simple phrases to particular situations ▪ handle short routine exchanges without undue effort, BUT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ hesitation and false starts.
(4)			
A2 (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ communicate limited information ▪ simple everyday situations. ▪ basic sentence patterns ▪ memorised phrases ▪ groups of a few words and formulae 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses some simple structures correctly, BUT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ systematically makes basic mistakes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ makes him/herself understood ▪ very short utterances, BUT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ pauses, false starts and reformulation
(2)			
A1 (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ words and simple phrases ▪ personal details ▪ particular concrete situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ memorised repertoire. ▪ limited control ▪ a few simple grammatical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ very short, isolated, utterances ▪ mainly pre-packaged BUT much pausing to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ search for expressions, ▪ articulate less familiar words, ▪ repair communication

Selected Criteria at A2

RANGE <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ commu-nicate limited information▪ simple everyday situations.▪ basic sentence patterns▪ memorised phrases▪ groups of a few words and formulae	1	2	3	4	5
ACCURACY <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Uses some simple structures correctly, BUT▪ systematically makes basic mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
FLUENCY <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ makes him/herself understood▪ very short utterances, BUT▪ pauses, false starts and reformulation	1	2	3	4	5
GLOBAL Overall impression mark	1	2	3	4	5

Option 3 creating your own rubric

	1	2	3	4
Reception (aural and written)	Can understand the gist of the text. Needs to be guided in order to understand.	Can understand the message (even if the details are missing). Needs extra help to understand details. Needs to be guided in using resources.	Can understand the text albeit a few words. Uses resources (extra help) autonomously.	Can understand the text thoroughly without necessarily relying on extra help. Extra resources are used effectively if need be.
Written Production	Can produce the main elements required (text genre, vocabulary, language structures, etc.) only with considerable guidance from instructor.	Can produce sufficient elements required (text genre, vocabulary, language structures, etc.) in order to respond to the core of what is required and only needs some help.	Can produce the elements required (text genre, vocabulary, language structures, etc.) fairly autonomously. Can use extra resources if needed to complete the task.	Can effectively produce the elements required (text genre, vocabulary, language structures, etc.) without necessarily relying on extra help. Takes initiative to use extra resources to refine the text if appropriate.
Accuracy and range (grammar and vocabulary)	Makes use of some of the learned structures and vocabulary. Comprehension requires some effort for the listener/reader to decipher the message	Makes use of learned structures and vocabulary so as to convey the general sense of the message. Mistakes may sometimes distort meaning.	Makes reasoned use of learned structures and vocabulary so as to convey a clear message. Mistakes are sometimes self-corrected.	Makes reasoned and effective use of learned structures and vocabulary, appropriately and in a variety of ways, to convey a refined message. Mistakes are usually self-corrected.
Fluency	Can express him/herself with pauses and frequent repetition. Needs help in order to be understood	Can express him/herself in an understandable way, despite hesitations and frequent repetitions	Can express him/herself with a degree of fluency; pauses and repetition do not hinder comprehension	Can express him/herself fluently and clearly.
Strategies	Needs assistance to understand and employ appropriate communication strategies.	Understands some of the required communication strategies but needs prompting and reminders to make use of them	Understands appropriate communication strategies and uses them with occasional prompting or reminders	Understands and can employ appropriate communication strategies independently

Sample Observation Checklist

By the end of this task _____:
name of student

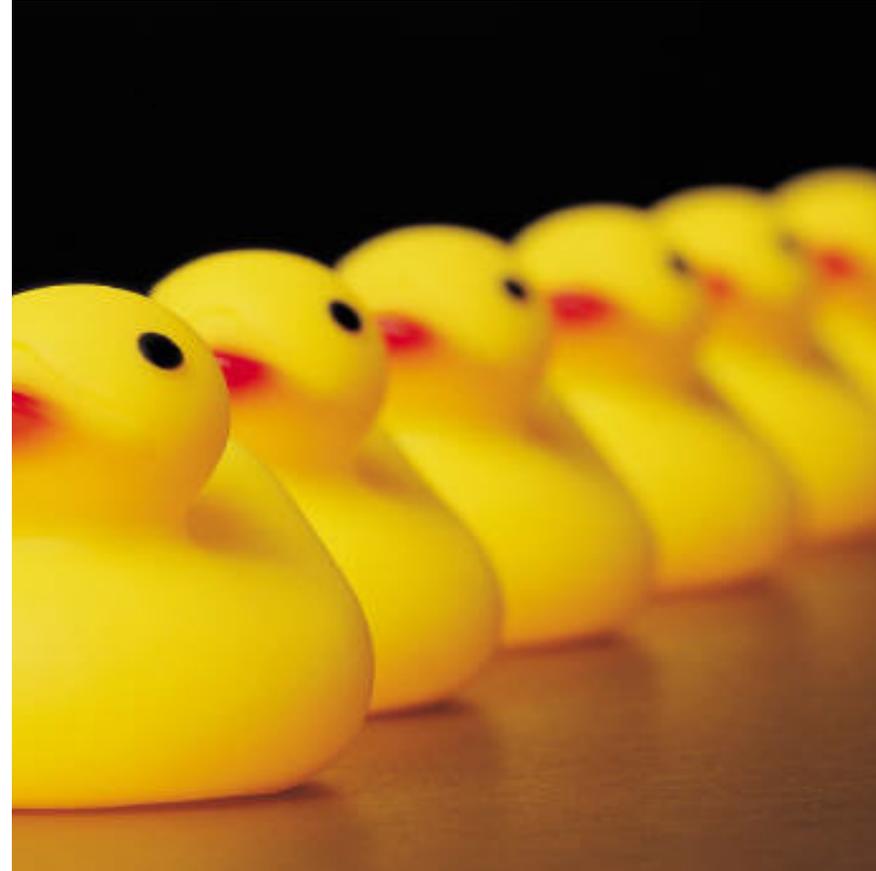
Option 3

creating your own checklist

Communicative language activities	by him/ herself	with help	not yet
Can explain to other people what he/she likes and doesn't like			
Can give a rehearsed simple presentation on a familiar subject			
Can answer straightforward follow up questions if he/she can ask for repetition and/or with some help with the formulation of his/her reply			
Can write short, simple notes and messages to satisfy matters of immediate need			
Plurilingual and pluricultural competences	by him/ herself	with help	not yet
Can establish links between languages and cultures			
Can be willing to observe and ask questions about other cultural settings			
Ability to learn	by him/ herself	with help	not yet
Can reflect on learning processes in order to make them more effective			
Can organize learning in an autonomous way			
Mediation competences	by him/ herself	with help	not yet
Can help along the progress of the work by inviting others to join in, to contribute with their feedback, and say what they think			
Can give feedback on and follow up statements and help the development of a discussion			

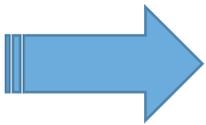
Use the CEFR-related bank of descriptors to customize the rubric according to the outcomes/enabling competencies established for your task.

Profiling not levelling (North, 2014: 11)



Plan of my presentation

- Second language learning and teaching... and assessment?
- Lost in assessment? the CEFR as a possible compass
- Curricular planning, definition of objectives and assessment: a triadic relationship
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Three fundamental concepts

- **Validity**
 - assessment actually does what it claims to do, providing evidence for a precise account of a student's competence
- **Reliability**
 - consistent across situations, comparable, equitable, and fair
- **Feasibility**
 - manageable, comprehensible, and relevant

Model of the assessment process by teachers (Rea-Dickins, 2001)

- 1. Planning** (what and how they assess and what are most appropriate assessment activities for specific assessment purposes)
- 2. Implementing** (assessment processes like introducing the assessment activity and providing feedback to the learners)
- 3. Monitoring** (students' achievement and development by recording and interpreting the evidence and revising the teaching plans)
- 4. Recording and disseminating** (students' achievement and progress)

Teacher as...

- Planner
- Co-player
- Scientist
- Reporter

- ... but also Judge

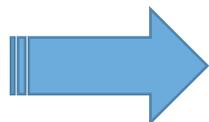
“Most of the teachers in this study were caught in conflicts among belief systems, and institutional structures, agendas, and values. The point of friction among these conflicts was assessment, which was associated with very powerful feelings of being overwhelmed, and of insecurity, guilt, frustration, and anger... This study suggests that assessment, as it occurs in schools, is far from a merely technical problem. Rather, it is deeply social and personal.” (Johnston, Guice, Baker, Malone & Michelson, 1995)

“Assessment that is explicitly designed to promote learning is the single most powerful tool we have for both raising standards and empowering lifelong learners” (Assessment Reform Group)

- Five simple research-based key factors to improve learning through assessment (ARG, 1999: 4-5):
 - the provision of **effective feedback to pupils**;
 - the **active involvement of pupils** in their own learning;
 - adjusting teaching to **take account of the results** of assessment;
 - a recognition of the **profound influence assessment has on the motivation and self-esteem** of pupils, both of which are crucial influences on learning;
 - the need for **pupils to be able to assess themselves** and understand how to improve.

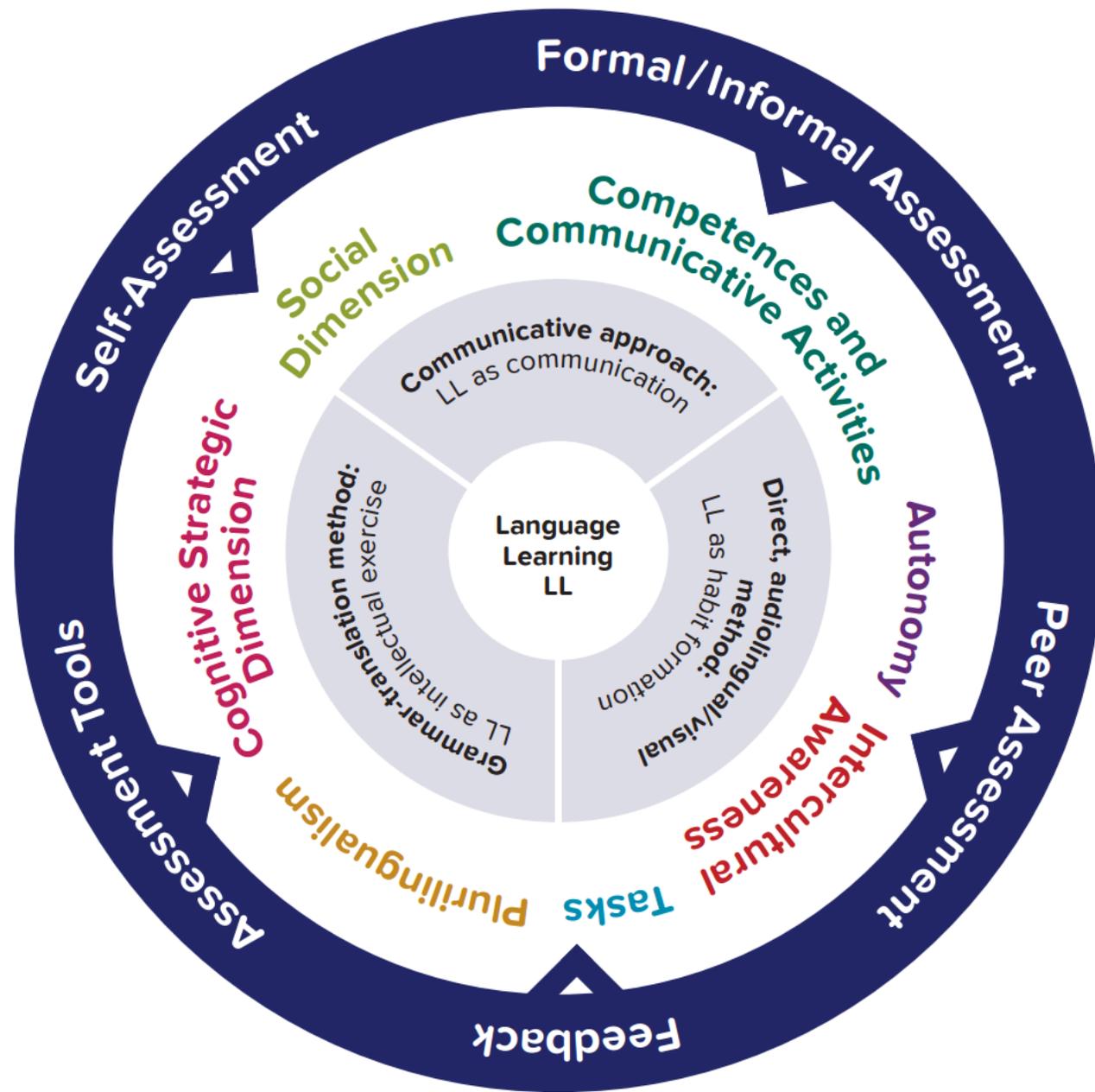
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Facing assessment: need for...





Piccardo E. (2014)

<http://www.curriculum.org/fsl/en/resources/from-communicative-to-action-oriented-illuminating-the-approaches/>

Teachers and learners should be equipped and empowered to take intelligent decisions in the light of learner needs, interests, characteristics and resources. Trim, 2011



Merci - Thank you
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