

Research Project, Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (22320112)
English Edition



A Comprehensive Study on the Framework of English Language Teachers' Professional Development in Japan

Edited by

**Hisatake Jimbo
Ken Hisamura
Yoshiko Usui
Masaki Oda
Leonid Yoffe**

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Part One

Breaking down the Descriptors in J-POSTL for EFL Student Teachers in Japan

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I. Background and Objectives

1. Background

J-POSTL, the Japanese Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages, was developed by the JACET SIG on English Education (hereafter the SIG) in 2010. It was adapted from EPOSTL (the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages) in the Japanese EFL educational context (for the process of adaptation, please see the 2010 SIG report), and is now piloted. In the future, it will be necessary to make it applicable to foreign language education in general in Japan. For now, however, it has been developed only by the researchers and teacher trainers of the English language; therefore, the checklist of 100 descriptors reflects only the viewpoints of English language educators.

EPOSTL has so far been translated into 11 languages in the European context without any modification of its contents. It is a reflection tool intended not only for student teachers but also for practicing teachers of languages. On the other hand, J-POSTL was elaborated only for EFL student teachers. In this respect, J-POSTL is unique. It is not a translation, but an adaptation. Nearly half of the descriptors, which were considered difficult for EFL Japanese student teachers to attain, were deleted from the checklist in EPOSTL, some of them were modified or combined, and a few new descriptors were added during the process of contextualization. However, the main rationale behind EPOSTL, namely action-oriented view of languages and life-long learning, have been maintained in J-POSTL.

2. Objectives

This paper aims to provide a detailed breakdown of each descriptor in the checklist of J-POSTL, which will help EFL student teachers use the checklist more easily and effectively as a reflection tool before, while, or after practicing in EFL classrooms. Some guidelines for the breakdown were as follows:

- Class size: 35-40, co-ed; conducted by one Japanese teacher of English,
- Classes taught mainly in English using a textbook authorized by the MEXT, hopefully, through Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology,
- To make each descriptor applicable from elementary to advanced courses in high school,
- To make each descriptor intelligible to the pre-service teachers during their practicum,
- To get both student teachers and learners to use classroom English without any difficulty,
- To try to make the practical know-how of veteran teachers as transparent as possible, etc.

Since J-POSTL is an adaptation of EPOSTL which relies heavily on CEFR and ELP, J-POSTL also reflects some of the philosophies of these European documents: mainly action-oriented view of language, and life-long learning: that is, learning to learn (see Newby at pp.72-87). Disseminating J-POSTL in Japan, therefore, will depend on how successfully we can raise the visibility of these underlying principles within the Japanese educational setting. It is expected that the implementation of J-POSTL will bring with it a paradigm shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered way of teaching and learning.

II. How to Use J-POSTL

The purpose of J-POSTL is to encourage student teachers to develop their professional competences as English language teachers by regularly recording what they have learned in their teacher training courses and during practice teaching. This text contains a selected range of concrete examples of teaching English in various classroom situations in Japan. These are intended to help student teachers better understand the descriptors of J-POSTL. By studying selected examples of these professional competences and referring to them in their training course, student teachers will become more aware of their own professional development.

Examples are arranged from easy to advanced situations. However, there will be differences among individuals in the perceived and actual difficulty of various teaching approaches. This will depend on the degree of their teaching practice experience. Student teachers may be anxious about trying some approaches considering their limited actual teaching experience in the classroom. They are not expected to be able to deal with every teaching approach perfectly at this stage of their training course because these examples are intended to be used as standards of professional competences throughout the long period of their careers. Given their limited experience

it is natural for student teachers to be able to handle only a limited number of approaches successfully during their teaching practicum

As mentioned before, one of the purposes of this text is to assist student teachers in understanding an English teacher's professional competences when they refer to the descriptors of J-POSTL. Therefore, it is important for student teachers to keep reflecting on their performance in their teacher training course and to consult with their teachers about incomprehensible points in the text.

III. Breakdown of J-POSTL Descriptors

Context

A. Curriculum

1. I can understand the requirements set in *Course of Study.

(Contents described in Course of Study)

- Practical communication skills should be emphasized.
- Four skills should be integrated.
- Previously taught material should be referred to consistently to allow students better internalize it.
- Teachers should use English and have students use English in class.
- Teachers should utilize a variety of activities taking into consideration of students' learning styles and course materials.
- Teachers should understand the purpose and substance of EFL activities in elementary school and be aware of the linkages between the EFL course curricular of elementary school, junior high school, and high school when they prepare for a class.

*Course of Study (See 3, 54)

B. Aims and Needs

2. I can understand the value of learning a foreign language.

(Meaning of learning a foreign language)

- Students develop interest in language itself and deepen their understanding of linguistic structure and mechanisms through learning a language which is different from their mother tongue.
- Students understand the culture underlying a language and respect people who have a different culture and ideas.
- Students understand other cultures and review their own society and culture objectively.

- Students acquire various perspectives and knowledge by communicating with people overseas and thus, broaden their horizons.
- Teachers nurture students' sense of values and viewpoints by encouraging them to have their own opinions and convey them in an international setting.

3. I can take into account attainment of target based on *Course of Study and *students' needs.

(Things teachers can do in order to take into account the attainment of target)

- Teachers check the objectives of the Course of Study.
- Teachers understand students' motivation to learn a foreign language through the use of questionnaires.
- Teachers check what students have learned. (e.g., Teachers review the contents of the textbook students used in the previous year).
- Teachers become aware of students' English proficiency. (e.g., Teachers conduct a diagnostic test among students. Teachers consult with colleagues who taught their students in the previous year about students' proficiency level.)

*Course of Study (See 1, 54)

*students' needs (See items 29, 34, 40, 49, 54, 87)

4. I can take into account students' motivation to learn a foreign language.

(Examples of factors that could motivate students to learn a foreign language)

- Students want to broaden their horizons.
- Students want to acquire English skills for overseas travel.
- Students want to make friends with a non-Japanese speaker.
- Students want to be able to understand an English language movie without the use of subtitles.
- Students want to pass an entrance exam.
- Students find that a foreign language is an asset when searching for employment.

(Ways of enhancing students' motivation)

- Teachers introduce authentic materials related to the contents of a textbook. (e.g., English newspapers, advertisements, magazines, movies, and music)
- Teachers set up a scenario in which students use English in class (e.g., role playing and problem-solving tasks).
- Teachers create opportunities for students to use English outside of class. (e.g., conversations with an ALT – outside of class; e-mail exchanges)
- Teachers create opportunities to have their students express their opinions in English. (pair and group discussion of a specific topic; writing one's opinion and sharing it with others)

5. I can take into account students' intellectual interests.

(Ways in class to take into account students' intellectual interests)

Teachers have their students think about social issues and life through the material used in class. (e.g., Students think about a way in which they as individuals could recycle after reading material on an environmental issue.)

- Teachers introduce activities which stimulate students' creativity. (e.g., Students write a letter to Anne Frank after reading *The Diary of Anne Frank*.)
- Teachers introduce activities which elicit students' emotions. (e.g., Students think about the meaning of a poem or a song.)
- Teachers introduce materials which compare Japanese with English. (e.g., Students compare a Japanese and an English proverb.)

6. I can take into account students' sense of achievement.

(Ways in class to take into account students' sense of achievement)

- Teachers set clear and realistic goals. (e.g., Students should be able to read more at least 100 words per minute if they are in the third year of junior high school.)
- On a regular basis, teachers design a specific classroom activity and have students record their learning process to engender a sense of achievement. (e.g., Following a rapid reading exercise, students record the number of words they read per minute.)
- Teachers establish clear milestones for students. In preparation for a five-minute speech, students first brainstorm the outline. Second, they write and practice an introduction. Then, they write and practice the body of the speech. Next, they focus on the conclusion of the speech. Finally, they practice the whole speech.)
- Teachers give homework which students think that they can do by themselves.

C. The Role of the Language Teacher

7. I can explain the value and benefits of learning English to learners and parents.

(The value and benefits of learning English)

- See B-2.

(Ways of explaining this)

- Teachers explain this to the students orally in class.
- Teachers write a column on the value and benefits of learning English in a newsletter and have their students and the parents read it.

8. I can take into account students' knowledge of Japanese and make use of it when teaching English.

(Teaching English taking into account students' Japanese knowledge)

- Teachers activate students' background knowledge before having them read a textbook. (e.g., Teachers ask questions related to a topic in Japanese. Students write

a keyword map related to the topic.)

- Teachers have their students read aloud, comparing the differences in rhythm between Japanese and English.
- Teachers teach vocabulary, comparing differences between Japanese and English concepts. (e.g., Teachers teach differences in the concepts of “go” and “come” in English and “iku” and “kuru” in Japanese.
- Teachers compare Japanese and English writing styles. (e.g., Teachers compare a Japanese “ki-sho-ten-ketsu” paragraph style with an English paragraph style, including the topic sentence.)

9. I can critically assess my teaching based on understanding theoretical principles.

(Understanding theoretical principles)

- Teachers are aware of the benefits and limitations of various teaching methods in assisting students to acquire a foreign language (grammar-translation method, oral approach, communicative language teaching, and task-based approach).
- Teachers understand the characteristics of language acquisition of students who learn English as a foreign language. (e.g. Foreign language acquisition sequence; L1 interference.)
- Teachers understand factors which influence the success of foreign language learning (e.g., motivation, learning styles, and learning strategies).
- Teachers know the pedagogical theory of four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

(Critical assessment of teaching)

- Teachers observe students in class, reflect on and analyze the causes of students’ behaviors.
- Based on students’ oral feedback or questionnaires, teachers reflect on and analyze the causes of problems.
- Based on learning outcomes such as the results of tests, teachers reflect on and analyze the causes of problems.
- Teachers videotape their own classes and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of their teaching based on certain criteria (class procedure, appropriateness of questions, allocation of time for each activity, and ways of getting feedback from students).

10. I can critically assess (based on learner feedback and learning outcomes) my teaching and adapt it accordingly.

(Critical assessment based on learner feedback and learning outcomes)

- Teachers observe students in class and analyze why some students do not actively participate in activities.
- Teachers conduct a questionnaire survey concerning the points students did not

understand in class, and analyze why they could not understand them.

- Teachers review the parts of regular exams on which students did not do well and identify the problem.
- Teachers review the parts students answered wrong on quizzes and homework assignments, identify the problem and adapt teaching accordingly.
- Teachers vary the allocation of time for activities (e.g., Teachers increase time for activities to nurture speaking abilities if students have a problem with speaking.)
- Teachers vary the degree of difficulty for activities. (e.g., When students do not actively engage in paired speaking activities, teachers change assignment parameters: easier topic or supporting materials.)
- Teachers change the activity itself. (e.g., If students demonstrate weakness in reading, teachers introduce reading strategies such as ways of guessing unknown vocabulary, skimming, and scanning).
- Teachers change ways of presenting and practicing language material. (e.g., When students do not understand the concept of present perfect, teachers devise ways of introducing the concept for better understanding, and change ways of practicing to enhance internalization.)

11. I can accept feedback from my peers and mentors and build this into my teaching.
--

- Teachers are open to constructive criticism and use it as the basis for professional development.
- When teachers' problems are pointed out to them, teachers consider possible solutions, and revise their lessons accordingly.
- When teachers' problems are pointed out and ideas are suggested for improvement, the teachers implement such ideas in their lessons.
- When teachers have problems after implementing an idea for improvement suggested by others, they consider their own idea for improvement and implement it in their lesson.

12. I can observe my peers and offer them constructive feedback.
--

(Constructive feedback)

- Teachers mention peers' good points and points for improvement based on criteria (verbal skills such as fluency, non-verbal skills such as gestures, allocation of time, ways of presenting language material, and response to students).
- Teachers observe students' behavior in class and describe the points that a teacher may not aware of. (e.g., Some students finish pair activities early and look bored while waiting for the other pairs to finish.)
- Teachers make comments on class from a viewpoint of students although they need to understand the intention of a teacher responsible for the class.
- Teachers make specific suggestions.

13. I can identify specific pedagogical issues related to my learners or my teaching in the procedure of plan, act, and reflect.

(The procedure of planning, acting, and reflecting)

- When teachers plan a class, they reflect on the previous class, realize the pedagogical issues, and consider the solution.
- Teachers observe students' behaviors and write down pedagogical issues while conducting a class.
- Teachers reflect on a class, become aware of pedagogical issues, and consider the solution.

(Examples of pedagogical issues related to learners or teaching)

- Teachers do not clearly understand students' interests.
- Teachers do not devise activities which attract students' interest.
- Teachers do not maintain intensity and concentration level in the class.
- Teachers do not provide appropriate feedback to students.
- Questions are not clear to students.
- The allotment of time for each activity is not appropriate.

14. I can locate information related to teaching and learning.

(Ways of collecting information related to teaching and learning)

- Teachers read books related to English education.
- Teachers collect materials and examples of class activities from the Internet.
- Teachers subscribe to professional magazines such as "The English Teachers' Magazine" or "New English Teachers' Magazine."
- Teachers regularly check the online bulletin boards of education publishers and academic associations and participate in lectures and workshops.
- Teachers subscribe to a mailing list related to English education.
- Teachers share ideas on teaching methods and materials with their colleagues.

D. Institutional Resources and Constraints

15. I am aware of the resources and educational equipment available in school and adapt them to my teaching as necessary.

(In case of an audio device such as a CD player.)

- I have students try to understand the context only through listening without seeing the text.
- I have students try to do a role-play using audio equipment.
- I have students try to read the text as they hear it.
- I have students try to shadow the audio transcript without seeing the text.

(In case of using a visual device such as a VCR or a DVD player.)

- I have students watch a video related to a topic of the textbook to activate their schema.

- I have students watch a video which accompanies the textbook before introducing a new lesson.
- I have students practice listening, reading and speaking by using a video which accompanies the textbook.

(In case of using a video camera.)

- I have students watch a video which includes performance by their senior students.
- I can use a video camera to improve students' performance.
- I can use a video camera to evaluate students' performance.

(In case of using a PC.)

- I can use a PC to make teaching materials.
- I can use a PC to calculate students' grades.
- I can use a PC to create students' data base.

Methodology

A. Speaking/Spoken interaction

16. I can create a supportive atmosphere and provide a specific situation for language use that invites learners to actively take part in speaking activities.

(To create a supportive atmosphere; to invite learners to actively take part in speaking activities)

- Teachers establish classroom rules and encourage students to become familiar with daily classroom routines (activities to lower affective filters of students).
- Teachers evaluate and select appropriate pair or group activities to make students less self-conscious (student-centered activities, lowering affective filters of students etc.).
- Teachers, in principle, encourage students to use English as a medium of classroom interaction, in order to raise awareness of English learning activities in class.
- Teachers, as role models, show a positive attitude toward using English, and demonstrate how to use it in class.
- Teachers encourage and help students to use English in spoken interaction through the frequent use of classroom English.
- Teachers evaluate and select a variety of techniques, such as rephrase and recast, to make students aware of their spoken errors, and keep encouraging them to use English without being afraid of making mistakes.
- Teachers evaluate and select different activities to provide opportunities to practice frequently used social expressions, and to make them realize the importance of English as a communication tool (greetings, questions, apologies, requests, etc.)
- Teachers help learners use communication strategies and compensation strategies in order to facilitate spoken interactions (giving back-channel feedback/nodding,

requesting repetition, repeating etc.)

- Teachers evaluate and select different activities to help students identify and use examples of language functions (thanking, praising, explaining, agreeing etc.)
- Teachers evaluate and select different activities to help students deal with linguistic ambiguity (questioning etc).

(To provide a specific situation for language use.)

- Relay game: Students practice greeting expressions. Then, they are divided into groups (of five to seven), and decide their group leaders. Each group lines up, and all the members of the group take turn and run to the leader in front, greet the leader, and run back to the line. The first group to finish wins the game.
- Interview game: Students make pairs and practice self-introduction, respectively. Then, all the students in class play an interview game with bingo sheets.
- Role-play: Students practice useful shopping expressions. Then, they are divided into groups (of five) and assume the roles of staff and customers in a fast food restaurant.
- Skit: Students make pairs and practice useful expressions for providing directions. Then, students make a skit and present it in class.

17. I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to encourage learners to accurately and appropriately express their opinions.
--

(About one's own ideas, one's personal matters, and one's own country and culture)

- Teachers evaluate and select different activities to help students perform “show and tell” on their personal information like daily routine, hobbies, and special skills or talents.
- Teachers encourage and help students to make a five- sentence speech about a topic that students have learned in a textbook, such as service dogs.
- Teachers encourage and help students to make a speech about their favorite Japanese season of the year and the reason why they like it.
- Teachers divide students into groups (of four or five) to do research on traditional Japanese events, like things to do on the *Setsubun* day, and help them make a speech about their findings.

(Abilities to accurately and appropriately express.)

- Teachers evaluate and select different activities to help students engage in playing games, such as three-hint game, and making speeches with words, collocations, phrases and idiomatic expressions that students have learned in a textbook.
- Teachers evaluate and select different activities to encourage students to learn how to ask questions and respond to one another about the information and topics that they have gathered.

18. I can evaluate and select meaningful speaking and interactional activities to help learners to develop competencies for presentation, discussion, etc.

(To develop competencies for presentation, discussion, etc.)

- Teachers evaluate and select familiar themes for students or topics that students have learned in a textbook. Then, teachers divide students into pairs or groups, and give them time and opportunities for brainstorming and discussion (in Japanese), as a warm-up before they actually engage in presentation, discussion or debate activities.
- Teachers evaluate and select debating issues, such as houses vs. condos or school uniforms vs. plain clothes. Then, teachers divide students into pros and cons to present their opinions and supporting ideas in class.
- Teachers evaluate and select themes and topics which individual student will be working on to make one-minute speech with expressions that he/she has learned in class or textbook.

19. I can evaluate and select a variety of materials to stimulate speaking activities (visual aids, texts, authentic materials etc).

- Teachers are active in exchanging information with colleagues in order to identify and evaluate a range of materials with themes and topics appropriate for the needs and interests of students, such as CDs, DVDs, printed materials, newspapers and magazines both in Japanese and English.
- Teachers design worksheets of four-frame comic strip/manga for students in pairs to write dialogues of their familiar/favorite characters.
- Teachers select an appropriate animation film, drama, or movie, to show students the clip without sound. Then, teachers help students to work in groups to write the dialogues of characters and present it to class.

20. I can evaluate and select various activities to help learners use typical features of spoken language (fillers, supportive responses, etc.) and engage in interaction with others.

- Teachers clearly explain and help students to understand that fillers, transition words and backchannelling are useful features of spoken language when engaging in interaction (Let me see, Well, I see, Sure etc).
- Teachers regularly demonstrate how to use fillers and backchanneling in class to encourage more introverted students.
- Teachers encourage and help students to make a skit and presentation using fillers and backchannelling (within the framework of realistic situations, see A16).
- Teachers encourage and help students to role-play characters in the textbook with fillers and backchannels added to their original dialogues.

21. I can evaluate and select a variety of techniques to make learners aware of and help them to use stress, rhythm and intonation.

- Teachers evaluate and select different activities with songs, chants, and rhymes to help students become familiar with prosodic features of English language without analytical understanding (Mother Goose, etc).
- Teachers evaluate and select various activities to encourage and help students to use chants and rhymes as part of classroom English to familiarize them with English phonetic features of rhythm and intonation (Eenie, Meenie, Minie, Moe / See you later, Alligator etc).
- Teachers evaluate and select a range of oral activities which make students practice tongue twisters, such as “Peter Piper,” in order to help them become aware of and use stress and rhythm as phonetic features of English. For example, teachers divide students into groups and guide them in a relay-game with tongue twisters.
- Teachers utilize textbooks and classroom CDs to help students engage in reading aloud, shadowing and repeating.

22. I can evaluate and select a range of oral activities to develop accuracy (vocabulary, grammar, etc).

- Teachers encourage and help students to understand the meanings of words written on picture cards and to pronounce the sounds over and over.
- Teachers encourage and help students to participate in pair work to select useful social expressions and make a skit within the framework of specific language-use situations (excuse me, I’m sorry, thank you, you’re welcome, I have no idea. No problem.).
- Teachers encourage and help students to understand the word order or verb configurations in interrogatives which are different from declarative sentences, and to participate in pair work to role-play (alternative questions with or, wh-questions).
- Teachers deal with pronunciation errors that occur in class in a way which supports learning processes and communication, such as rephrasing.
- Teachers encourage and help students to write a speech with learned vocabulary and grammar, correct their drafts, and teach pronunciation.

B. Writing/Written Interaction

23. I can help learners to develop their creative potential by engaging learners in writing activities appropriate to different situations and functions of language use.

- Teachers present learners with formats and expressions to write a variety of greeting cards (e.g., thank you, apology, sympathy, celebration, season greetings, etc.)
- Teachers help learners understand differences between formal and informal

writing.

- Teachers help learners practice appropriate register in writing.
- Teachers help learners practice note-taking.
- Teachers present learners with a list of symbols to take notes effectively (e.g., because→b/c, with→w/, without→w/o, etc.)
- Teachers help learners think of their own symbols.
- Teachers present learners with sample paragraphs written in different rhetorical patterns such as comparison and contrast, cause and effect, exemplification, classification, listing, and analyze their structure.
- Teachers help learners practice writing paragraphs in different rhetorical patterns (e.g., comparison and contrast, cause and effect, exemplification, classification, listing, etc.)

24. I can evaluate and select activities which help learners to participate in written exchanges such as emails.

- Teachers present learners with a default email format.
- Teachers present learners with both good and bad models of email writing and help learners evaluate them.
- Teachers have learners engage in email writing tasks (e.g., submit their assignment to the teacher, inquire about contents of the assignment, etc.)
- Teachers have learners engage in email writing tasks with their ALTs.
- Teachers plan and put into practice email writing tasks with students at sister schools abroad.

25. I can help learners gather and share information for their writing tasks.

(Gathering information)

- Teachers explain ways to select and evaluate information.
- Teachers encourage learners to always check the references/bibliography when using Wikipedia sources.
- Teachers explain ways to collect information (e.g., selecting keywords, kinds of databases and their usage, referencing the bibliography, etc.)
- Teachers explain how to record sources.
- Teachers explain what plagiarism is.
- Teachers explain how to avoid plagiarism.

(Sharing information)

- Teachers have learners orally present the content and sources of the information gathered in their own words.
- Teachers have learners evaluate each other's sources for their reliability and appropriateness.

26. I can help learners to write by using mind maps, outlines, etc.

- Teachers select a common theme (e.g., school uniforms) and have learners do mind mapping in pairs or small groups. Then, have each pair or group present their ideas and do mind mapping on the board.
- Teachers categorize words listed on the mind map using keywords (e.g., advantages and disadvantages of school uniforms).
- Teachers have each learner formulate his/her opinion on the theme (e.g., agree or disagree with school uniforms).
- Teachers present learners with a sample outline (e.g., an outline for those who agree with school uniforms and an outline for those who disagree with school uniforms).
- Teachers have learners select supporting details from the information gathered (e.g., newspaper or magazine articles which discuss advantages and disadvantages of school uniforms).
- Teachers help learners become aware of the purpose of various writing styles and be independent learners.

27. I can help learners to write cohesive paragraphs and essays.

(Writing a paragraph)

- Teachers explain the features of a typical paragraph (e.g., indent 5 single spaces or skip a line to mark the beginning of a new paragraph, about 150 to 180 words per paragraph, one topic per paragraph, etc.)
- Teachers explain the structure of a typical paragraph.
- Teachers make a worksheet to help learners recognize a good topic sentence.
- Teachers have learners read a short paragraph and identify its topic sentence.
- Teachers have learners engage in a task comparing and contrasting Japanese and English rhetorical styles of a paragraph.

(Writing an essay)

- Teachers explain the structure of a typical essay.
- Teachers dissect a paragraph into a set of sentences and have learners recreate the paragraph by using cues such as transitional words.
- Teachers explain transitional words typical to different rhetorical styles such as comparison and contrast, cause and effect, exemplification, classification, and listing.
- Teachers explain the structure of a typical introduction.
- Teachers help learners think of ways to attract readers' attention in the introduction.
- Teachers explain what a thesis statement is (including its role, the relationship with the body and the conclusion, etc.).

- Teachers explain the structure of typical body paragraphs.
- Teachers explain the structure of a typical conclusion.
- Teachers explain that the conclusion does not include any new information.
- Teachers explain how to write good titles.
- Teachers have learners write a title for each other's essay in pairs.
- Teachers have learners engage in a task comparing and contrasting Japanese and English rhetorical styles of an essay.

28. I can evaluate and select writing activities to consolidate learning (grammar, vocabulary, spelling etc.)

(Vocabulary and grammar)

- Teachers list up common mistakes found in learners writing assignments and have learners correct the mistakes (individually, in pairs, in small groups).
- Teachers explain the common mistakes made by learners on a particular writing assignment and make a worksheet to help them internalize them.
- Teachers have learners edit their writing assignments focusing on a particular grammatical point before submission.
- Teachers make a self-checklist based on commonly made mistakes and have learners use it to check their writings before submission.
- Teachers have learners reflect on the teacher's feedback on their mistakes and write a reflective report.
- Teachers have learners peer review using a checklist.
- Teachers introduce and explain usages of dictionaries as a tool to help learners write and have them practice using them.

(Spelling)

- Teachers explain and advise how to use the spell check function of Word properly (e.g., if the misspelled word is an existing English word, it will not be detected as a spelling mistake).
- Teachers explicitly explain spelling mistakes commonly made by learners and minimum pairs such as adopt and adapt or low and law.

C. Listening

29. I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.

(The needs, interest and language level of the learners)

- Teachers conduct a survey to grasp what themes or topics students are interested in (favorite singers, countries where they want to go, etc).
- Teachers conduct a survey to grasp students' self-assessment on their English proficiency or the level of achievement in English.
- For junior high school students who have become familiar with 'listening' interaction

in foreign language activities at elementary school, teachers conduct a survey to grasp their listening proficiency upon their entrance, followed by classroom observation, quizzes and regular exams.

(To select appropriate texts)

- For students who have not yet become familiar with the sounds of English, teachers create picture worksheets, in which students learn initial consonants of words, such as car, cookie, cow, carrot, camera, cake, corn, candle, in order to raise students' phonemic awareness.
- Teachers create dictation worksheets or dictogloss worksheets to help students develop their schemata by working on paragraphs from the textbooks.
- Teachers create song worksheets to help students review grammatical items that they have learned in textbooks ("Help" by the Beatles for tense, pronouns, comparatives etc).
- Teachers evaluate and select video materials to stimulate students' needs and interests (You Tube etc).

* Students' Needs (See items 3, 34, 40, 49, 54, 87)

30. I can provide a range of pre-listening activities which help learners orientate themselves to a text.

- Teachers write down a title of textbook unit on blackboards in order to give students time and opportunities for brainstorming and discussion (in Japanese) in pairs or groups before engaging in listening activities.
- Teachers ask students questions related to the topic or contents of the textbook, and encourage them to think them over before engaging in listening activities (service dogs: Do you have a pet? Do you like dogs? What kind of dogs are service dogs?)
- Teachers help students gather and share information on the topic or contents of listening activities in order to raise students' awareness of the issues beforehand (land mines, etc).

31. I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when listening.

(To use students' knowledge of a topic)

- Teachers take into account students' needs and interests.
- Teachers understand and integrate what students have learned.
- Teachers are aware of a close correlation between their English classes and other academic subjects, so that they can appreciate and look through from a cross-curricular view point.
- Teachers are aware of and introduce in class current social problems and international issues.

32. I can design and select different activities in order to develop different listening strategies (listening for gist, specific information etc).

(Listening strategies: bottom-up)

- Teachers evaluate and select listening activities for students to practice phonemes or sound changes, like linking, in order for them to become aware of the phonetic differences between English and Japanese.

(Listening strategies: top-down)

- Teachers encourage and help students to think about a topic or contents before listening, for example, by writing a title of the text unit, showing some pictures and photos, and having students discuss them in class.
- Teachers give students useful keywords before listening and instruct them to focus on those words when they are listening.
- Teachers explain and help students understand vocabulary, including difficult and unknown lexical items, as well as grammar before listening.
- Teachers encourage and help students guess the contents and review what they have discussed earlier while listening.
- Teachers encourage and help students take notes and write down keywords while listening.
- Teachers encourage and help students to focus on stressed words while listening.
- Teachers use shadowing as a useful means of learning prosodic features and retention of English sounds while students are engaged in listening activities.
- Teachers evaluate and select post-listening activities which encourage and help students to discuss what they have just heard and review what they had guessed prior to listening.
- Teachers ask students to report what keywords and stressed words they have recognized while listening in order to help them grasp the meanings.

33. I can design and select different activities which help learners to recognize and interpret typical features of spoken language (tone of voice, intonation, style of speaking, etc.)

- Teachers create dictation worksheets to make students aware of typical features of English sound changes, such as linking, liaison, omission, contraction.
- Teachers explain typical features of spoken language, such as fragment utterances and chunks, and show students the examples in realistic usage situations (“Tea or coffee” at a coffee shop etc).
- Teachers show students a video clip to explain and make them understand typical features of spoken language, such as recast/repair, disfluency, paraphrases, and repeated utterances.

D. Reading

34. I can select texts appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners.

(Using supplementary materials to motivate learners)

Teachers' Selection

- Teachers have learners read newspaper (e.g., *Student Times*) or magazine (e.g., Aera's English version) articles related to the content of the reading text.
- Teachers rewrite or summarize authentic texts according to learners' level.

Learners' Selection

- Teachers help learners select appropriate information from the internet, etc.
- Teachers have learners research the information related to the content of the reading text. (e.g., If the textbook content is about athletes with disabilities in Ghana, have learners research about athletes with disabilities in Japan. Then, prepare a worksheet which helps learners summarize the information found in English. Learners can research in Japanese and report in English. Moreover, have learners focus on the country, Ghana and have them research about Ghana and other African countries.)

(cf. Learners' Needs: refer to items 3, 29, 40, 49, 54, 87)

35. I can provide a range of pre-reading activities to help learners to orientate themselves to a text.

(Raising learners' interests)

- Teachers show a picture related to the content of the reading text and have learners talk about the pictures in pairs or in groups of three. Then, have a few learners present what they talked about.
- Teachers write the title of the reading text and have learners guess its content. (e.g., Have learners talk about it in pairs or groups of three and present it to the class.)
- Teachers show learners a section of a movie or have them listen to a section of a broadcast related to the content of the reading text.
- Teachers ask learners questions which help them activate their schema on the content of the reading text (e.g., Do you know....?, if the reading text is about a freediver, ask "How long can you hold your breath?" and have them challenge it. Then, follow up with questions such as "Do you know long freedivers can hold their breath?", etc.)

36. I can encourage learners to use their knowledge of a topic and their expectations about a text when reading.

(Activate their background knowledge related to the content of the text)

- Teachers make connections with other subjects learners are studying.
- Teachers make connections with the current news.

37. I can apply appropriate ways of reading a text in class (e.g. aloud, silently, in groups, etc.)

(Read in various ways)

Reading Aloud

- Teachers have learners listen to the teacher read without looking at the text. Then, have learners talk about what they remember in a pair or groups of three or have them draw an image of what they have heard.
- Teachers do buzz reading with the whole class including the teacher.
- Teachers have learners get into pairs and read to each other without looking at the text when voicing (read, look up, speak).

Read Silently

- Teachers have learners read paragraph by paragraph and have them exchange what they remember in pairs.

38. I can design different activities in order to practice and develop different reading strategies according to the purpose of reading (skimming, scanning, etc.).

(Establish the purpose of reading and develop reading strategies)

Scanning

- Teachers write the title of the new reading text on the board and have learners guess the content.
- Teachers have learners scan for keywords related to the title of the reading text.
- Teachers have learners scan for related words/terms based on their guesses. Teachers have learners concentrate on the activity by setting a time limit.
- Teachers have learners focus on transitional words such as “however” and have them scan the reading text.

Skimming

- Teachers write the title of the new reading text on the board and have learners guess the content.
- Teachers have learners read the first and the last paragraphs of the text and guess the content.
- After confirming the theme of the text with the class, have learners read the first sentence of each paragraph and confirm what they have understood.

Selecting Topic Sentences

- Teachers have learners read each paragraph and underline the topic sentence.
- Teachers have learners write the topic of each paragraph in the margin.

Guessing the Meaning of Unknown Words

- Teachers have learners underline unknown words of each paragraph or write new words on the board.
- Teachers help learners guess the meaning of unknown words by making use of their knowledge of prefixes, suffixes, and stems.
- Teachers explain the role of an appositive comma or phrases such as “that is” and “in other words”.
- Teachers help learners pay attention to definitions of terms in the text.

Active Reading: Questioning Strategies

- Teachers have learners write comprehension questions in the margin. (e.g., What does...mean?, What does the author mean by....?)
- Teachers have learners write their opinions in the margin. (e.g., I agree or disagree because...)
- Teachers have learners write questions to the author in the margin. (e.g., Why does the author say...?, How can the author be so sure that...?)
- Teachers present learners with expressions they can use in doing the activities above.

39. I can select a variety of language activities to provide a bridge between reading and other skills.

(Speaking)

Reproduction

- Teachers have learners read paragraph by paragraph and retell the content in pairs.
- Teachers have learners pay attention to inter-sentential and inter-paragraph connections. (e.g., □ dissect the text into paragraphs or dissect a paragraph into sentences, □ distribute to each student a paragraph or a sentence, □ have learners memorize the content on the paper, □ have learners exchange what they have memorized orally, □ have learners reproduce the text or the paragraph)

Storytelling

- Teachers have learners retell the content of the text as if telling the story to a grade school student or someone unfamiliar with the topic.

Discussion

- Teachers have learners exchange their opinions about the theme of the text in small groups. Then, report it to the class.

(Writing)

- Teachers explain how to paraphrase.
- Teachers demonstrate paraphrasing by a dialogue with the learners and writing it on the board.
- Teachers have learners paraphrase complicated sentences in their own words.
- Teachers show an example of a summary.

- Teachers make a fill-in-the-blanks type of summary worksheet.
- Teachers explain how to summarize.
- Teachers have learners summarize the text in English using their own words.
- Teachers have learners write their reaction to the text.

40. I can recommend books appropriate to the needs, interests and language level of the learners for extensive reading.

Elucidate the purpose and ways of extensive reading)

- Teachers present the learners with extensive reading guidelines.(e.g., not to use the dictionary or that one can discontinue reading if he/she doesn't find the book interesting)

(Choosing books appropriate to learners' level)

- Teachers have learners engage in activities to choose a book appropriate to their level. (e.g., □make a copy of the first couple of pages of each graded readers' level, □show learners guidelines to choose a level appropriate to them (e.g., that he/she can read a page in a few minutes, that there are only a couple of unknown words in a sentence)).
- Teachers help learners make reading in English habitual. (e.g., give learners the first 5 to 10 minutes of class time for reading)

(Motivate learners to read)

- Teachers set a goal and make learners' progress visual. (e.g., have learners to color one space every 5 pages they read until they reach the goal)
- Teachers set up an opportunity to share what learners are reading. (e.g., have those learners who read the same book share their reactions or have learners recommend books they have read by making a short speech, etc.)
- Teachers scaffold the activity by preparing a fill-in-the-blanks worksheet or sample so that the task can be accomplished in English.
- Teachers have learners listen to the teacher recommend a book in English.

(cf. Learners' Needs: refer to items 3, 29, 40, 49, 54, 87)

E. Grammar

41. I can deal with questions learners may ask about grammar and if necessary, help them to use appropriate grammar reference books and dictionaries.

- Dictionary usage is taught by looking up vocabulary and phrases, etc. that are used in textbooks.
- Students engage in activities that will lead them to look up the meaning of unknown words in a dictionary when using work-sheets which include those words. In such activities, students learn important points such as that some words have multiple

meanings.

- To teach grammar used in a textbook as target language components. As a supplementary activity, students write sentences using their own information after teachers have shown them the target expressions in dictionaries.
- Students engage in learning activities reviewing grammar they have learned by referring to a chapter such as "Summary of Grammar" in their textbooks so that they can understand the target grammar better and master it.
- To instruct how to use appropriate grammar reference books which enhance students' autonomous learning .

42. I can evaluate and select grammatical exercises and activities that support learning and encourage oral and written communication.

- Students engage in shopping role-playing activities leading them to understand and use auxiliary verbs such as 'could you ~?' or 'will you ~ ?' questions which indicate polite requests.
- When students learn past tense, sentences in a form of a diary are presented, and students engage in an activity leading them to write about their own past experiences.
- When students learn the features of English paragraph writing, conjunctions and expressions which help develop persuasive discussion will be taught.

F. Vocabulary

43. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learn vocabulary in context.

(Learning vocabulary in context)

- Teachers present new vocabulary in a sentence and have students guess the meaning from the context.
- When teachers introduce a new word, they have students guess the meaning of the word using a picture or a photo.
- Teachers have students look words up in a dictionary when students find that the meaning they know is not appropriate in context. Even if they think they understand the meaning of a word teachers should have students check the meaning of the word because a word has various meanings.

(Examples of language activities to help students acquire vocabulary)

- Teachers help students connect the spelling and meanings of a word using a bingo activity.
- Teachers review the vocabulary (words and expressions) students have learned in a previous lesson in an oral introduction. This enables students to put the new vocabulary to practical use.
- Teachers have students express their opinions orally and write using the vocabulary

they have learned.

43. I can understand Longman's Basic 2000 Word, and evaluate and select a variety of activities with these words..

(Understanding of Longman's Basic 2000 Words)

- Teachers understand that Longman Basic 2000 Words are nearly the same words which Japanese high school students learn by their second year.
- Teachers realize that the Longman Basic 2000 Words correspond to 1200 words taught in junior high school and 1800 words taught in high school according to Course of Study (announced in 2008 for junior high schools and in 2009 for high schools).

(Conducting a lesson using Longman's Basic 2000 Words)

- Teachers utilize Longman's Basic 2000 Words in classroom English.
- Teachers conduct oral introductions about topics in a textbook using Longman's Basic 2000 Words.

45. I can understand and use high and low frequency words and receptive and productive vocabulary for my learners.

(High and low frequency words)

- Teachers are aware that the words native speakers of English use frequently and the words students use in school or daily life are high-frequency words.
- Teachers are aware that proper nouns which are not frequently used and jargon are low-frequency words.

(Receptive and productive vocabulary)

- Receptive vocabulary is vocabulary that learners can recognize and remember the meaning of when they read or hear it. Productive vocabulary is vocabulary that learners can use orally or in writing.

(Teaching vocabulary)

- Teachers teach receptive and productive vocabulary in three stages, "imitation and production without understanding," "understanding," "reproduction with understanding" and "production(making a sentence using vocabulary learned).
- Teachers teach receptive vocabulary in reading and listening, while they teach productive vocabulary in writing and speaking.

G. Culture

46. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which awaken learners' interest in and help them to develop their knowledge and understanding of their own and the English language culture.

Student teachers are supposed to acquire some basic knowledge of culture so that they can design and conduct some cultural activities in the classroom. For example:

(English teaching/learning)

- I am aware that English can be taught in two ways in Japan: as a foreign language, and as an international or global language.

(Cultural knowledge)

- I can describe the concept of culture in a fairly organized way.
- I can describe cultural similarities and differences in terms of everyday life, events, non-verbal communication, association, register, logic, etc. between Japan and English speaking countries in a fairly organized manner.
- I have the fundamental knowledge about the cultural heritage English-speaking countries share: for example, the Bible, Mother Goose, Shakespeare, Greek and Roman Myths, proverbs, superstitions, etc.
- I have the fundamental knowledge about historical and social background of major English speaking countries such as the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand: for example, immigration, indigenous people, politics, geography, famous people, literature, music, art, holidays, events, etc.
- I have the basic knowledge and understanding of the variations of English language and culture, especially the roles and characteristics of Englishes in the countries where English is used as an official or the second language.
- I have some interest in and knowledge of current events and international affairs regarding peace, environment, nature, science and technology, world heritage sites, etc.

(Activities)

- I can provide additional cultural information concerning the content of the lesson using printed materials or audio-visual aids.
- I can guide learners to use a dictionary, an encyclopedia, or the Internet to locate the desired culture-related information.
- I can raise learners' awareness of the values and views behind English language and culture through the above mentioned activities.
- I can design and conduct a variety of activities in which learners can introduce Japanese culture, discuss similarities and differences in culture between Japan and foreign countries, or exchange information and ideas about international topics in the forms of show & tell, speech, discussion, debate, email, essay writing, etc.

Resources

47. I can identify and evaluate a range of course books/materials appropriate for the age, interests and the English language level of the learners.

(Categories)

- books

- print media
- online sources
- TV and or radio programs
- commercial DVDs
- other commercial materials

(Activities)

- I can understand what the learners think.
- I can know the students' interests.
- I can grasp the students' English proficiency.
- I can locate course books/materials appropriate to improve the students' English proficiency.
- I can locate course books/materials appropriate for the students' level.
- I can locate course books/materials appropriate for presentations.

48 I can select texts and language activities from course books appropriate for my learners.

- I can make an approximate assessment of students' abilities.
- I can select paragraphs students can read without a dictionary.
- I can select paragraphs students can read with a dictionary.
- I can select language activities students can do without a dictionary.
- I can select language activities students can do with a dictionary.
- I can select language activities students can do with teacher's scaffolding.

49. I can locate and select listening and reading materials appropriate for the needs of my learners from a variety of sources, such as literature, mass media and the Internet.

When you read or watch literature, newspaper, website, and so on,

- I often wonder whether it can be a good material to inspire students.
- I often wonder whether it can be a good material to improve students' English proficiency.
- I often wonder whether it can be a good material for students to internalize English vocabulary.
- I often wonder whether it can be a good material for students to understand English grammar.

(cf. Learners' Needs: refer to items 3, 29, 40, 49, 54, 87)

50. I can make use of ideas, lesson plans and materials included in teachers' handbooks and resource books.

(As for teaching ideas that are included in teacher's manuals attached to a textbook and or auxiliary materials,)

- I can use the ideas by adapting them to my students.

- I can use the teaching plans and other materials by adapting them to my syllabi.

51. I can design learning materials and activities appropriate for my learners.

- In instructing target sentences of the textbook, I try to figure out good ways so that students can learn the sentences within the context.
- In instructing advanced versions of language activities in the textbook, I try to devise the best way for students to understand the situational setting.
- I read articles in English Teachers' magazine, and or New English Teachers' magazine.

52. I can recommend dictionaries and other reference books useful for my learners.

- I usually check examination books sent to school carefully.
- At a bookstore I usually check books or dictionaries which are not sent to school.
- I usually check electronic dictionaries at an electronics shop.

53. I can guide learners to use the Internet for information retrieval.

- I usually check English-language websites to obtain information.
- I try to gather information about English websites my students can use.
- I compile a list of frequently used lexicon in English website so that I can teach the vocabulary to my students.

Lesson Planning

A. Identification of Learning Objectives

54. I can understand the Course of Study requirements and establish learning objectives accordingly.

- To set learning objectives leading students to understand the basic knowledge of English language pronunciation such as liaison, stresses in words, phrases and sentences used in a textbook (considering students' expectation to be able to pronounce English well).
- To set learning objectives leading students to recite some English sentences in the textbooks or organize their thoughts and make a speech on a topic they have covered.
- To set learning objectives leading students to understand the life and culture of the area dealt with in the textbook by giving students supplementary information.
- To give students advanced self-teaching materials such as newspapers and magazines (considering students' interest to further study the topics they have covered in their textbooks).
- To set learning objectives leading students to develop their receptive vocabulary or

review sentence patterns and practice using intentionally the vocabulary previously learned (considering students' expectation of improvement of skills to enable them to pass university entrance examinations).

55. I can establish specific learning objectives for individual lessons and/or for a period of teaching.

- To design an annual teaching plan considering what kind of English skills should be developed or how to design a syllabus using textbooks. For example, set learning objectives leading students to develop their listening skills to the level of understanding everyday topics such as information about a sale or local events.
- To set monthly learning objectives based on an annual teaching plan. For example, students can listen to the whole unit of the textbook and understand the content correctly.
- To set weekly learning objectives based on a monthly teaching plan. For example, students can listen to an AET's questions about a section of the textbook and understand it correctly.

56. I can set objectives which challenge learners to reach their full potential.

- To set learning objectives leading students to develop an interest in a topic presented in the textbook and stimulate learning by presenting concrete visual information such as photographs.
- To set learning objectives leading students to self-assess their skills by giving them a can-do list. For example, "I can convey what I want to buy to the shopkeeper", when they learn a topic about shopping.
- To set learning objectives leading students to understand a task expressing their thoughts and opinions as a final activity of each unit and stimulate their learning by presenting aims of the task beforehand.
- To set learning objectives leading students to work on their language activities cooperatively and develop cooperative learning in their everyday classroom.

57. I can set objectives which take into account the gap in proficiency and special educational needs of the learners.

- To set learning objectives leading students to improve their listening skills by using audiovisual materials or English songs. (considering students' expectation to be able to understand TV broadcast or movies in English better).
- To set learning leading students to improve their reading skills through extensive reading (considering students' expectation to be able to read books written in English without a dictionary). For example, a desirable number of books to be read in one semester is indicated.

- To set learning leading students to assess their degree of understanding and mastery of the vocabulary and language components they have acquired.
- To set learning aims according to the three levels of English language ability advanced, intermediate and basic. For example, a junior high school writing task such as “What would you like to do for the summer vacation?” could be given according to their level. For an advanced level, a learning objective would be to write a coherent passage with varied vocabulary, while writing a passage replacing some information in a model sentence would be appropriate for an intermediate level. For the basic level, learning objectives would be to enable learners to understand the future tense form better by writing sentences following a model sentence.

58. I can set objectives for the four main skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing respectively, according to the focus of individual lessons and/or period of teaching.

- As objectives of assessments of students’ learning progress on an individual textbook unit, objectives are set according to the four main skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing respectively. Each skill is assessed from the perspectives of ‘interest, motivation and attitude’, ‘understanding’, ‘expressing oneself’ and ‘knowledge and understanding of a language and culture’. The following are some examples:
- As an example of ‘understanding’ in ‘listening’, an objective is set to lead students to understand what a customer wants to buy, by listening to the conversation between the shopkeeper and the customer.
- As an example of ‘expressing oneself’ in ‘speaking’, an objective is set to lead students to talk about their favorite picture when they study about fine art in their textbook.
- As an example of ‘knowledge and understanding of a language and culture’ in ‘reading’, an objective is set to lead students to understand correctly the culture of the country when they have studied an intercultural topic in their textbook. In that study, students can use their knowledge of the target country they have learned in their social studies classes.
- As an example of ‘interest, motivation and attitude’ in ‘writing’, an objective is set to lead students to write a passage about the differences of the country presented in the textbook and Japan following a culture-related unit in textbook.

59. I can set objectives which encourage learners to reflect on their learning.

- To set learning objectives to use a portfolio so that students can reflect on the activities performed and the material learned. For example, “I have learned vocabulary about transportation”, “I was able to understand the content of the textbook correctly” and “I was able to answer the questions of my pair work partner.”
- To set learning objectives to lead students to prepare them for making a speech

(considering assessment points of their learning process which are given before their activity).

- To set learning objectives to lead students to take points of reflection into consideration using an assessment sheet for producing activities such as presentations or skits.
- To set learning objectives to lead students to think how to improve their activity through discussion about their performance when they have an activity in which they do some research and present their findings.

B. Lesson Content

60. I can structure lesson plans and/or plan for periods of teaching in a coherent and varied sequence of content.
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- When lesson plans for periods of teaching are designed, the teaching policy is coherent. For example, a teaching plan for writing is designed to lead students to make it a daily writing task throughout the academic year to write about what they have experienced and express their opinions about those experiences.
- To design a teaching plan for speaking promoting students' use of English by making interaction in English between a teacher and students commonplace in a classroom - e.g. when greeting and giving instructions.
- To design a teaching plan considering language components such as grammatical items and vocabulary, and the focused skill appropriate to the specific situation. For example, a teaching plan is designed leading students to better understand wh-questions by using interview activities which aim to improve students' questioning and answering skills. This plan is designed according to the number of lessons for the textbook unit taught in a month.

61. I can plan activities to ensure the interdependence of listening, reading, writing and speaking.
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- To design a teaching plan utilizing daily language activities in which listening and speaking activities are integrated - for example, to convey information obtained through communication on a phone to others.
- To design a teaching plan in which listening and reading activities are integrated - for example, to confirm the information heard on a radio by checking articles in newspapers or magazines.
- To design a teaching plan in which listening and writing activities are integrated - for example, to organize a counterargument after listening to opponents' remarks in a debate activity.
- To design a teaching plan in which reading and speaking activities are integrated - for example, to read a catalog and order an item on the phone.
- To design a teaching plan in which writing and speaking activities are integrated - for

example, to write a speech and then deliver it.

- To design a teaching plan in which reading and writing activities are integrated - for example, to reply to a letter.

62. I can plan activities to emphasize the interdependence of language and culture.

- To design a teaching plan to enhance students' interest in history and culture. For example, students do some research on the World Heritage sites they would like to visit in the future and present their findings.
- To design a teaching plan using a topic from the 'Asian Foster Plan' to lead students to learn about and reflect on the life of children in another Asian country whose life is very different from the life of Japanese children.
- To design a teaching plan to enhance students' interest in language and different lifestyles. For example, to make a teaching plan based on the language and lifestyle of the Maori people and lead students to recognize their uniqueness compared to Japanese culture.

63. I can plan activities which link grammar and vocabulary with communication.

- To design a teaching plan to improve students' vocabulary leading students to do a task like the following Q and A pair work using pictures or photographs:
Q: How many (a name of an animal) can you see in this picture? A: I can see (a number) lions. Or Q: How do you say (a Japanese name of an animal) in English? A: It is a penguin.
- To design a teaching plan to use task-based activities which consider an authentic language-use situation when a grammatical item is taught. For example, when the comparative degree is taught, students play a role of a shopkeeper claiming their goods are better than those of a competitor. Students also play a role of a customer who compares both products from both shops and asks questions about the differences to respective shopkeepers.

64. I can accurately estimate the time needed for specific topics and activities and plan work accordingly.

- To design a teaching plan for an individual textbook unit based on the annual teaching plan.
- To design a teaching plan which focuses on an individual lesson's objective while considering a broader teaching aim of the whole unit of the textbook.
- To design a teaching plan which takes into account the possibility that the learning activity may not finish within the scheduled time or the learning activity may finish earlier than expected.
- To design a supplementary teaching plan in case the students' understanding doesn't

meet the expectation and so an additional learning activity is required.

- To design a teaching plan which considers how much time a learning activity might take. For example, how long will it take students to itemize the pros and cons of a cellular phone after reading about it?

65. I can design activities to make the learners aware of and build on their existing knowledge.

- To design an activity leading students to do a communication activity using a worksheet like a picture dictionary for reviewing some of the vocabulary they have learned.
- To design an activity leading students to communicate in pairs or groups about a shopping situation, or showing the way for reviewing some grammatical items they have learned.
- To design an activity leading students to make a presentation on environmental problems when dealing with an environmental theme. Similar kinds of activities can be used when dealing with social problems or historical topics.

66. I can vary and balance activities to enhance and sustain the learners' motivation and interest.

- To design an activity to utilize students' background knowledge so that they can understand the language components they have learned better. For example, students introduce their favorite teenage star or comic book character showing their photos when they learn the third person singular. They introduce their characters as follows: "This is my favorite singer. He/ She likes ~."
- To design an activity to promote students' productive use of English. For example, design a small talk activity with such topics as 'My Favorite Music/ Actor/ Sport as a warm-up activity.
- To design an activity to promote students' interests using audiovisual material. For example, design an activity leading students to write about their impressions of the animals after they see images of them when the topic of the preservation of nature is being taught.
- To set learning objectives leading students to understand an activity by expressing their thoughts and opinions at the end of a textbook unit, and work on their learning positively by clearly presenting the aims of the activity beforehand.
- To consider students' personal relationships which may allow communication activities to flow more smoothly in cooperative learning situations. For example, to design an activity leading students to build a relationship of trust exchanging their information such as likes or dislikes on textbook topics – e.g. music, environment and regional topics, etc.

67. I can vary and balance activities in order to respond to individual learners' learning styles.

- To design learning activities that are suitable for students' interests according to their age. For example, at the first step of English learning in upper classes at elementary school or in the first-grade classes at junior high school, students work on activities which familiarize them with English sounds, using oral reading rather than focusing on grammatical rules.
- To design learning activities which lead students to present their research on what they have studied before, on topics which stimulate students' academic interests and encourage them to broaden their knowledge.

68. I can take account of learners' feedback and comments and incorporate this into future lessons.

- To design supplementary activities for the subsequent lesson when the students' understanding is not sufficient.
- To analyze the reason for lack of interaction between a teacher and students or among students in an activity to promote their interest in the new topic.
- To reflect on the lessons conducted so far and improve subsequent lessons by utilizing student questionnaires.

C. Lesson Organization

69. I can select from and plan a variety of organizational formats (teacher-centered, individual, pair, group work) as appropriate.

- To design a lesson plan leading students to work on pronunciation practice and understanding the meaning of target words using flash cards when students need to understand the meaning and usage of new words.
- To support individual students who have pronunciation difficulty.
- To design a lesson plan leading students to work on extensive or intensive reading at their individual pace.
- To design a lesson plan, focusing on reading and speaking skills, which leads students to work on an integrated activity such as reading a letter written by a partner and commenting on it.

70. I can plan for learner presentations and learner interaction.

- To design a lesson plan leading students to work on an activity where they ask questions about such things as their favorite food, sport, and music with wh-question cards as a warm-up activity.
- To design an advanced activity at making use of language items learned in the classroom. For example, to design a learning activity leading students to exchange

information about facilities such as a park, a library or a station, etc. in their neighborhood and how they use them.

- To design a lesson plan leading students to work on activities such as making a speech on a theme dealt with in the textbook when targeting presentation skills.
- To design a lesson plan leading students to exchange book reports on an assigned book and talk about the pros and cons of the book.
- To design learning activities leading students to present their ongoing research on what they have studied before in order to promote independent learning. For example, students research an environmental problem they are interested in and make a presentation about it.

71. I can plan when and how to use the target language, including meta-language I may need in the classroom.

- To design a lesson plan leading students to exchange information about the topic of the new textbook unit, using audiovisual material to promote students' interest .
- To design a lesson plan leading students to make a speech about what they did in their summer vacation.
- To design a lesson plan leading students to communicate with each other using the grammar and vocabulary they have learned. For example, after introducing a relative pronoun, students work on the following interaction:

A: What am I? I am a person who builds a house. B: Well, I think you are a carpenter.

- To design a lesson plan leading students to conduct a debate as an advanced activity when a controversial theme such as 'young people's use of cellular phones' is dealt with in the textbook.

72. I can plan lessons and periods of teaching with other teachers and/or assistant language teachers (team teaching, with other subject teachers etc.).

- To design a teaching plan to demonstrate the model of an interaction activity with an ALT when focusing on self-expression.
- To design a lesson plan in which an ALT introduces his or her country's culture.
- To design a lesson plan leading students to conduct an interview with an ALT.
- To design a lesson plan to answer questions from students with support from the mentor or an ALT, and give some suggestions on how to promote an activity when students work in pairs or in a group.
- To design a team teaching plan which allows for supportive feedback from the mentor after the lesson.

Conducting a Lesson

A. Using Lesson Plans

73. I can start a lesson in an engaging way.

- Greeting each other in English and creating an affective atmosphere for an English lesson
- Talking about learners' school life or family life
- Talking to learners in English by referring to topics about learners
- Using classroom English and raising learners' awareness that a lesson is about to begin
- Using songs in English or audio-visual aids in order to create a relaxing atmosphere
- Reviewing previous lessons and getting learners ready for new content

74. I can be flexible when working from a lesson plan and respond to learner interests as the lesson progresses.

- Grasping main objectives of the lesson as well as the flow of a lesson plan
- Understanding purposes of each activity and varying activities as needed
- Elucidating activity by using easy English or examples
- Writing on blackboard in an easily comprehensible manner or using audio-visual aids effectively
- Monitoring learners' level of understanding, and adding concrete examples or selecting supplementary teaching materials as needed

75. I can adjust my time schedule when unforeseen situations occur.

(unforeseen situations)

- When it takes more or less time for instructions or explanations than expected
- When it takes more or less time for individual/group activities than expected
- When learners cannot answer questions
- When learners ask unexpected questions or show unanticipated response

(ways of dealing with unforeseen situations)

- Repeating questions/explanation/instructions, rephrasing by using easier expressions (for example, when learners do not understand "Raise your hands.", you can say, "Put up your hands."), or giving hints
- Having learners work in a pair and confirm their understanding with each other before beginning an activity or checking answers as a class
- Dividing teaching elements into two groups in advance – most essential points and points which can be omitted or be taught during the next lesson
- Providing another related or more advanced activity for learners who can finish an activity early

- Providing a more advanced activity as a class
- Assigning a part of an activity as homework when learners cannot finish it within the assigned time
- Reviewing what was difficult to understand in the follow-up lesson
- Providing another activity through which learners can further practice what was difficult in a previous lesson

76. I can time and change classroom activities to reflect learners' attention spans.

- Properly allocating time to each activity depending on the level of learners' understanding or the degree of difficulty
- Allowing learners to think on their own or to discuss with other learners
- Building in some time for learners to understand the explanation or what is written on blackboard as well as to copy what is written on board to their notebook
- Varying activity formats, as needed, and allocating time appropriately
- Paying attention so that learners do not spend too much time on each activity
- Building in some time for individual learners or groups to present orally

B. Content

77. I can relate what I teach to learners' knowledge, current events, and the culture of those who speak it.

- Eliciting learners' background knowledge or experience and relating it to lesson content
- Having learners think about how and where in their life vocabulary, concepts or themes introduced are used
- Relating lesson content to current events or news
- Relating lesson content to the content of other subjects

C. Interaction with Learners

78. I can keep and maximise the attention of learners during a lesson.

- Paying attention to speed and volume of voice or eye contact and becoming a model of a good English speaker
- Confirming the level of learners' understanding of your instructions or explanation in English
- Introducing or explaining by eliciting learners' reaction
- Devising ways of having students use English
- Properly dealing with slow learners
- Monitoring the progress of a whole class

79. I can encourage learner participation and learner interaction whenever possible.

- Providing an activity through which learners can practice using language elements that they learned
- Providing an activity through which learners can express their ideas by relating to their life, thoughts, and emotions
- Encouraging learners to have confidence in their English
- Clearly assigning roles (mc, summarizer, note-taker, etc.) in a group activity
- Considering the levels of each student's English proficiency in pairing or grouping

80. I can cater for a range of learning styles.

- Providing various activities in a balanced manner, from communication-centered tasks to more analytical tasks
- Providing various activities in a balanced manner for a range of learning styles (e.g., using visual aids for 'visual' learners or using audio aids for 'audile' learners)
- Providing both individual tasks and group tasks, for learners who prefer to work individually as well as for learners who prefer to work in groups

81. I can help learners to develop appropriate learning strategies.

- Asking learners to reflect on their use of strategies, such as guessing the meaning of unknown vocabulary from context
- Explaining and demonstrating how to use a strategy suitable for an activity
- Providing an activity through which learners can practice using a strategy introduced
- Asking learners to choose themselves the most appropriate strategy for an activity
- Having learners set a goal before an activity
- Having learners evaluate their own use of strategies after an activity

D. Classroom Management

82. I can create opportunities for and manage individual, partner, group and whole class work.

- Creating opportunities for individual work such as reading aloud of a text, checking pronunciation of expressions which will be used in pair work, putting together their ideas before group work, or writing freely by using the expressions that learners learned after group work
- Creating opportunities for pair work such as a role play or an information-gap task
- Creating opportunities for group work such as ranking, problem solving or ordering paragraphs in a coherent manner
- Creating opportunities for whole-class work such as a bingo game for learning new vocabulary, practicing expressions for using in pair work or group work, or reporting back to a whole class

83. I can manage and use instructional media (flash cards, charts, pictures, audio-visual aids) effectively.

- Creating flash cards or power point slides for introducing new vocabulary
- Showing pictures or realia, or providing context in explaining vocabulary
- Using pictures or charts for enhancing learners' comprehension
- Optimizing layout of handouts or use of blackboard
- Using picture cards for explaining situations.
- Using audio-visual aids such as DVD or CD for learners to get the gist of what they read or review.

E. Classroom English

84. I can conduct a lesson in English, and if necessary use Japanese effectively.

(using English as a medium of classroom language: efficient use of Total Physical Response in class)

- Teachers, as role models of English user, actively utilize classroom English in order to make students clearly understand their instructions in English.
- Teachers understand that demonstration is more important than oral explanation when using classroom English.
- Teachers are determined to make students understand in English, and encourage them to try hard during class.
- Teachers give students clear and specific instructions in English, and demonstrate how they can do it.
- Teachers give students clear and specific instructions in English, and students follow the instruction by themselves.
- Teachers give students a variety of tasks in English, and encourage them to respond physically.
- Teachers encourage and help students give clear and specific instructions in English each other, and to respond physically. For example, "Let's play a game. First, make a group of four. Next, decide the group leader by "rock-scissors-paper."

(using English as a medium of classroom language: tips)

- Teachers speak loudly and clearly.
- Teachers use and control eye contact.
- Teachers are always present within sight of students as role models.
- Teachers are aware of the importance of appropriate tone of voice.
- Teachers utilize non-verbal communication (use authentic materials and real-life examples, draw pictures, use gestures, body language, and facial expressions, etc.)

(using Japanese effectively as necessary)

- Teachers plan in advance how to keep English and Japanese separate in use in class

in order to meet students' needs (Which language and what kind of expressions should be used for classroom management? Which English expressions can be used? What Japanese expressions are useful?)

- Teachers plan in advance to decide when to use English or Japanese depending on the teaching context in order to avoid translating English into Japanese after giving an instruction in English to students.
- Teachers must understand that the frequent use of Japanese, especially in the beginning stage, may have a negative influence on students' subsequent learning experiences because students will not make a further attempt to understand in English and wait for Japanese if Japanese becomes a medium of classroom language while using only English might sometimes demotivate students.
- Teachers make sure of students' level of comprehension in English by (1) carefully observing students, and (2) asking questions. For example, if there are students who do not seem to understand in class, a teacher may ask, "Is that right?" "What do you think?" "Put up your hand if you don't understand" or "Tell me in Japanese what I said."

85. I can encourage learners to use English in their activities.

- Teachers must understand "the necessity" of using English, and demonstrate it to their students by designing and selecting a variety of activities within the framework of realistic usage situations in order to give students a chance to experience English use. In other words, it is "necessary" for students to make a clear connection between the expression and its meaning when teachers are explaining the meaning in class. Teachers use an expression, for example, "Make a group of four," with gestures to guide students to make a group of four when playing a game.
- Teachers give students opportunities in class to learn and experience new English expressions for themselves through the use of classroom English, or English as a medium of classroom language. In other words, teachers help and encourage students to actually feel that English is a means of communication. For example, teachers can encourage students by saying "Very good," "Well done."

Independent Learning

A. Learner Autonomy

86. I can guide and assist learners in setting their own objectives and in planning their own learning.

(Kinds of objectives)

- Broadly speaking, objectives can be divided into three categories: short-term objectives for one term or one year, mid-term objectives until graduation, and

long-term objectives for the future after graduation)

(Examples of objectives)

- short-term objectives

(1) Students can understand 80 % of conversation in English about the past events.

(2) Students can carry on a conversation in English about the things they did the day before.

(3) Students can write more than five sentences in English about the things they did yesterday.

- mid-term objectives

(1) Students get accustomed to listening to English and understand speakers' intention after listening to simple English.

(2) Students get accustomed to speaking English and express their opinions using simple English.

(3) Students pass 2nd grade of STEP test.

- long-term objectives

(1) Students can conduct a conversation on familiar topics when traveling abroad.

(2) Students can function socially and academically in an English-speaking country.

(3) Students can conduct business negotiations in English.

(Guiding and assisting learners in setting their own objectives)

- Teachers provide time for students at the beginning of a term or year to set their own goals individually.
- Teachers present examples of objectives that senior students set in the previous year to help students understand the notion of "objectives".
- Teachers have students brainstorm objectives collaboratively.
- Teachers have students set short-term objectives according to specific skill-based criteria.
- Teachers have students share their objectives with their classmates. When their objectives are unclear, teachers have students revise them.

(Guiding and assisting learners to plan their learning)

- Teachers have students plan their learning and submit the plan to the teacher at the beginning of a term or a year.
- Teachers have students identify specific milestones to achieve their short-term objectives when they plan their learning. (e.g., Students read aloud a textbook five times a day. Students keep an English diary in which they make daily entries of more than five sentences.)

87. I can assist learners in choosing tasks and activities according to *their individual needs and interests.

(Understanding students' needs and interests)

- Teachers conduct a questionnaire about topics that students are interested in.

- Teachers conduct a questionnaire about students' motivation for learning English and their attainment targets.
- Teachers check students' academic level through observation, quizzes, and regular exams.

(Presentation of tasks and activities which suit individual students' needs and interests)

- Teachers implement activities where students can choose a topic based on their interest. (e.g., Students choose a speech topic among three choices.)
- Teachers prepare three kinds of worksheets (basic, standard, and advanced) which students can choose according to their English proficiency.
- Teachers prepare activities suitable for students' motivation and objectives for learning English. (e.g., When students have a short-term goal such as "to conduct a one-minute speech about things they did in the previous day," teachers prepare reading aloud, overlapping, and shadowing activities and have the students select one activity.)

*their individual needs (See items 3, 29, 34, 40, 49, 54)

88. I can help learners to evaluate their own learning processes and outcomes.
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(Helping learners evaluate their own learning processes)

- Teachers have students keep learning records to monitor their learning progress.
- Teachers have students check their learning records regularly (e.g., once a month) and revise them if they accomplish their goal.

(Helping learners evaluate their own learning outcomes)

- Teachers have students keep records of learning outcomes as a portfolio which may include items such as exam results, learning records, and assignments they have handed in, and have them reflect on whether they have achieved the objectives they set at the beginning of the semester.
- Teachers check students' learning outcomes. If students do not accomplish their learning objectives, they write down the reasons as well as the solution and submit them to the teacher.

B. Homework

89. I can select tasks most suited to be carried out by learners.

(Most suitable tasks for students)

- Teachers give homework focusing on vocabulary. (e.g., vocabulary practice and English composition using vocabulary learned)
- Teachers give homework focusing on new content. (e.g., reading a textbook aloud, copying sentences in a textbook, and doing grammar exercises)
- Teachers give homework to expand the content learned in class and encourage students to speak about the contents (e.g., making a skit using sentences in a

textbook, and writing, preparing for example a show-and-tell speech).

- Teachers give homework to promote good study habits. (e.g., watching an English TV program, listening to an English radio program, keeping an English diary, and writing anything related to English in a notebook.)
- Teachers assign a reasonable amount of homework (e.g., Teachers give homework students can finish in 20 to 30 minutes.)

90. I can provide necessary support for learners in order for them to do homework independently and assist them with time management.

(Necessary support for learners in order for them to do homework independently)

- Teachers make the purpose of homework clear. (e.g., Teachers tell students that the purpose of the homework is to acquire vocabulary when they give related homework.)
- Teachers have students hand in worksheets or notebooks, and write down comments for each student in order to arouse students' motivation.
- When some students do not hand in homework, teachers ask for the reasons they do not hand in homework orally or through a questionnaire.

(Assistance with time management)

- Teachers ask students to record and report the time they took for homework.
- When teachers give homework to promote good study habits, they ask students to record and report time took. (e.g., Students black out one cell per hour to show their study hours for one week or one month.)
- Teachers show the class study hours of English, such as an average hours per week regularly (e.g., once a month) and encourage students to reflect on their length of time spent on English study.

91. I can assess homework according to valid and transparent criteria.

- Teachers vary methods of assessment (e.g., merely checking whether or not students did homework, checking the quality of the homework students did, checking students' understanding using a quiz, and giving feedback to students for further study) according to the contents and kinds of homework assigned.
- When teachers give an assignment to read aloud or recite a textbook, they assess students' achievement based on clear criteria. (examples of criteria: Students read aloud at an appropriate volume. Students read aloud using appropriate intonation. Teachers convey contents to the audience clearly.)
- Teachers conduct a vocabulary quiz for assigned homework involving vocabulary practice. (e.g., Students in pairs conduct a quiz to see how many words they can define within one minute. Students check the number of correct answers following a dictation.)

C. Virtual Learning Environments

92. I can use various ICT resources such as internet and appropriately advise learners on how to use the resources

- By using educational equipments, I try to provide level-appropriate materials.
- I try to have students study outside classroom by using educational equipments.
- In class, I have students learn individually by using the Net and/ or e-learning.
- Outside classroom, I have students learn individually by using the Internet and/or e-learning.

Evaluation

A. Designing Assessment Tools

93. I can evaluate and select valid assessment procedures (written tests, performance tests, etc.) appropriate to learning aims and objectives.

- At the beginning of the school year, I plan what kind of ability of students I develop based on the textbook and how I measure the development.
- At the beginning of each term, I plan what kind of skills I develop based on the textbook and how I measure the development.
- At the beginning of each lesson, I plan what kind of skills I develop based on the textbook and how I measure the development.

94. I can design and use in-class activities to monitor and assess a learner's participation and performance.

- In order to assess students' attitude toward my class, I write some comments and or assessments down on the class name list and or the class sitting chart.

B. Evaluation

95. I can identify strengths and areas for improvement in a learner's performance.

- In order to communicate to students' their strong points and weak points, I try to remember students' faces and names as soon as I start the lesson.
- In order to identify each student correctly, I use the class name list and or the class sitting chart.
- I have students confirm incorrect answers in a quiz.
- I have students confirm incorrect answers in a mid-term or term-end test.

96. I can present my assessment of a learner's performance and progress in the form of a descriptive evaluation, which is transparent and comprehensible to the learner, parents and others.

- I control students' data with a PC so that I can illustrate students' development with tables and /or graphs.

97. I can use appropriate assessment procedures to chart and monitor a learner's progress (reports, checklist, grades, etc.).

- I try to evaluate students' development with valid tests.

C. Language Performance

98. I can assess a learner's ability to engage in spoken and written interactions.

- I make an effort to improve my English speaking and writing abilities in order to assess students' ability effectively.
- I make Can-do lists and or portfolio in order to assess students' ability effectively.

D. Culture

99. I can assess learners' ability to make comparisons between their own and the culture of the English-language communities.

- I make a habit of studying cultures of English-speaking countries.
- I try to include information about cultures of English speaking countries in my lessons.
- I try to conduct lessons where students can identify differences between Japanese culture and cultures of English-speaking countries.
- I try to assess students' willingness to understand differences between Japanese culture and cultures of English-speaking countries.
- I try to assess students' willingness to speak about differences between Japanese culture and cultures of English-speaking countries.

E. Error analysis

100. I can analyze learners' errors and provide constructive feedback.

- When a student makes a mistake, I try not to blame the student but to encourage him or her.
- When a student makes a mistake, I try to identify the underlying cause. When a student makes mistakes in spoken English, after distinguishing acceptable local errors, from global errors, which impede comprehension, I try to correct the latter

JACET Survey on CEFR

Shien Sakai, Hisatake Jimbo

I Background

In the beginning was the Can-do list. The term has become so prevalent in the English teaching profession. Then we have started discussing the six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) of CEFR's global scale of language competences. At the same time, the term "learner autonomy" has become a buzz word. And we have realized that the term originated in the CEFR. JACET SIG on English Education started studying ELP and EPOSTL from 2008, which was little known in Japan at that time. Moreover, the fundamental principles of plurilingualism / pluriculturalism and action-oriented approach of CEFR were not discussed much among the researchers. In other words, only the assessment framework of six levels of CEFR was taken up for serious discussion.

Therefore, we have decided to conduct a survey among English educators on how much knowledge they have on CEFR's framework itself and fundamental principles. Our objective is to collect accurate data on the Japanese teachers' knowledge of CEFR and disseminate the essential core of CEFR.

II Survey

- 1) Respondents: JACET members listed in the 2009 directory
- 2) Method: Written Questionnaires
- 3) Timeframe: December, 2010 to January, 2011
- 4) Number of responses: 278
- 5) Question Items
 - i) Knowledge of the terms: 10 items, ii) Introduction of CEFR to the respondents' environment by adapting it: 7 items, iii) Necessity of learning foreign languages other than English to promote east Asian and global human interaction: 7 items
- 6) Data analysis: MS EXCEL2007 and SPSS19.0J software packages were used to analyze the data.

III Survey Results

1. Knowledge of the terms

This section were responded in 4 level scale: 4 (know very well), 3 (know to a certain degree), 2 (heard several times), 1 (heard for the first time). From Item1 (knowledge of Can-do list, Item 2 (knowledge of CEFR), Item 3 (knowledge of CEFR's six levels of language competences), Item 4 (knowledge of plurilingualism) to Item 5 (knowledge of pluriculturalism), the modes were 3 (know to a certain degree), their average values were in the 2s. From Item 6 (action-oriented view of language learning), Item 7 (domain of language activities), Item 8 (learner autonomy) to Item 9 (European Language Portfolio), the modes were 1 (heard for the first time) and their average values were in the 2s. However, Item 10 (knowledge of EPOSTL) showed the average of 1. Items 9 and 10 showed floor effects. (The details are shown in Tables 1, 2, 3).

Table 1 Knowledge of the terms (4 level scales)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ave.	2.90	2.78	2.60	2.49	2.39	2.11	2.04	2.15	2.00	1.61
Mode	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1
SD	1.01	1.01	1.08	1.10	1.10	1.07	1.01	1.03	1.03	0.86

2. Introduction of CEFR to the respondent's environment by adapting it

This section were responded in 5 level scale: 5 (Agree), 4 (Somewhat agree), 3 (Cannot tell), 2 (Somewhat disagree), 1 (Disagree). The modes of four items, Item11 (Classify the students by the six levels of CEFR scale and give instruction), Item12 (Create the teaching curricula based on the CEFR's six levels), Item 13 (Include other foreign languages in addition to English as optional subjects to promote east Asian and global human interaction) and Item 15 (Giving classes on an action-oriented principles) were 3 (Cannot tell) and their average values were in the 3s, which show that their pendulums swing in the affirmative direction. The modes of Item14 (Include other foreign language cultures in addition to English language cultures as optional subjects) and Item16 (Instructing focusing on the necessary domains of language activities—public, private, working and educational environments) were 4 (Somewhat agree) and their average values were in the 3s, which show that their pendulums swing more in the affirmative direction. The mode of Item17 (Instructing the idea of lifelong learning of foreign languages) was 5 and its average value was in the 4s, which show that almost all respondents agree. Item17 showed the ceiling effect.

Table 2 Introduction of CEFR to the respondents' environment (5 level scales)

	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Ave.	3.34	3.25	3.78	3.93	3.71	3.76	4.53
Mode	3	3	3	4	3	4	5
SD	0.91	0.91	0.95	0.94	0.86	0.91	0.75

3. Necessity of learning foreign languages other than English

This section was responded in 5 level scale: 5 (Necessary), 4 (Somewhat necessary), 3 (Cannot tell), 2 (Somewhat unnecessary), 1 (Unnecessary). The modes of Item 18 (Chinese) and Item19 (Korean) were 4 (Somewhat necessary), and their average values were in the 4s, which show that many respondents think they are necessary. The modes of Item 20 (Russian), Item 21 (German), Item 22 (French) and Item 23 (Spanish) were 3, and their average values were in the 3s, which show that their pendulums swing in the necessary direction. The mode of the last Item 24 (Japanese) was 5 and the average value was in the 4s. However, the number of non-respondents of this item was 25, considerably larger than other languages. Item 18 (Chinese) and the last Item 24 (Japanese) showed the ceiling effect.

Table 3 Necessity of the languages other than English to promote east Asian and global human interaction (5 level scale)

	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Ave.	4.27	4.00	3.11	3.11	3.17	3.42	4.17
Mode	4	4	3	3	3	3	5
SD	0.73	0.90	1.00	0.96	0.95	0.95	1.02

4. Factor Analysis: Processing of analyzable items and missing values

As items 11-17 concern the introduction of CEFR to the respondents' environment by adapting it, we decided to conduct factor analysis on this section. Item 17 was deleted because it showed the ceiling effect. In this section there were 7 or 8 no-responses in each item. "No-responses" were processed as missing values of zero. As correlations were expected among factors, the promax rotation was used in the analysis. We found the two major factors. The components of the first factor were items 11, 12, 15 and 16, and we named this factor as "instructing students." The components of the second factor were items 13 and 14, and we named this factor as "plurilingualism / pluriculturalism."

5. Correlation

1) Correlation between Section 1 and Section 2 (see Table 4)

We analyzed how much influence does the knowledge of the terms have on the introduction of CEFR to the respondents' environment by adapting it. Items 2 (CEFR), 3 (CEFR's six levels), 4 (plurilingualism) and 5 (pluriculturalism) have weak correlation ($r > 0.200$) with items 11 (Classify the students by the six levels of CEFR scale and give instruction) and 12 (Create the teaching curricula based on the CEFR's six levels).

Item 8 (learner autonomy: attitude to learn languages for lifelong) has weak correlation with item 12 (Create the teaching curricula based on the CEFR's six levels).

Table 4 Correlation between Section 1 and Section 2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	.165**	.211**	.243**	.204**	.202**	.161**	.173**	.197**	.156**	.101
12	.189**	.232**	.269**	.201**	.213**	.174**	.181**	.231**	.174**	.127*
13	.081	.119*	.153*	.170**	.197**	.124*	.157**	.162**	.171**	.152*
14	.050	.094	.116	.112	.165**	.076	.121*	.136*	.128*	.095
15	.132*	.081	.098	.107	.085	.130*	.125*	.116	.050	.029
16	.014	.009	.026	.050	.064	.013	.082	.062	.017	-.008
17	.123*	.053	.103	.065	.072	.013	.077	.118*	.071	.070

** Correlation coefficient is significant at 1% level.

* Correlation coefficient is significant at 5% level.

2) Correlation between Section 1 and Section 3

Correlation between Section 1 and Section 3 does not show much, however Russian shows weak correlation with items 4, 5, 10 (EPOSTL).

3) Correlation between Section 2 and Section 3 (see Table 5)

Chinese shows intermediate correlation ($r > 0.400$) with Item 13 (Include other foreign languages in addition to English as optional subjects) and Item 17 (Instructing the idea of lifelong learning of foreign languages) and weak correlation with other items in section 2. Korean shows no correlations with Items 11 and 12 and weak correlations with other items. Japanese shows weak correlations with Items 13 and 14 (Include other foreign language cultures in addition to English language cultures as optional subjects). From the section 2 perspectives, items 13 and 17 show correlations with the necessity of all foreign languages.

Table 5 Correlation between Section 2 and Section 3

	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	.252**	.278**	.440**	.376**	.262**	.317**	.472**
19	.120*	.130*	.395**	.318**	.274**	.240**	.399**
20	.102	.154*	.271**	.176**	.146*	.154**	.211**
21	.014	.017	.234**	.149*	.141*	.135*	.203**
22	.026	.031	.277**	.187**	.134*	.095	.236**
23	.153*	.190**	.342**	.246**	.186**	.161**	.283**
24	.139*	.110	.324**	.250**	.141*	.182**	.306**

** . Correlation coefficient is significant at 1% level.

* . Correlation coefficient is significant at 5% level.

IV Discussion

1. As for the knowledge of terms, the average of items 1-5 was in the 2s and the mode was 3 (know to a certain extent), which shows that those items are generally well understood. However, the mode of items 6-10 was 1 (heard for the first time), which shows that those items are not well understood. Particularly Item 9 (ELP) and Item 10 (EPOSTL) show floor effects, which means that these items are little understood. These results show that CEFR is understood only in terms of the Can-do list, common framework and plurilingualism / pluriculturalism. It became evident that other components of CEFR such as action-oriented approach of language teaching, domains of language activity, learner autonomy and portfolio are not well understood.

2. As for section 2, the average of all items were in the 3s, which show that the pendulum is swinging in the affirmative. The partial reason for this is that the terms used in the choices were explained beforehand. Many teachers tend to support the principles of CEFR, once they are familiar with its components. Particularly Item17 (Instructing the idea of lifelong learning of foreign languages) showed the ceiling effect, which suggests almost all respondents agreed with this item.

3. In the factor analysis of section 2, the first factor (instruction of students) and the second factor (plurilingualism and pluriculturalism) were found, which means that many teachers think that teaching by using CEFR and instructing plurilingualism and pluriculturalism are separate. The average values of two items in the second factor are higher than those of four items in the first factor, which means many teachers agree with the ideas represented in the second factor. As the second factor concerns more with the philosophical perspective of CEFR than the first factor which deals with the institutional perspective, its acceptance at higher level is necessary.

4. The average value of Item 1 (knowledge of Can-do list) was the highest in section 1, but it had no correlation with the items in sections 2 and 3, which means that Can-do list may be used irrelevant of the ideas of CEFR.
5. Chinese correlated highly with the items in section 2, which shows that many think that the foreign language other than English in Japan tends to be Chinese.
6. Korean showed no correlations with the items of instruction and curriculum in the correlations between sections 2 and 3, which suggests that there are few classes of Korean offered in spite of its great needs.

V Future Problems

Considering that the percentage of respondents was a little more than 10%, we can surmise that the interests in CEFR among English teachers in Japan are not high. However, CEFR's Can-do list and six levels of language competences are widely discussed. Possible reasons are as follows. In recent years Japanese society has begun to ask the education world for numerical outcomes. Such phrases as the competence of bachelors' degree or quality guarantee of college graduates are openly discussed.

I remember the unforgettable scene. That was when I visited the University of Quebec, Canada in February, 2006. I observed an English class of 10 Japanese students on a short stay program. The content of the class was focused on the preparations for the TOEIC exams. I asked the teacher in charge of this program the reasons for conducting such class. He said the Japanese counterpart asked for such concrete outcomes as better TOEIC scores.

In Japanese college classes the preparations for TOEIC exams are prevalent. The use of Can-do list or six competence levels of CEFR show the similar trend. They are convenient measures to set the numerical targets for the learners.

CEFR, in essence, was created by the combination of top-down process of EU philosophy of seeking peace through human interactions through learning languages and bottom-up process of the practice of the CLT begun from the Threshold level. The ideas and practices of CEFR are very valuable and they can be applied to the foreign language education in Japan. The preparations for the TOEIC exams in class are not necessarily bad. However, the foreign language education at tertiary level should be more than that. The philosophy of CEFR or similar ideas can be included in the objectives of language education at tertiary level.

The results of our survey show that the philosophy of CEFR can be understood and accepted among English educators in Japan. As for low recognition items of knowledge of the terms, affirmative level increases when their ideas and possibilities of implementation are explained. Take Item 6 (action-oriented view of language learning) in Table 2 for example, the average value was 2.11 in 4 level scale and its mode was 1 (heard for the first time). The mode of related Item 15 (Giving classes on an action-oriented principles) was 3 (cannot tell), but the average value was 3.71 in 5 level scale. In addition, the average value of Item 8 (learner autonomy) was 2.15 in 4 level scale and its mode was 1, but the average value of Item 17 (Instructing the idea of lifelong learning of foreign languages) was 4.53 in 5 level scale and its mode was 5 (agree). Therefore, we can conclude that it is important to disseminate not only Can-do list and six level of competences but also the philosophy or principle of CEFR.

On the other hand, two portfolios created on the basis of CEFR, ELP and EPOSTL, are still little known in Japan. The main reason seems to be the lack of interest in clarifying the learning process and reflection of learning in Japanese education. We have to make use of these tools in order to promote communicative language teaching and learner autonomy.

Appendix 1 : Survey Items

i) Understanding of the terms (1~10)

Please respond in 4 level scale: 4 (know very well), 3 (know to a certain degree), 2 (heard several times), 1 (heard for the first time)

1. Can-do Statements (Can-do list)
2. CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference)
3. Six Levels of language competence of CEFR (A1~C2)
4. Plurilingualism of CEFR
5. Pluriculturalism of CEFR
6. Action-oriented view of language learning of CEFR
7. Domains of language activity (Public, Private, Work, Education)
8. Learner Autonomy of CEFR (life-long learning)
9. ELP (European Language Portfolio)
10. EPOSTL (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages)

ii) Introduction of CEFR to the respondent's environment by adapting it (11~17)

Please respond in 5 level scale: 5 (Agree), 4 (Somewhat agree), 3 (Cannot tell), 2 (Somewhat disagree), 1 (Disagree).

11. Classify the students by the six levels of CEFR (A1~C2) scale and give instruction.
12. Create the teaching curricula based on the CEFR's six levels (A1~C2).

13. Include other foreign languages in addition to English as optional subjects based on plurilingualism to promote east Asian and global human interaction.
14. Include other foreign language cultures in addition to English language cultures as optional subjects based on pluriculturalism.
15. Giving classes on an action-oriented principles of CEFR
16. Instructing learners focusing on the necessary domains of language activities—public, private, working and educational environments.
17. Instructing the idea of lifelong learning of foreign languages.

iii) Necessity of the learning of foreign languages other than English to promote east Asian and global human interaction (18~25)

Please respond in 5 level scale: 5 (Necessary), 4 (Somewhat necessary), 3 (Cannot tell), 2 (Somewhat unnecessary), 1 (Unnecessary).

18. Chinese
19. Korean
20. Russian
21. German
22. French
23. Spanish
24. Japanese
25. Others ()

Part Two

Reports on Overseas Visits and Fieldworks

Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (Refugees) in Ireland Current Status and Challenges

Leo Yoffe, Hisatake Jimbo

Demographic Context

Between 1999 and 2007 Ireland experienced an unprecedented surge in inbound migration. From 2002 to 2006 the number of non-Irish residents in the country rose from approximately 225,000 to 420,000. While these figures may not seem impressive when compared with the immigrant intake in traditional host states, in the Irish context it represented an increase of 87% over a four-year period. Attracted by the robust economy migrants arrived in Ireland primarily from the EU Accession states, including Poland, Latvia and Lithuania. In all, non-Irish nationals came from 188 different countries, with the top five countries of origin being UK, Poland, Lithuania, Nigeria and Latvia (Central Statistics Office, 2010). Over 200 languages are represented by the various migrant groups. Since 2007 the economic climate in the state deteriorated considerably culminating in a financial crisis which required a well-publicized IMF/EU bailout in 2010. As a result, Ireland is now perceived as a much less attractive destination for new migrants. While the new national population census is not due until mid-2011, evidence suggests that the overall number of immigrants arriving in Ireland has declined significantly. For example, the number of work permits issued in 2009 decreased by 41% relative to 2008 (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, 2010). Despite the much weaker immigration flows, migrants will continue to be an integral part of Irish society. The data shows that the vast majority of immigrants already in Ireland choose to stay in the country, thus the elaboration of an effective integration policy remains a high priority for the government.

Asylum Seekers

The two major immigrant groups include refugees / asylum seekers and migrant workers. This paper will focus on the language provision for adult refugees as currently the government of Ireland has no systematic policy of linguistic integration for other migrant groups (Vocational Educational Committees do provide free language training to those with limited English skills regardless of their status, contingent on the availability of resources) . It is also estimated that non-EU refugees have a greater need

for English language instruction than newcomers from EU member states.

The number of asylum seekers in Ireland peaked dramatically in 2000-2002 period, increasing from around 4,000 in 1997 to 11,634 in 2002, before falling off to 8,000 in 2003 and leveling off at approximately 4,000 per year since 2004 (Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner, 2010). Over the past several years Ireland's recognition rate of asylum applicants has been around 10%, and between 2000 and 2008 approximately 8,500 nationals received refugee status. Prior to 2007, most asylum seekers came from Nigeria and Romania. After Romania joined the European Union in 2007, over a quarter of all applications came from Nigerian nationals.

Language Needs of Refugees

A significant increase in the number of refugees at the beginning of the 21st century forced the Government of Ireland to establish very quickly an integration policy, including mechanisms to address the language needs of the asylum seekers. This policy development was influenced by several important studies. Perhaps the most pivotal among them was the *Report of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Integration of Refugees – Integration a Two-Way Process*. The Report, published in 2000, demonstrated that an overwhelming majority of accepted refugees lacked adequate English skills to access social services and participate in Irish society. The subsequent study produced by the County of Dublin Vocational Educational Committees (VECs) in 2002 underscored the urgency of providing systematic language training to adult migrants. The document showed that more than 50% of refugees have virtually no English language skills. The results pointed to another significant challenge – over 7% of asylum seekers had no literacy skills in their mother tongue.

Policy Response

The Government of Ireland responded to these findings by incorporating Refugee Language Support Unit, which was originally established in 1998, as Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT) in 2001. This newly created organization was responsible for coordinating of the provision of English language training for adult refugees and assisting VECs with the delivery of the language programs. In 2008 IILT was disbanded and the responsibility for the provision of English language programs for refugees was fully transferred to the Vocational Educational Committee sector. While the organizational structure has changed, the pedagogical principles and philosophy underpinning the substance of the Adult Refugee Program remain largely unmodified.

The Main Parameters of the Adult Refugee Program Language Component

1. Training, including language training, is provided only to those with refugee status.
2. Program participation is free (or for a minimal fee) for up to one year of study on a

basis of 20h/week; however this does not need to be continuous. In general terms this translates into a generous 920 hours of language instruction for each participant.

3. In addition to language classes, the Program assists with integration into Irish society by helping refugees access information about employment and education opportunities, government services, and societal characteristics more broadly.
4. Each participant's English language ability is initially assessed using the Oxford Quick Placement Test. Importantly, those requiring language training undergo a needs analysis to help coordinators determine their respective learning priorities.
5. Class size is limited to 16 participants.
6. Language training in the Program requires no final assessment. The decision not to set a standardized bar for exit was made in consideration of the wide range of educational backgrounds and literacy levels of learners, to avoid the influence of a testing mechanism on the course content and to minimize stress on participants. However, in principle, after completion of the general course the learners are expected to reach a minimum of A2 level as defined by the Common European Framework (CEFR). The language program, as a whole, strives for a B1 level (the first rung of the Independent User classification according to CEFR). In line with these principles course participants are encouraged (not obliged) to take an on-line BULATS (Business Language Testing Service) test administered by University of Cambridge.

Types of English Courses

While the Program administrators seek to develop a framework curriculum in consultation with the learners to meet their needs, there are obvious limits to how much the syllabi can be fine-tuned to individual needs. Two groups of learners pose particular challenges – those with a low overall literacy level, and those attempting to move to a B1 level from an A2 (Bearpark, 2011). Broadly, the ESL courses provided within the context of the Program can be divided into three categories as follows:

1. General English Course

The course focuses on the acquisition of survival English skills. It is organized on the basis of 20 contact hours per week over a 16-17 week period, and is offered either in the morning or in the afternoon, thus facilitating attendance by those working. The course covers all four skills and the syllabus includes topics necessary for living in Ireland: health, education, money matters, interaction with bureaucrats, and CV

preparation. The participants are appraised two or three times over the duration of the course via an interview, which results in a written report and serves as the basis for next learning phase.

General English Course is arguably the most popular learning element offered by the Program, with approximately 75% of all Program participants enrolled. It is offered by VECs across the country contingent on the identified needs in the communities. In communities with Muslim migrant population and recognized language needs, this course has been offered at the local Mosques to address the needs of women not permitted by religious constraints to attend mixed-gender classes. In these circumstances, the value of the English course was particularly high as it not only provided women with requisite English skills to function in the host society, but, more importantly, represented often the only opportunity many of them had to meet a member of indigenous population.

2. English for Academic Purposes

These classes were offered to learners with professional qualifications and sufficient educational background who sought to pursue their studies at tertiary level. Several classes in this category were offered, mainly in Dublin. They were three-four months in duration and focused primarily on note taking, report writing, TOEFL preparation and other specific professional language needs.

3. Pre-Vocational Language Classes

These classes seeking to prepare adult refugees for mainstream vocational training were in place until 2005. This 'bridging' function no longer exists and upon completion of a General English Course participants can transfer to vocational training modules offered by FETAC (Further Education and Training Awards Council).

Role of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) in the Classroom

With the program outcome linked to CEFR benchmarks, the ELP plays a role in the provision of language training to adult migrants. The 'Milestone' version of the portfolio incorporates the three constituent components -- language passport, language biography, and dossier – but has important characteristics which differentiate it from other ELP versions. It was developed in Ireland in partnership with educators in four other European nations, and focuses on the needs of adult migrants learning the language of the host community. This tool takes into account the learner's home culture and linguistic background, and incorporates language challenges a learner is likely to face in the new environment. The use of the ELP in the classroom promotes ongoing

self-assessment to give learners a level of confidence; however, self-assessment alone is typically not sufficient for external purposes – recognition of qualifications, access to the labor market and education. Learners are, therefore, encouraged to take a formal examination, as stated previously.

Program Outcomes

It is difficult to determine with any degree of accuracy whether the English language provision to adult migrants in Ireland has been successful as no comprehensive longitudinal studies have been undertaken to evaluate the impact of instruction on the participants' progression. Limited results, collected in 2004-2005, show that a majority of participants do complete their General English Course within one year. According to the figures for 2004-2005, almost 74% of participants completed language courses "with a level of proficiency that supports entry to further education, training or employment; or reached a level of proficiency that meets their needs.. ." (Integrate Ireland Language and Training, Measure 17 of the EHRDOP, 2006). This description is very broad and gives little useful information as to the real effectiveness of the language program. Obviously, a more systematic follow-up of program participants is warranted to assess the quality of the language delivery.

In April 2007 Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) conducted a survey to collect information from providers of ESL training to refugees (mainly VECs) about the best practices put in place and about the possible impediments to a more effective delivery of language programs. The challenges identified by the respondents can be summarized as follows:

1. Lack of national ESOL strategy; lack of consistency among providers in curriculum design and evaluation practices.
2. Lack of training for ESOL teachers; lack of teaching resources.
3. Difficulty of accommodating the schedules of working students, particularly in rural areas where the commute to the class location presents a challenge for many participants.
4. Duplication of provision due to poor overall coordination, and
5. Insufficient class contact hours to let the students attain the desired / needed level of proficiency in English.

(IVEA ESOL Survey report, 2007)

Obviously the results of this survey point in a much more concrete way to the deficiencies in the language program delivery, and thus formed the basis for the recommendations presented to the government.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Of the concerns presented in the preceding section arguably the most pressing was the need to devise a national ESOL strategy and ensure a greater level of coordination within the VEC language providers. It was suggested in the IVEA report that the latter objective can be achieved by establishing a national ESOL support office mandated to assure the quality of language program delivery to adult migrants.

Since the beginning of the 21st century the Government of Ireland has invested considerable resources into the delivery of language training for adult refugees. Even in today's harsh economic climate which resulted in the curtailment of many public services in the state, the linguistic integration of asylum seekers remains an important government priority with only a slight budgetary reduction (Bearpark, 2011). Whether this investment of taxpayers' money has produced the desired results is not clear. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, by and large, refugees are satisfied with the quality of language training they receive; however, it is impossible to draw definitive conclusions in the absence of the empirical data. A rigorous quantitative evaluation of the participants' achievements is necessary. The precarious financial position of the Irish government will likely help expedite this task.

Providing adequate infrastructure to assure quality delivery of language programs remains an important priority. At present there is no coordinating body to oversee ESOL delivery. Recently, however, the Government announced that the 33 VECs which so far have operated autonomously, will be amalgamated to 16 in an effort to make tutor training, curriculum design and resource allocations more consistent.

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Language Policy in Ireland and the European Language Portfolio

Mika Ito

Introduction

The educators in Ireland have greatly contributed to the ELP development. In particular, Professor David Little of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) has been responsible for most of the work on the ELP in Ireland in collaboration with the Modern Languages Division of the Council of Europe (ECML) in Strasbourg. The ELP has been used as the cornerstone of ESL instruction for adult newcomers in Ireland. At the same time it seeks to fulfil two functions in post-primary education: an effective means of helping language learners to become more autonomous and the formal assessment of learner achievement.

This chapter briefly summarizes the information on the language policy and the ELP in Ireland collected through literature review and the research trip to Dublin in November, 2010, including personal communication with the following professionals.

- Dr. Lorna Carson
- Dr. David Singleton
- Ms. Chie Oda
- Ms. Treasa Lowe

Languages and Education in Ireland

- **Population**: 4,239,848 (as of April 23rd, 2006) (Stationery Office, 2007); it has been affected both by immigration of non-Irish nationals and by returning Irish-born migrants.
- **Languages**: the Irish language (Gaelic or Gaeilge) as the first official language and the English language as a second official language according to Article 8 of the Irish Constitution; In reality English is the mother tongue of the great majority of people in Ireland. However, there have also been increasing numbers of foreign nationals arriving in Ireland and students in Irish schools whose mother tongue is neither English nor Irish since the enlargement of the EU in 2004 (Department of Education and Science, Ireland, 2006).

- **Education**: primary education (First level from age 4 to 12: an eight year cycle), post-primary education (Second level from age 12 up to 18: a three year Junior Cycle, an optional Transitional year programme, and a two or three year Senior Cycle), and higher education (Third level)
- **Language Education**: Irish and English taught in the primary school curriculum, Irish required in the Junior Cycle and the Senior Cycle, English required in the Junior Cycle; Irish and English are compulsory subjects in Ireland.

Language Policy in Ireland

- **PPLI**: In Ireland, the Post-Primary Languages Initiative (PPLI) was set up in September 2000 to diversify, enhance and expand the teaching of languages in second-level schools. Consequently, Spanish, Italian and Japanese were targeted as the initial languages by the initiative, and Russian was added a few years later. The PPLI still continues under the National Development Plan 2007-2013.
- **Language Policy**: According to Little (2009), Irish has policies regarding the Irish language, but it does not have a general languages policy, far less a language education policy, and there is no national curriculum. In Ireland, foreign languages survive in post-primary schools because the National University of Ireland requires a foreign language for matriculation.

Cultural and linguistic diversity: Irish economy boomed between 1995 and 2007, the Celtic Tiger period, accompanied by significant immigration, new linguistic communities, and new educational challenges. For example, Dublin has become a multicultural and multilingual city where an increasing variety of languages are spoken at home next to or instead of English (Carson and Extra 2010: 8). The new communities and the educational challenges remain answered in Ireland even after it underwent an economic bust due to the global financial crisis.

The ELP in Ireland

- **The CEF(R) and the ELP**: Little (2003) points out the challenges that the post-primary curriculum in Ireland faces from four different perspectives: (i) the changing language situation in Ireland; (ii) internationalisation and Ireland's membership of Europe; (iii) two new documents recently developed by the Council of Europe to support language teaching/learning in its member states; and (iv) current trends in language teaching. "Two new documents" identified here are the ELP and the Common European Framework (CEF, later also known as CEFR). He also

explains, “As the Common Reference Levels come to be more widely applied to the assessment of L2 proficiency, it is inevitable that they will be refined and differentiated to take account of the particular needs of different age groups and different learning objectives” (Little 2003:31).

- **The Milestone ELP**: The Milestone European Language Portfolio (The Milestone ELP) is a multilingual version of the ELP (37.2002-EN) designed and developed transnationally by the partners in the Milestone project. The Center for Language and Communication Studies (CLCS) at TCD, and Integrate Ireland Language and Training were among the Milestone partners. The Milestone ELP is used by adult learners who are learning the language of their host community. On the other hand, it allows teachers to see exactly what their students can already do in different languages, to plan future learning accurately to meet their students’ individual needs, and to support their students in their own self-assessment so that they can become effective learners. (The Council of Europe 2002).
- **The Japanese language at UCD**: According to Ms. Oda, former Asian Languages Coordinator and Lecturer at University College Dublin (UCD), the Japanese language became an elective foreign subject in the post-primary curriculum as well as a foreign language for matriculation as a result of the PPLI. The UCD Applied Language Centre offers an extensive programme of foreign language electives, including Arabic, Chinese, Czech, English (for general and academic purposes), French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Russian, Spanish and Swahili. Since 2001, the CercleS ELP (see Note at p.60) has been used at UCD along with the CEF(R). In the Foreign Language Elective Modules at UCD, where all the UCD students are entitled to take the Japanese language, the CEF(R) and the ELP are playing an important role because teachers can show the levels of the Japanese language proficiency to students while they need to grasp students’ Japanese language learning experiences and their competencies in Japanese.
- **The CEFR and the ELP for the Japanese language education**: Ms. Oda pointed out that it is not easy to utilize the ELP in the Japanese language education at university in Ireland although it helps students to become more autonomous through goal setting and reflection.
 - Within tight time constraint, it is difficult to use it in class, including the check lists. (In the near future, the ELP is scheduled to go online at UCD.)
 - It is difficult to train all the UCD Japanese teachers, one full-timer and five part-timers, about the ELP.
 - It seems that the CEFR can-do statements are not suitable for UCD students.

(There are about 100 students per year taking the Japanese language.)

- The status of the ELP use has been slow although Prof. Little has contributed greatly to the development of the ELP.
 - Among various versions of the ELP, the Milestone ELP seems to be most successful.
-
- **The ELP in Ireland:** Dr. Carson and Dr. Singleton pointed out the following regarding the ELP in Ireland.
 - The ELP is still recognized as a useful educational tool although its use is not required in teacher colleges or in schools.
 - Among various versions of the ELP developed by the TCD faculty in consultation with teachers and other stakeholders, the Milestone ELP was spearheaded by Integrate Ireland Language and Training(IILT).
 - TCD requires all prospective teachers in the Language Modules Programme to be familiar with ELP and other basic COE language policy-related documents. Dr. Carson is coordinating these efforts.
 - Both Carson and Singleton lamented about the poor state of foreign language education in Ireland. In addition to the absence of an overall language policy, most teachers gladly jumped on the “bandwagon” of CLT, adopting a very weak version. As a result, learners acquire some convenient conversational techniques but lack in-depth understanding of the language structure.
 - Enhancing foreign language competence of Irish learners is not a priority for the Government of Ireland, particularly in the present very severe financial crisis which will most certainly entail budgetary cuts in the education sector.
 - **The ELP at TCD:** Dr. Carson also elaborated on the following regarding the ELP in the Language Modules Programme (Carson 2011);
 - For teacher training: the 11 staff members in the programme are recommended to use the ELP to set goals, carry out self-assessments, plan tasks and monitor progress. However, there is often resistance amongst teachers. The solution at TCD was to embed the ELP very deeply within the programme.
 - Students are engaged in a number of different projects throughout the year (a minimum of two, although usually three for A1-A2 levels, and 4 for B1-B2 levels) in their foreign language classes. Each project's (or task's) overall learning objectives are derived from the CEFR. As students implement each project, they are expected to submit an accompanying project with both draft work, and finished work in their 'dossier'. This approach precedes the ELP,

inspired by Prof. Little's work. In a way, each project is a mini-ELP, with accompanying self-assessment and monitoring of activities.

- Some teachers use the ELP apart from this, to check with the class what they would like to do next, or to help them keep their ELP up to date. This is the part that students see as most relevant because they want to go abroad for a year. They also enjoy working on the Europass CV which accompanies the Passport.
- One of the biggest challenges Dr. Carson and her colleagues face is to have students keep all their materials together in one folder, and to actually compile a dossier. Some teachers are stricter than others on this point, but students do recognize the value of this when they start to have a number of good documents that they are happy to show to their external assessors, for example.

Conclusion: possible considerations

In the 1990s, the economy of Ireland began to prosper and eventually resulted in large-scale population and linguistic diversity in the country. Now there is a real need in Ireland for a carefully considered and integrated language education policy in order to achieve social cohesion internally and the ability to engage with other countries externally as was suggested by Little (2009). From that perspective, although Ireland and Japan are quite different from each other in terms of language and educational context, it is still of significance for Japan to learn about the history, background, current status, and problems of Ireland, a country that set up the PPLI and has contributed to the development of the ELP as a companion piece to the CEF(R). The ELP designed to promote the development of plurilingualism is viewed as an effective means of helping language learners to become more autonomous.

Thus, it is believed that Ireland offers potentially useful examples for ways in which Japan can improve its own teacher education and professional development from the following perspectives:

- Policy development needs to be made by experts in consultation with teachers, educators and other stakeholders; Policy goals need to be evidence-based and realizable; Policy implementation needs to be supported by empirical monitoring and evaluation (Little, 2009).
- As learner autonomy is set as one of the most significant objectives in the post-primary language curriculum in Ireland, the ELP, with three obligatory

components of a language passport, a language biography, and a dossier, can serve as a useful reflective and self-assessment tool to help language learners to become more autonomous by developing their ability to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning. While the ELP is the property of individual learner of a language, it could be used for purposes of external assessment anywhere since it is designed according to the common reference levels of the CEF(R).

- However, it is also very important for language teachers not to blindly accept the assessment criteria of the CEF(R) or the CER(R) can-do statements without understanding its principles and backgrounds.
- The ELP would fully work only in an educational context where the common reference levels of the CEF(R) are applied and implemented in a language curriculum. Thus, it is important to establish a framework for pre-service teacher education programs where students can become familiar with the CEF(R) and the ELP.
- During our visit, we also had a chance to observe primary school classes. Scoil Choilim Community National School was established in September 2007 under the patronage of the new model community national school. The rationale behind its establishment is to reflect the changing shape of Irish society (Scoil Cholim Community National School 2010). Although the case of Ireland is not quite comparable with the Japanese one, it could be referred to as an interesting precedent for Japanese educators to deal with diversification in a society.

Note: CercleS is a confederation of independent associations from 22 countries in Europe founded in Strasbourg in 1991.

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Trinity College Dublin: <http://www.tcd.ie/>

University College Dublin: <http://www.ucd.ie/>

A visit to European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)

Itinerary

Monday, February 7, 2011 – Thursday, February 10, 2011

European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), Graz, Austria

Objective: To investigate language policy and language teaching in Europe with a special attention to the spread of Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL), to collect materials, and to discuss with scholars concerned.

There are three major components of the tour; 1) Participating in a seminar at ECML, 2) Visiting primary and secondary schools in Graz, and 3) Visiting Professor David Newby at the University of Graz.

Monday, February 7, 2011

14:00-17:00	Self-introduction Working session of the JACET group at the premises of the ECML Working session on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)
17:00-	Welcome reception with staff members from the Centre

Tuesday, February 8, 2011

07:30	Meeting in lobby of the Hotel Weitzer: transfer to schools (in 3 groups)
07:45-10.30	School visits in Graz: 1) Bundesgymnasium Ursulinnen http://www.ursulinen.asn-graz.ac.at/ 2) Bundesgymnasium Oeverseegasse http://www.oeversee.asn-graz.ac.at/ 3) Graz International Bilingual School www.gibs.at Transfer back to ECML
10.45-11.00	Coffee at the ECML
11.00-12.30	Working session on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) WS1: Theoretical background and objectives of the CEFR: Present status and challenges (Waldemar Martyniuk)
12.30-14.00	Lunch
14.00-18.00	Working session on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) WS2: Contextualization of the CEFR in the European settings (David Newby) WS3: Relationship between CEFR and ELP: Essential factors for developing an ELP within the constraints of the national educational structure(s) (David Newby)

Modern Language syllabi at Austrian lower and upper secondary schools are designed on the basis of CEFR. Subsequently, educational standards take CEFR into consideration. School leaving examinations (which are administered to students at 18 and 19 years old) are constructed based on CEFR at some institutions. In order to teach English at schools, one needs to reach C1 level of CEFR. We were divided into three groups for the school visits in the morning.

Wednesday, February 9, 2011

08.00-08.45	Introduction to the school visit (Evelin Fuchs) Transfer to the Volksschule Berlinerring
09.00-13.00	Visit to the Volksschule Berlinerring - applying CLIL in a primary context http://www.pze.at/vs-berlinerring/ Transfer to The University of GRAZ Q&A session (Participants and David Newby)
13.00-14.00	Lunch at The University of GRAZ Transfer to ECML
14.00-17.00	European Language Portfolio Workshop 4: Using ELP in the classroom; integrating with existing syllabi and adjusting testing mechanisms (Grete Nezbeda)
17.00-18.00	Visit to the ECML Resource Centre

Thursday, February 10, 2011

09.00-09.45	Lecture on the CEFR (summary) (David Newby)
09.55-11.00	Wrap-up session: Reflection Free discussion among participants

Part Three

Joint Symposia on the CEFR: Teaching of English, German and French

- First Symposium: Friday, August 20, 2010 at Waseda University (Conference Room, 4th floor, Bldg. No 11)

Contextualization of the CEFR and other Council of Europe instruments within a European context

David Newby

1. Introduction

It is my pleasure to share with you my impressions and interpretations of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, a document published by the Council of Europe in 2001, which has had a considerable influence on many aspects of language teaching across Europe. In addition, I shall refer to a sister publication, the *European Language Portfolio* (ELP), and a document which I had the privilege to co-author, the *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages* (EPOSTL). In doing so I should like to pay particular attention to the **underlying rationale** of these documents, since implementation of the CEFR, the ELP and the EPOSTL will depend to a considerable extent on how far users – policy makers, teacher educators, teachers etc. - will **identify** with its aims and rationale and on how **relevant** its many insights, both educational and linguistic, are considered to be for the context of **local learning** and **teaching cultures**.

My observations are not only of a theoretical nature: in addition, I shall discuss my own insights from using Council of Europe publications in my working context as a teacher educator at the University of Graz in Austria and as the author of school textbooks. Further, I shall incorporate my experiences of working as a project coordinator and consultant for the Council of Europe in a variety of countries. In each discussion point, I shall comment from three perspectives:

- a) how the aspect or principle under discussion can be **implemented** – for example, in national curricula;
- b) what advantages this may bring;
- c) what challenges may result from this innovative perspective, especially as far as classroom teaching is concerned.

2. The learner perspective of the CEFR

At the core of many innovative practices in language teaching methodology over the past few years is the shift away from seeing language pedagogy through the eyes of **teachers**, the methods and the materials they employ, towards a perspective which focuses on various characteristics of **learners**, such as how they acquire language and on the measures learners themselves can take to make their learning more effective. This trend is reflected in a variety of labels which have emerged: ‘learner-centred’, ‘learner independence’, ‘learner autonomy’, ‘self-directed learning’ etc. As far as the CEFR is concerned, there are three aspects of a learner-centred view which are particularly significant, which show three quite different rationales. These can be described as follows:

- a) Linguistic: the learner as a **language user**, reflected in principles of the Communicative Approach to language learning and teaching and in the ‘action-oriented’ view of language of the CEFR;
- b) Educational: the learner as a **life-long learner**, reflected in the concept of learner autonomy;
- c) Socio-political: the learner as, what the CEFR terms a ‘**social agent**’ (p.1) , reflected in concepts such as plurilingualism and intercultural awareness.

It would seem to me that before looking at details of the CEFR, it is useful to consider these separate, though interwoven, rationales in light of a) how they might, or might not, find **acceptance** among teachers and learners in specific educational cultures, and b) what **relevant measures** might need to be taken if content and insights of the CEFR are to be implemented in, say, a national curriculum or a teacher education programme.

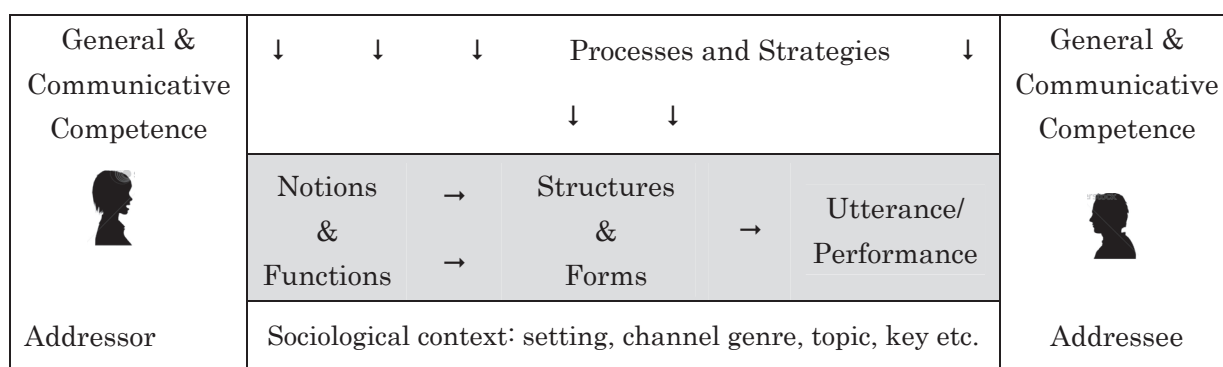
3. Rationale 1 - Linguistic: The Learner as a User of Language

3.1. User-based view of language

In order to begin this discussion, I should like to take a step or two backwards in the history of language teaching to the 1970s, a time when I was beginning my own career as a teacher, a time which saw something of a revolution in language teaching as a

result of what became known as the Communicative Approach. As is well known, this approach was initiated by applied linguistics who sought to implement communication-based theories of language use which emanated from linguists such as Hymes, Halliday, Austin and Searle.

This view of language as a system of use was at the heart of an early Council of Europe publication, the *Threshold Level*, first published in 1975 and revised in 1991, and continues to be the view underlying the CEFR's 'action-oriented' view of language. One way of explaining this view is by means of a simple model of communication¹, as shown below, which the CEFR terms a '**communicative event**'.



The significance of this model is that it attempts to represent, in simple form, language as a **process** and from the **perspective of the language user**. It makes two important points: first, that all language takes place in a **context** and second, that the forms of language – morphemes, words, sentences – are a reflection of some **prior system of meanings**, either pragmatic (**language functions**, such as greeting, apologising etc.) or semantic (**grammatical and lexical notions**, such as reference to time or location).

There is considerable significance in depicting language in this way. One important result is that when setting teaching objectives in curricula or school textbooks, language has to be specified in terms of its **meaning system** (notions and functions²) rather than in terms of grammatical forms, such as present perfect tense or indefinite articles.

3.2. Language in the Threshold Level

The *Threshold Level* set itself to task of providing a **taxonomy** of '**communicative categories**' identified in the communication model: context, functions, notions etc. There were various reasons for taking a communication-based approach to language description, which are not only linguistic. Clearly, the above-mentioned categories are a

¹ Based on Communication Model (Newby, 2002: 259)

² See Newby, 2000 for more discussion.

pre-requisite for the design of a **communicative curriculum** or textbook and for communicative methodology.

3.3. Language in the Common European Framework of Reference

In many ways, the CEFR shares and builds on categories which were found in the *Threshold Level* and which have been part and parcel of communicative language teaching for many years. There are many things that could be said about the language description in the CEFR but I will focus on one or two aspects which are, in my view, of particular significance:

- a) its comprehensive description of **communicative competence**, which builds on other models (Canale and Swain, 1980; Bachmann, 1990 etc.) and extends that provided in the *Threshold Level*;
- b) its **action-oriented** approach, which goes beyond competence and focuses on aspects of language **use**;
- c) its focus on language **performance**, not only competence, and its explicit **descriptions** of this performance in **metalanguage**;
- d) using these descriptors as a means of **scaling** and **assessing** language performance.

It is to the performance aspects of the CEFR – b), c) and d) - which I shall turn my attention.

There has been a long tradition in language testing to focus on the learner's knowledge, or competence. Anderson (1990: 219) makes a distinction between **declarative** and **procedural** knowledge, which he defines as follows: 'declarative knowledge refers to knowledge about facts and things; procedural knowledge refers to knowledge about how to perform various cognitive activities'. As far as the language code – grammar, lexis etc. - is concerned, tests are often of the 'fill-in-the-gap' variety, which tests a student's knowledge about, but not the ability to use grammar and lexis. These tests reflect the **objectives** of teaching or the **input** by the teacher or textbook to the pupils. This procedure could apply both to traditional or to communicative approaches. What would differ is how objectives are specified – in formal or in notional-functional terms.

Clearly, in both traditional and communicative approaches, language skills, requiring procedural knowledge, or what the CEFR calls '**language activities**' – reading, writing, speaking, listening etc. - have always been tested to some extent, especially writing skills. However, the assessment of productive skills is often haphazard. One of the most innovative, and best-known, aspects of the CEFR is its attempt to make the **output** of language or the learner's **performance describable** and **gradable**, by means of **explicit**

‘can-do’ descriptors. In the communication event model above, we are now concerned with the ‘**utterance/performance**’ box, which is the final stage of the encoding process and which results from successful application by the student of his or her communicative competence. Unlike previous competence models, the CEFR therefore describes both **competence** and **performance** or, in teaching terms, both the **input of teaching** and the **outcome of learning**.

It should be added that the CEFR claims that it is ‘**non-dogmatic**: not irrevocably and exclusively attached to any one of a number of competing linguistic or educational theories or practices’ (p.8). However, principles of the Communicative Approach are at the core of many aspects of its ‘**action-oriented**’ view of language.

3.4.Implementation, advantages and challenges: user-based view of language Implementation

This specification of language through meaning-based categories of communication also had a **political motivation**. As far as traditional curricula were concerned, their specifications are language-based and therefore language specific. Curricula for English and say, Spanish or Russian, would be designed separately in the belief that English had little in common with a Romance or with a Slav language. If, however, a curriculum begins with units such as ‘functions’ or ‘notions’, it will be seen that these are not language specific. As far as the category of pragmatic function is concerned, learners will need to greet, apologise, ask for help, and issue invitations whatever language they are learning. As far as settings, social roles and topics are concerned, these are independent of the language that is being learnt. So this meant that curricula across Europe could use the same framework for curriculum design for any language that was taught. One noticeable development in the years following the publication of the *Threshold Level* was that many national curricula across Europe began to use similar forms of categorisation. This was the first strong move towards what the CEFR terms the ‘the creation of a **harmonious** approach to language teaching and facilitating mobility and the exchange of ideas’, a move which was subsequently enforced by the *Common European Framework*.

With the publication of the CEFR, its level specification soon found its way into most school and university curricula. The following example of exit levels is taken from my own Austrian teaching context:

- A2 - End of lower secondary education (8th grade, pupils’ age 14)
- B2 – End of upper secondary education (12th grade, pupils’ age 18)
- C1 – End of Bachelor Degree in modern languages at university (3 years study)
- C2 – End of Master Degree in modern languages at university (2 years study)

It should be added that the new Austrian school curriculum for lower secondary level has taken the fairly radical step of virtually abandoning the specification of specific input-based, language objectives which it introduced in the 1980s following the publication of the *Threshold Level*. There is no longer any reference to what is to be taught; instead, skill-based descriptors of expected outcomes, taken directly from the CEFR, are listed.

The introduction of explicit ‘can-do’ descriptors has also led to changes in testing and assessment; in some European countries have changed assessment procedures to bring them in line with the specifications of the CEFR. In Austria, the final school leaving examination has been completely reformed so that it conforms to a skill-based rationale.

Advantages

A user-based view of languages brings various advantages:

- Objectives are communication and **meaning-based**;
- Provides a springboard to **communicative methodology**;
- **Ability to use language**, not only knowledge, is in the focus of teaching, curriculum design etc.; this corresponds to what are usually stakeholders’ – e.g. employers’ expectations of language learning;
- Competences are **transparent** to learners; they can thus become aware of their own language level by means of ‘self-assessment’ ;
- For teachers, explicit descriptors provide a means of **assessing language competence** in a systematic way;
- Explicit descriptors and level specification aid **comparability**; for example, teachers across national borders categorise language and assess it according to common criteria.

Challenges

- Re-orientation to seeing language through notional, functional – as opposed to traditional - categories requires a **rethinking** of the **nature of language**;
- The **metalanguage** of CEFR descriptors requires considerable understanding on the part of teachers;
- Seeing language in terms of output/performance as well as input/objectives places additional responsibility on teachers – performance-based assessment means that ability to develop skills will be in the spotlight. This means that a teacher’s ability to develop these skills will also be indirectly assessed.

4. Rationale 2 - Educational: the learner as a life-long learner

As stated above, the CEFR regards itself as ‘non-dogmatic’ and does not seek to impose a particular view of learning. It is a design feature of the CEFR that didactic issues are presented as a series of options that users ‘may wish to consider and where appropriate state’. In section 6.4.2.3 the following question is posed: ‘How far should **learners** be expected or required to:

- a) follow all and only the teacher’s instructions in a disciplined, orderly way, speaking only when called upon to do so?
- b) participate actively in the learning process in co-operation with the teacher and other students to reach agreement on objectives and methods, accepting compromise, and engaging in peer teaching and peer assessment so as to progress steadily towards autonomy?’ (p.144)

Whilst the CEFR offers no explicit opinion on these two diametrically opposing views of the role of teachers and learners, at various points it does make statements which point to a certain underlying rationale of learning which are more in line with b) above than with a).

At the core of this is a commitment to the concept of ‘**life-long**’ learning. Indeed, it is one important aspect of the level specifications that they ‘allow learners’ progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis’ (p.1). The question that then arises is *which* learning process and actions initiated by the learner will facilitate life-long learning. Three aspects will be identified as contributing to life-long learning:

- the ability to **reflect** on one’s language and one’s learning and draw relevant conclusions;
- the development of **learning to learn strategies**;
- the ability to take **responsibility** for one’s own learning

It will be seen from these that the notion of ‘life-long’ entails, by its very definition, an adherence to an **autonomous** view of learning. As the CEFR states: ‘once teaching stops, further learning *has* to be autonomous. Autonomous learning can be promoted if “learning to learn” is regarded as an integral part of language learning, so that learners become increasingly aware of the way they learn, the options open to them and the options that best suit them’ (141).

Like much of the content of the CEFR, here we can see an underlying motive that is located in the sphere of ideology: that learners should be ‘**empowered**’ to act

autonomously and responsibly, which is linked to the concept of ‘democratic citizenship’. On page 4 of the CEFR we will find the following statement concerning the aims of language learning: ‘To promote methods of modern language teaching which will strengthen independence of thought, judgement and action, combined with social skills and responsibility.’

One aspect which is at the core of the concept of learner autonomy is the ability to **reflect** on one’s own learning. The descriptors of the CEFR lend themselves very readily to **self-assessment**. ‘Can-do’ descriptors thus become ‘**I can**’ descriptors. On page 26 of the CEFR there can be found a ‘self-assessment grid’, which can be used by students for students for a variety of purposes: in job application forms or as a ‘placement’ tool at the commencement of a language course. In addition to this **instrumental** purpose of self-assessment, there is also an **educational** purpose: by reflecting on their competences students will be able to recognise their strengths and weaknesses and think about strategies that have helped or will help to improve their learning etc. I shall return to this aspect shortly when I discuss the *European Language Portfolio*.

4.1. Implementation, advantages and challenges: ‘life-long’ learning

Clearly, the concept of life-long learning is one to which many educational systems have, in the past, paid little regard since national curricula focus on what is to be learnt and taught at a particular stage of schooling rather than during the rest of the lives of students. In Europe, I think it is true to say that it has become something of a ‘buzz word’ – a term which is used increasingly by language experts, and which can be found in the general educational goals of recent school curricula, but which may be considered a rather empty term by many classroom teachers. At the practical level, the most common application of the term is in connection with ‘**learning to learn**’, a category that can be found in many textbooks in the form of ‘learning tips’.

A further challenge concerns the concept of **learner autonomy**. This is a complex concept, deriving from what might be termed a philosophy of education. I have found in my discussions with teachers that they often have very little understanding of what autonomous learning, in the sense that it is used by Holec (1981) or Little (1991), actually entails, believing it to denote any activity that is vaguely learner-centred, such as group work. As with various aspects of innovation, one needs to be aware of the danger of a gap developing between language teaching experts – teacher educators, curriculum designers etc. – and classroom teachers, who do not have sufficient access to innovative theories.

5. Rationale 3 - Socio-political: the learner as a ‘social agent’

One innovative aspect of the CEFR, compared with other specifications of communicative competence, is that it includes not only language-based, but what it terms ‘**general competences**’. These can be seen from various perspectives; however, the aspect which is given most attention is that of **cultural competences**.

The prominence given to cultural aspects in the CEFR derives from the general view that ‘Language is not only a major aspect of culture, but also a means of access to cultural manifestations’ (p6). More specifically, aspects of culture in the CEFR seem to be based on the three general rationales discussed in this paper:

- a) linguistic: that language can be seen as an **expression of cultural norms**, referred to as ‘**sociolinguistic competence**’ (p.119) – this can be seen in categories such as ‘politeness conventions’;
- b) educational: that the language classroom provides a suitable environment for furthering the aim of **fostering understanding of different cultures**, seen in categories such as ‘intercultural awareness’ and ‘existential competence’, for example, ‘willingness and ability to distance oneself from conventional attitudes to cultural difference’ (p. 105);
- c) socio-political: that foreign language teaching provides a **forum for promoting ‘plurilingualism’ and ‘pluriculturalism’**. The distinction between ‘pluri’, ‘-lingual and –cultural, as opposed to ‘multi’ –lingual and –cultural, is of considerable importance for the CEFR. In essence, plurilingual means that languages that have been learnt, and related cultural manifestations, are seen not as separate entities but as an integrated whole, as what might be termed the personal linguistic and cultural *habitus* of the student. The CEFR states that the learner should build up ‘a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact’ (p.4).

5.1. Implementation, advantages and challenges: ‘social agent’

The view of culture expounded in the CEFR differs considerably from how culture is often represented in school textbooks and language classrooms, which is often purely fact-based. Learners are provided with information about the target culture – facts or certain rituals, such as how Christmas is celebrated etc. - yet educational goals such as developing intercultural awareness, which also entails reflecting on one’s own culture, are less prominent. For teachers, these additional aims require a shift in traditional teaching practices.

Similarly, the ‘pluri’ concept is new for teachers. For example, previously, teachers tended to keep a strict separation between the mother tongue and the foreign language, fearing interference errors. The realisation that the mother tongue is a useful resource in learning requires a new assessment of the relationship between languages. The ‘pluri’ rationale is of particular significance in Europe for students who have a migrant background and whose home language may not be the official language of the country in which they live. Whereas in former times, both the native languages and cultures of these students were seen as a threat to ‘integration’ – students should learn the language of country of residence – increasingly efforts are made to encourage learners to see their first language not only as an important part of their personal heritage but as a valuable resource in learning other languages.

There is no doubt that the view of culture which underlies the CEFR is having a considerable effect on teacher education in Europe. The idea of pluriculturalism and the move towards an intercultural awareness approach figure strongly in the content of teacher education. An examination of school textbooks, however, suggests that a knowledge-based approach still dominates.

6. CEFR – an observation

Before leaving the CEFR behind, it might be added that many school teachers are relatively unaware of the content of the CEFR even though it may be incorporated in their national curriculum. Teachers will usually be aware of the levels (A1 – C2) but will often know little else about it. There are various reasons for this. Firstly, the document is complex in its categorisation and not easy to grasp. I do not recommend to my students that they go to the library and read the CEFR without my introductory explanations of its function and structure or before consulting a book such as *Insights from the Common European Framework* (Morrow, ed. 2004). Second, due to its comprehensive categorisation, not all sections will be immediately relevant for teachers, though they may be for school textbook authors and curriculum designers. If teachers are to understand the CEFR properly, then support materials and in-service teaching seminars are essential measures. It seems to me that an awareness of the **rationale** – language, cultural, educational etc. - underlying the CEFR is more important than a detailed knowledge of the text itself. In implementing the CEFR and devising support measures language policy makers should therefore consider exactly *why* it might benefit teachers to know about the CEFR and *which aspects* should be mediated.

7. The European Language Portfolio

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) is a document in which those who are learning

or have learned a language - whether at school or outside school - can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences. The ELP shares many of the principles and some of the content of the CEFR: 'I can' descriptors based on the categories of communicative competence and culture; the view that reflecting on one's own language and experiences is an important step in the development of learning strategies and plurilingual and pluricultural awareness etc.. Unlike the CEFR, of which there is only one version, each country develops its own portfolio and will, moreover, produce different versions for different stages of education – primary, lower secondary etc. Approximately 100 different versions have been produced to date. One advantage of the ELP is that it can be **customised** in accordance with local learning needs and teaching cultures. To ensure coherence at a European level, templates are made available by the Council of Europe to assist in portfolio design. Completed versions are then 'validated' by a Council committee, though this practice is to cease at the end of 2010.

The ELP serves two quite different functions: a) the **pedagogic** function, which aims to enhance the motivation of learners and helps them to reflect on their objectives, ways of learning and success in language learning and encourage them to enhance their plurilingual and intercultural experience, and b) the **reporting** function, which provides evidence of language levels and cultural experiences, for example, when transferring to a different school or to present to employers when applying for a job.

Recently, an **Impact Study** commissioned by the Council of Europe has been carried out by Maria Stoicheva, Gareth Hughes, Heike Speitz . In the following I shall refer to some of the findings of this study.

7.1. Support measures necessary for implementing the ELP

- Most successful projects have been **initiated by Ministries of Education**, or supported by them, with a clear relation to the context of national educational priorities;
- **Support measures** – in-service training etc. – needed to facilitate a shift of paradigm from teaching to learning and to learner autonomy;
- Overall **compatibility of national curricula** with the ELP/CEFR, which creates favourable conditions for further exploration and application of the ELP; goals of the official curriculum are formulated as “can do”
- Teacher training institutions provide continuity through **regular training and pedagogical research**

7.2. Advantages of the ELP

- The ELP provides a sense of a real **common European** product;
- It enforces the concept of **plurilingualism**, especially among migrant children;
- **Positive thinking** behind “I can” descriptors;
- **Transparency** of learning for both learner and teacher – shows what students have actually learnt, especially at an early stage of education;
- Very useful for teachers in secondary school to see what students have done before.

7.3. Challenges

- Requires a substantial **change in existing teaching practices**;
- Teachers must accept a **shift to more learner-orientation**;
- The ELP might be considered as an “**overload**”.
- **Logistical and financial problems** of ensuring access to the ELP.

8. Teachers’ Competences: the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)

So far in my discussions it is the learner who has been in the focus of attention. The question that arises is: if we adopt the action-oriented view of language in the CEFR and if we aim to develop the ability of reflection and life-long learning among learners, how can we **equip teachers** to face these challenges and how might teacher education be organised in ways that are compatible with these rationales?

In the year 2004 I was invited by the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe to coordinate a project together with language experts from five countries. This had the aim to produce a document to be used in teacher education which would complement the principles of the CEFR and which would contribute to the harmonisation of teacher education in Europe. This project resulted in the *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)*, which appeared in 2007.

The *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages* is a document intended for students undergoing their initial teacher education which encourages them to reflect on the didactic knowledge and skills necessary to teach languages, helps them to assess their own didactic competences and enables them to monitor their progress and to record their experiences of teaching during the course of their teacher education. The EPOSTL consists of three main sections:

- a **personal statement** section, to help students at the beginning of their teacher education to reflect on general questions related to teaching
- a **self-assessment section**, which contains lists of ‘can-do’ descriptors relating to didactic competences
- a **dossier**, in which students can document progress and record examples of work relevant to their teacher education and their future profession.

At the core of EPOSTL are 195 descriptors of didactic competences to be found in the self-assessment section, expressed as ‘I can ...’ statements. Two examples of descriptors are:

- I can create a supportive atmosphere that invites learners to take part in speaking activities.
- I can cater for a range of learning styles.

These descriptors have different functions. Some are:

- to encourage students to reflect on the competences a teacher strives to attain and how this may be reflected in their teaching
- to facilitate self-assessment of students’ competence
- to provide support in discussions with mentors and teacher educators

As can be seen, the descriptors are not merely a checklist but provide a springboard for reflection and discussion. In the first of the two examples of descriptors shown above students need to consider *how* they would ‘create a supportive atmosphere’. In the second, they must discuss the complex theoretical area of what learning styles actually are.

The reactions to the EPOSTL by teacher educators across Europe have been overwhelmingly positive. Since its publication in English, French and German the ECML has received a number of applications from member states to translate it into local languages. The current number of translations lies at eleven: in addition to those mentioned there are versions in Croatian, Dutch, Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Greek, Italian, Russian and Spanish. Most of these can be downloaded from the EPOSTL website. Currently it is also being translated into Turkish.

Various principles underlying the *CEFR* apply equally to the *EPOSTL*.

- A **reflective** mode of learning and teaching
- ‘**I can**’ **self-assessment competence descriptors**

- An **autonomous** view to both learning and teaching
- **Life-long learning** – a recognition that just as learning a language is a life-long process, so is ‘learning to teach’ a process which will accompany teachers throughout their professional career.

As with the ELP, the EPOSTL contains lists of ‘I can’ descriptors. The difference is that whereas the ELP describes *language* competences, the EPOSTL describes *didactic* competences. However, there is complementarity between the two documents. For example, the ELP might list a learner-based descriptor such as ‘I can understand short simple texts written in common everyday language’ and this will be complemented in the EPOSTL by a teacher-based descriptor: ‘I can select texts appropriate to the needs and language level of the learners’.

8.1. Implementation of the EPOSTL

The EPOSTL is widely used in teacher education institutions across Europe. The following strategic points seem important for its successful implementation:

- It should be integrated into existing teacher education programmes;
- It should be used by all teacher educators in an institution;
- Different options for using the EPOSTL should be explored – methodology/didactic course, teaching practice, mobility programmes, course assignments, term-papers etc.
- A concrete action plan for using the EPOSTL – aims, content, timescale etc. – should be agreed among teacher educators;
- Mentors (school practice supervisors) should be involved;
- Support measures are needed when implementing EPOSTL: workshops, conferences etc. for teacher educators, mentors in schools and other interested parties;
- National EPOSTL networks should be set up.

8.2. Advantages provided by the EPOSTL

The main advantages of the EPOSTL are the following:

- Provides comprehensive and systematic competence-based descriptors.
- Promotes reflection in teacher education
- Makes competences, aims and content transparent.
- Facilitates student teachers’ self-assessment.
- Encourages dialogue and discussion between educators, mentors and students.

- Creates a bridge between teacher education institutions and schools.
- Helps teacher educators to plan their curricula.

8.3. Challenges of using EPOSTL

When using an innovative tool such as the EPOSTL, various problems need to be overcome. From my own perspective as a teacher educator I have found the following difficulties:

- Students have to accept a reflective mode of teacher education rather than being fed with facts;
- Students are reluctant to make self-assessments;
- Initially, students find the 195 descriptors slightly overwhelming;
- Getting all teacher educators within a university to use EPOSTL systematically requires considerable energy and organisation.

I should like to conclude my discussion of the EPOSTL with a quotation from a student who has used it: “I think it is a good thing to have it (the EPOSTL) though at the beginning of filling in it I had a different opinion. It turned out to be really useful - I could spot my progress and, actually, it was the first time when I really went deep into details about my teaching style. ...it worked like a diary of self development in TEFL, I could check my skills.”

9. Conclusion

The work of the Council of Europe outlined above has contributed enormously both to my own professional life and to language teaching across Europe. In order to maximise the benefits of using its instruments it seems to me essential, however, that the principles behind it must be understood and evaluated, not only by policy makers but by classroom teachers. This will help teachers to identify with, rather than be alienated by, those aspects which are implemented.

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Downloads:

EPOSTL <http://epostl2.ecml.at/>.

CEFR:

http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/Languages/Language_Policy/

Link:

European Centre for Modern Languages: www.ecml.at

Developing "Language Pedagogy" in Japan: Suggestions for the road ahead based on "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)"

Noriyuki Nishiyama

Translated by Rika Aoki & Tomoko Yamakawa

1. Introduction

Nearly 10 years have passed since the publication of CEFR. During this decade, the visibility of CEFR has risen dramatically, and numerous studies and attempts for its adaptation have been undertaken (Nishiyama 2009a, 2009b). Today's conference also represents this effort, which demonstrates the high level of interest in language education ideals of European origin.

As far as I know, however, most of the interest focuses on “common reference levels,” while plurilingualism and pluriculturalism – essential elements of CEFR -- seldom receive consideration they deserve.

In this talk, the longitudinal nature of language acquisition and education will be discussed in the context of the criticism plurilingualism and pluriculturalism face. I will also comment on ongoing debates, related to French language education, in order to promote further discussion of contextualization of CEFR in Japan.

2. “Language pedagogy” assumed in CEFR

In Chapter 1 of CEFR, its aim is defined as follows: “The Common European Framework is intended to overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages arising from the different educational systems in Europe” (p.1).

Moreover, the aim is also described as follows: “By providing a common basis for the explicit description of objectives, content and methods, the Framework will enhance the transparency of courses, syllabi and qualifications, thus promoting international co-operation in the field of modern languages” (p.1).

This part underscores the international, interdisciplinary, and plurilingual dimensions espoused by CEFR. In order to understand its implications, I would like to consider this issue from the macro perspective; the process of European integration.

The process of European integration originates in the no-war commitment between Germany and France, two adversaries who have fought each other three times over 75 years. The reconciliation movement began with the co-management of coal and steel, the resources which were at the root of earlier conflicts, and the formation of European Coal and Steel Community in 1951. After that, economic integration has advanced through the co-management of nuclear power (1957) and the removal of retaliatory tariffs (1968), and culminated in the formation of the monetary union, the introduction of the common currency (Euro) (2002) and the progress toward the realization of EU Constitution. Now, this process is moving from “hardware to software,” so to speak.

The education, which is the prime example of software, however, has not been integrated into the process of European integration led by European Commission, but has been left within the jurisdiction of each country. This is because of significant differences in the values, traditions and history of education system among European nations. This kind of issue is related not only to education systems generally but also to the foreign language pedagogy, more specifically.

The aim of CEFR is to promote human mobility in Europe, to provide a common reference for the assessment structures which are rooted in national education cultures, and to show the common basis in language pedagogy supporting the evaluation system.

In Europe, it is often the case that languages differ according to country, and therefore the references for the corresponding terms are not always the same. This is not limited in educational system but also is present in the very concept of language education. Language pedagogy itself is the exhibition of linguistic culture, and it has preserved its specialty and individuality according to languages. The same situation can be seen all over the world, which means that the concept, the way of thinking, and the awareness of the problem differ from those in Japanese language pedagogy and French language pedagogy. Although the same corresponding terms are used, their semantic contents and the history or tradition of formation of concept are not same.

To these tendencies, CEFR seeks to offer the common basic term system. By setting CEFR as a common educational basis, the dialogue among teachers of different languages in a country would be promoted, the language threshold would be removed, and more integrated language teaching would be pursued. This also enables teachers of different languages in different countries to communicate with one another.

Thus, the assumption of CEFR shows the possibility of converting pedagogy of each language into language pedagogy which is related to foreign languages overall. In this case, plurilingualism means not only multi-tiered coexistence of languages in an individual, but also multi-tieredness of the foreign language pedagogy itself. Therefore, this can be considered as an innovating viewpoint in the structure of language pedagogy.

In Japanese, “foreign language pedagogy” is usually understood as an alternative term of “applied linguistics” in an Anglo-Saxon context, and this concept does not seem to derive from the idea of plurilingualism up to now (Koike 2003; 2).

In French, on the other hand, there exists the concept called “didactique des langues,” which is sometimes categorized by the kind of languages such as English, French, or German, and in other cases by the status of a language such as mother tongue, foreign language, or second language. The categorization of each language such as English pedagogy or French pedagogy has mother tongue pedagogy, foreign language pedagogy, and second language pedagogy as its subdivisions. Moreover, the unit of its subdivisions is individual languages (Cuq et Gruca 2005; 66-67).

In this kind of categorization, however, the pedagogy of each individual language is independent from each other and autonomic without mutual interchange, which is far from the principle of an integrated foreign language pedagogy.

Language pedagogy based on plurilingualism as defined by CEFR is an integrated language pedagogy, and is common among individual languages or individual language pedagogies. Among these, for example, “partial ability” and “intermediate ability” are not the issues of individual languages but operate as concepts traversing language pedagogy, which requires an investment into teacher training. .

Because of the fact that CEFR proclaims itself to be a common system across all languages, it has been translated not only into European languages but also into Asian languages such as Japanese, Chinese and Korean. As of 2009, 36 different language editions have been published, and those in Romanian and Slovenian are pending. This document has the largest collection of different language editions, which greatly surpasses *Threshold level* with 24 different language editions.

Here, it is necessary to remember that CEFR is written in English and French, the two official languages of the Council of Europe. These two editions are not the translation from the other, but were written in English and in French concurrently depending on the chapter, and after that modifications were done by three British and one French

researchers. The joint production of the original document was undertaken with the assumption that the major concepts can be shared in English and French.

However, it is not clear if the technical concepts share their semantic representation in the original English and French editions. First of all, this must be fully fulfilled in English and French. This semantic equivalence, however, is not always evident.

This juxtaposition can be illustrated by the term "evaluation." In English, the terms "evaluation," "assessment," and "testing" are chosen according to their meanings. In French, on the other hand, the term "évaluation" subsumes these three meanings. In addition, the French term "contrôle" shares its concepts with English "assessment," "evaluation" and "monitoring" (Uni 2010). These differences are caused by the fact that the French language has less vocabulary compared to English and speakers of French have a tendency to segmentalize their thoughts by analytic argumentation. Another reason is that the concept "evaluation" itself originated in Anglo-Saxon culture and was imported into French.

Another example can be seen in "interculturality" and "interculturalité" which is translated as *ibunka tekiousei* (adaptivity to different culture) in Japanese edition (p.44). It is doubtful, however, whether CEFR considers it as an issue? Thus, the concept referred by this term is not always the same within the contexts in Anglo-Saxon language pedagogy, French language pedagogy and Japanese language pedagogy (Himeta 2009).

Through these two examples, it can be concluded that English, French or Japanese language pedagogy is not necessarily underpinned by the same theoretical principles. It does not mean, however, that the CEFR's assumption is false. Instead, it may be possible to consider that the relatively common understanding of new concepts used in CEFR such as "partial ability" and "plurilingualism and pluriculturalism" does exist. In this sense, for the elaboration of an integrated language pedagogy leading to the acceptance of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism, it is necessary to deepen our understanding not only of "common reference levels" but also of the new concepts generated from the discussions of CEFR with teachers of different languages.

3. Criticism of "Common European Framework of Reference"

To the best of my knowledge, valid criticism of CEFR has seldom been heard in Japan. The reason why CEFR has received a largely positive appraisal in Japan is that researchers and educators of foreign languages in Japan are inclined to appreciate and introduce this new instrument for the time being and or / and have blind devotion to

academic works originating in Europe and North America. Then, can the same be said about Europe? Have European educators responded positively to CEFR? European reaction has been more cautious. To deepen the discussion, I will play a role of a devil's advocate to introduce some of the critique. .

Critique of "CEFR" is leveled at the perspectives of language teaching itself (Migeot, 2008a, 2008b).

According to *Guide for the development of Language Education Policies in Europe* (2007) which is published to popularize 'plurilingualism' and 'pluriculturalism' cited in CEFR as a policy of language education, plurilingualism has two dimensions: one of competence and the other of value, both of which are closely related to the notion of identity of a language, (Beacco, 2007). Language teaching develops learners' linguistic competence as a tool and it is related to functions of identity of language and those of social integration at the same time. Certainly, CEFR not only advocates perspectives of language as a tool but also refers to cross-cultural competence and cultural competence. However, on the whole, these components are marginal while the descriptors and action-oriented approach seem to be the central pillars of CEFR. In addition, methodology based on the descriptors and action-oriented approach is apt to focus on only functional aspects of a language. As a result, there is a concern that the methodology only seeks to train learners to perform a particular task.

In addition, by changing the role of learners into that of social agents, CEFR has an intention of freeing learners from classrooms, and leading them into the society. However, examining CEFR carefully, a concept of social agents is not introduced in CEFR and the document still uses a concept of learners and language users (p. 44).

A perspective of language teaching focusing only on functioning values that divides learners into two types, high and low achievers, considers human beings as commercial resources and ignores identity of language and the goal of social integration.

Mind you, it is not true that from the beginning CEFR tried to create the standard of functional language proficiency in order to parallel the rise of globalization. According to Coste, one of the authors of this document, in 1991, when they formulated the concept, it was agreed that a number of qualification systems for English proficiency implemented in various European countries should be integrated into one system with greater transparency the EU member nations could commonly share. It was not intended, on the other hand, that language learners should be trained to obtain practical language skills as commercial resources in the midst of growing globalism (Coste, 2009)

Since then, the Council of Europe has continued to proclaim that the language education should aim to contribute to the development of democratic society where people learn languages of neighboring countries and promote mutual understanding. The commercial-based view of education or functionalism has not been included in the concept. However, the advent of globalism has been making practices of CEFR into contrary to what was originally intended.

In 2007, EU created a new position in charge of multilingualism and has been involved in language policy. EU has been trying to make use of CEFR in language policies. These days, EU has been making efforts to create a multi-polar structure vis-a-vis USA's unipolar dominance. Under the circumstance, EU has worked out neoliberalism-flavored language policies, all of which are related to CEFR. One of them is establishing "a European Space for higher education" based on the Bologna Declaration (1999). It intends to elevate the qualities of European higher education by introducing the standardized schooling-year-system: undergraduate, four years; master course, two years; doctorate course, three years. School-year varies among European countries. Then, the European Space for higher education will be able to compete with American higher education (Uegaki, 2009). Prior to the standardized school-year system proposed by the Bologna Declaration, there were significant variations among the European countries with regard to the length and sequence of academic programs. That meant that each country's education system reflected the country's cultural characteristics. CEFR promotes mobility of students and citizens in the European areas by standardizing assessment of language proficiencies, while the "European Space for higher education" promotes the mobility of students in the educational system (Louis, 2005; Kido, 2008).

One of the instruments that promote interchange programs smoothly among universities is Europass: a common self-assessment framework which enables students of EU countries to make their language ability and professional skills transparent and then provide their personal information. There are some EU universities which require students who want to study there to show their Europass. Europass, in fact, uses CEFR's Common Reference Levels for the benchmarks of language ability. Therefore, it can be said that the student mobility has been standardized by the Reference Levels of the CEFR. Also, Europass was developed on basis of European Language Portfolio (ELP), a reflection as well as a self-assessment tool for practices of CEFR. However, it did not incorporate intentionally the personal language dossier, one of the major sections of ELP, into its structure. As a result, Europass has only focused on language ability leaving the reflective and autonomous learning abilities of the bearers unevaluated. Moreover, language ability in Europass has been considered as that of one specific language, which differs from the philosophy of plurilingualism or

pluriculturalism CEFR has promoted.

In addition, to promote the EU language education policy, in which people are expected to speak their mother tongue plus two other languages, academic achievement tests are being planned. In this study “European Indicator of Language Competence,” which follows the Common Reference Level of the CEFR, is used as criteria. The idea of evaluation in this “European Indicator of Language Competence” is similar to the Common Reference Level introduced in the Europass. In this way, the CEFR is being applied to the trend, which is not consistent with the original philosophy of CEFR.

Here is another problem: the CEFR has been used in the immigrant education in an unexpected way from the viewpoint of its original philosophy. The CEFR on paper promotes a lofty principle: to promote mobility of students and citizens, to deepen mutual understandings and to contribute to an establishment of a democratic society. On the other hand, however, the CEFR works as an instrument to control migrations into Europe. This fact may be perceived as contradictory.

Recently, the governments of leading European countries have made steps to link the residence permit with language competence (Délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France 2005). Specifically, in France immigrants are required to achieve the lowest language competence, level A1.1. If they achieve this level, they become eligible for the residence permit. In Germany immigrants are required to achieve B1 level.

However, is it educationally significant to use the Common Reference Levels as a screening instrument to select immigrants? It is acceptable if the practical, as opposed to the theoretical, application of the CEFR is to encourage mobility across the borders of EU countries, or if the member nations design their language education policy based on the CEFR, because this was the original intent.

However, as was pointed out by some teachers from the former French colonies at the international conference under the auspices of the Association of Professors of French Language Education in 2007, those countries which send their workers as emigrants to Europe would have to take some measures against the CEFR, as long as it is used as a screening tool. This is because, they claimed, communicative approach cannot be readily integrated into the local language learning culture, and the implementation of the CEFR could possibly bring with it a further confusion and ultimately impose a burden on all stakeholders. It is not likely that European countries will impose the CEFR on the countries sending emigrants, but, if they continue to use the CEFR, it is likely that the CEFR will become a moral and practical pressure to these countries. As a result, the

CEFR, contrary to its intended purpose, may become a binding tool. In other words, the lure of acceptance by wealthy European countries would have undue influence on the education policies of immigrant-providing countries. In the future, the social and education authorities in these nations will have to align their instructional priorities with the outcomes required by CEFR, even if it would be incongruent with the local socio-educational context.

4. Conclusion

In this presentation, I intended to avoid problems of the Common Reference Level in the CEFR. I discussed possibility of the integrated education and the critique of the CEFR, which has seldom been discussed in Japan. Critical analysis is necessary for the scholarly development, but, in Japan, it is not a rare case that academic theories or ideas developed in Europe or the USA are blindly accepted. Therefore, I hope this presentation would be a springboard for discussing concerns about the CEFR.

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Integration of CEFR in Japan --- Comparative Case Study of German Language Education and Japanese Education

Fumiya Hirataka

Translated by Terri Akiko Elliott, Tomoko Yamakawa, and Rika Aoki

Since CEFR was published in 2001, there have been various reactions in Japan. I would like to explain how this instrument was received by the Japanese educators, review the main principles of CEFR, and discuss the road ahead.

I suppose Deutschlehreraus- und fortbildungskurs der JGG, a German language teacher training program begun in October 2003 and cosponsored by Japanische Gesellschaft für Germanistik, Der Japanische Deutschlehrerverband, or Japanese Societies for German Studies and Goethe-Institut Tokyo (technically supported by Dokkyo University), introduced CEFR as an academic tool for German language education in Japan. After that, DaF-Seminar, sponsored by Japanische Gesellschaft für Germanistik introduced CEFR several times. A lecture “CEFR and its principle and limitation” and a symposium “CEFR and plurilingual education in Japan” sponsored by Der Japanische Deutschlehrerverband were held at Japanische Gesellschaft für Germanistik research seminar in Spring 2008. Professor Shigeru Yoshijima, a translator of CEFR into Japanese, was the keynote speaker and not only German but also English and French education specialists were invited as panelists. Even though the panelists support the idea of plurilingualism introduced in CEFR, there are various problems in the way of successful implementation of this mechanism in the foreign language education in Japan.

Next, I would like to describe a concrete example of the use of CEFR in German education in Japan. Hopefully this example will clarify the challenges we are facing here and problems to be considered as we contemplate adapting CEFR to Japan.

Even though many German textbooks published in Germany and language tests conducted by Goethe-Institut and Österreichisches Sprachdiplom-Deutsch follow CEFR style, there are few German textbooks based on CEFR which are published in Japan. There are several reasons for this.

First, at the practical level CEFR and related mechanisms are still largely unknown to German teachers. Next, since German education in Japan mainly focuses on grammar

and vocabulary, reading and translating textbooks, it runs counter to the CEFR fundamental idea of what the learner can realistically accomplish in the target language. Last, most German learners who study it as a second foreign language at university level won't be able to reach A1 level since they study for only 1 or 2 periods (45 or 90 hours a year). If we would like to apply CEFR to German education in Japan, we have to subdivide A1 level.

There are some textbooks based on A1. For example, *Start frei!* is a result of collaboration by Goethe-Institut members familiar with CEFR and Japanese German teachers. This textbook has 10 lessons and Lesson 10 is a trial examination of A1 (Start Deutsch 1) level. It seems the textbook refers to *Profile Deutsch*, since the word list at the back of the textbook has indications of either A1 or A2 level. This appears to be the reason it is called "German textbook aim to reach A1, first level of CEFR" and marked "A1" on the cover of the textbook. However, it doesn't explicitly use Can-do Statements, it was made to pass A1 level exam started in Germany and influenced by CEFR rather than based on CEFR itself.

It seems *Portfolio* is more common than CEFR among Japanese German teachers. That is probably because learner-focused-instruction is becoming the norm among Japanese German teachers. The importance of "learning to learn" and of autonomous study promotion was understood, and the role of the *Portfolio* as a tool for enabling learners to reflect on their FL acquisition is being debated in Japanese academic circles.

For example, Kokushikan University in Tokyo has developed their original *Foreign Language Portfolio* for five languages: English, German, French, Chinese, and Japanese. This *Portfolio* is used in language classes. First, in order to set a common goal level for five languages, program managers rewrote Can-do descriptors of CEFR partly considering adjustment for course contents of each language and level, and show it to students as "goal for each level". Can-do descriptors were made by all teachers who took part in *Portfolio* development during discussion. German, French, and Chinese teachers for lower level, English teachers for middle-and-upper levels, and Japanese teachers for foreign students, thought about concrete ideas to revise the descriptors considering course contents and available textbooks.

Can-do descriptors of each language were developed by people in charge of each language by referring to "goal for each level" and considering course contents of each language. As far as I know, German instruction was based on textbook items for core courses using contents and grammatical order of general textbooks publicly available (e.g. *Schritte international*).

Kokushikan University divides the foreign language curriculum objectives into 10 levels,

comparison to CEFR is on Table 1. According to this, A1 level is divided into four levels. As I mentioned, since German education in Japan has limited class time, it is hard to reach even A1 level. For this reason it is necessary to refine the A1 level further.

Table 1 The Level of Kokushikan University and the Equivalent of CEFR

Kokushikan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
CEFR	A1-1	A1-2	A1-3	A1-4	A2-1	A2-2	B1	B2	C1	C2

The important thing to discuss in relation to the acceptance of CEFR in Japan is Japanese language education. When CEFR was published in 2001, Japanese language teachers in Europe reacted quickly. Japan Foundation entrusted Association of Japanese Language Teachers in Europe to research the theoretical background and purpose of CEFR and ELP development and its usage, and with language education trends, including Japanese, in Europe at that time, published “Japanese Education and CEFR in Europe”. It said “a common outline based on the principles of CEFR should be established for Japanese education” and this outline or structure “should seek to be able to compare with internationally accepted standards in foreign language education”. As I’ll explain later, this became realizable by *JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education*.

At the same time Japan Foundation changed their policy from supporting Japanese education meeting local needs, to promoting the spread of Japanese language learning globally. In addition to CEFR various standards exist as a base for contributing to their own language and foreign language promotion policy in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Since the number of Japanese learners overseas was increasing, Japan Foundation started in 2005 to construct *JF Japanese education standards* in order to support reexamination of Japanese language business requirements to promote Japanese language overseas. After conducting consultations at roundtables held three times in 2005 and various academic meetings, *JF Japanese education standard testing edition* was published in 2009, followed by *JF Japanese education standard 2010* in 2010.

In order to promote Japanese language at the critical time of globalization and diversifying sense of values in Japan and elsewhere Japanese language should be considered as one of the options for international communication in the multilingual society. For this reason, *JF Japanese education standard* introduced the ideas of “Japanese for mutual understanding”.

JF Japanese education standard 2010 was developed based on CEFR principles. First, *JF Japanese education standard 2010* is based on ideas and composition of

communicative language competence and communicative language activities, sequence of language ability and language activity, and is expressed as “JF standards tree (see Appendix).” All constituent elements of language ability and language activities are represented by the roots and branches of the ‘tree’ as per diagram (see Appendix) TLTY I still think it may be a good idea to put a rough diagram in the Appendix. The key categories are already translated so it should be sufficient. I downloaded it from the JF website and inserted at the end of this paper. Let me know what you think. Altogether the diagram contains 53 categories, all introduced by CEFR.

Next, *JF Japanese education standard 2010* follows six steps, A1 to C2, of CEFR. This makes it possible “to monitor Japanese progress based on CEFR by using JF standard”. The 53 categories include six steps of Can-do descriptors. Teachers choose the descriptors which suit their classes and students. They make their own Can-do (MY Can-do) by rewriting and editing them and using in their classes. A website called “Everyone’s Can-do site” supports that work.

Also, since *JF Japanese education standard 2010* has portfolio consisting of “evaluate chart”, “record of linguistic and cultural experience”, and “study results”, not only teachers but also students can set their individual goals and review their learning.

By using *JF Japanese education standard 2010*, “teachers are able to understand students’ needs roughly by ‘tree of JF standard’, and examine how to set reachable goals and evaluate results. Also, teachers are able to share the problems on a common basis and consult how to solve them by using common language master standard.” Thus, *JF Japanese education standard 2010* is a tool for “reflection” and “dialogue” for both teachers and students.

Lastly, I would like to return to action-oriented approach, one of the ideas of CEFR that humans are social beings accomplishing tasks by using languages, and plurilingualism, the principle of building peaceful and democratic Europe through mutual understanding. I would like to discuss the possibility of introducing CEFR to Japan.

It seems hard to establish language education based on action-oriented approach in Japan, yet paradoxically at the same time Japan is one of a few countries to promote language education following action-oriented approach from a different perspective. Foreign language education in Japan mainly focuses on grammar and vocabulary, and reading and translation. This could be called the traditional way, even though class time is limited. A structure-oriented approach that examines grammar and vocabulary differs from action-oriented approach. However, considering “action-oriented approach” as “accomplishing tasks through language”, Japan, the country, studied civilization and

culture from developed countries by reading documents in English, German, French, and other languages, seems to be one of the few advanced countries for language education and language learning by action-oriented approach. This could be due to the fact that in Japan the emphasis has been traditionally on reading ability as “partial competence”, defined in the CEFR, and developed their ability. On the contrary, Japanese people have not been good at debating or making full use of language of expression using skillful sophisticated language. Japanese do not have a tradition of action-oriented approach such as using language as a skill. However, understanding what they read in foreign literature, thinking of the contents from their individual perspectives and making practical use of the acquired knowledge are important factors which have helped develop Japanese civilization and culture. This is not unrelated to the fact that there are plenty of translations conducted in Japanese educational settings.

Next, let’s take a look at the issue of plurilingualism. The idea that a community of nations with different languages aiming for peaceful coexistence is also applicable in Asia. Not only European countries but also Japan and Korea are facing the big challenges of multicultural coexistence by looking at the prospect of increasing the number of immigrants and becoming a multilingual society. Considering this, not only Europe but also Japan and other Asian countries can share the values of pacifism and strive for multicultural coexistence via language policy and language education, long for world peace, and seek social stability. However, Europe which has organizations to promote peace and the protection of human rights, such as the Council of Europe, and Asia which does not have them, seem to have different processes to build frameworks like CEFR. Europe has experienced World Wars twice, and started the movement to assure long-lasting peace and established the Council of Europe in order to realize it. The Council of Europe produced CEFR as a vehicle to accomplish this lofty principle. On the other hand, since Japan (Asia) does not have any consultative mechanism to promote peace and human rights at the regional level, it has to begin with a specific common framework in Asia. China called it CEAFR (Common East Asian Framework of Reference) at the first roundtable hosted by Japan Foundation. In a sense this meeting represented the starting point of language education and language learning contributing to peace-building.

Also, it seems that human views and social views on peace-building are different between Europe and Asia. Europe aims at training citizens to contribute to building peace and a democratic Europe, and understanding a plethora of value systems is essential to this process. And this philosophy is based on the very notion of “democracy” and “citizenship education” inherent in Europe. The notions of “democracy”, “citizenship education” and “citizen” are ideas that originated in Europe. The question

remains whether these ideas are universally applicable, especially in Asia. Thus it is conceivable that when CEAFR is completed it would be a peace building tool in Asia, however I wonder if this would be an effective route for building democracy and citizen education. With its socio-economic peculiarities Asian path will likely be different from the one pursued in Europe. In my opinion, cultivating citizenship values and promoting people who can contribute to regional peace would depend on the understanding of concepts which are inherent in the region such as “harmony” or “virtue”. “Mutual understanding” would be close to explain “harmony” to Europeans. With this in mind CEAFR may be the best vehicle we have now. CEAFR seems to be a bundle of “Japanese for mutual understanding”, “Chinese for mutual understanding”, and “Korean for mutual understanding”. It doesn’t seem to be a complete product though, since CEFR has Japanese, Chinese, and Korean editions, and Japan has JF standard.

In order to realize a peaceful world, national security used to be important. As is widely known, human security came to be the focus of public attention since the collapse of cold war architecture. The world is increasingly globalized and with easy movement around the planet there are ample opportunities to become familiar with other cultures, values and languages. Language and communication will play a very pivotal role in promoting mutual understanding, and contributing to human security. For this reason our task is to consider how to translate education and especially language education into a policy-relevant instrument one which would strengthen ties in the region.

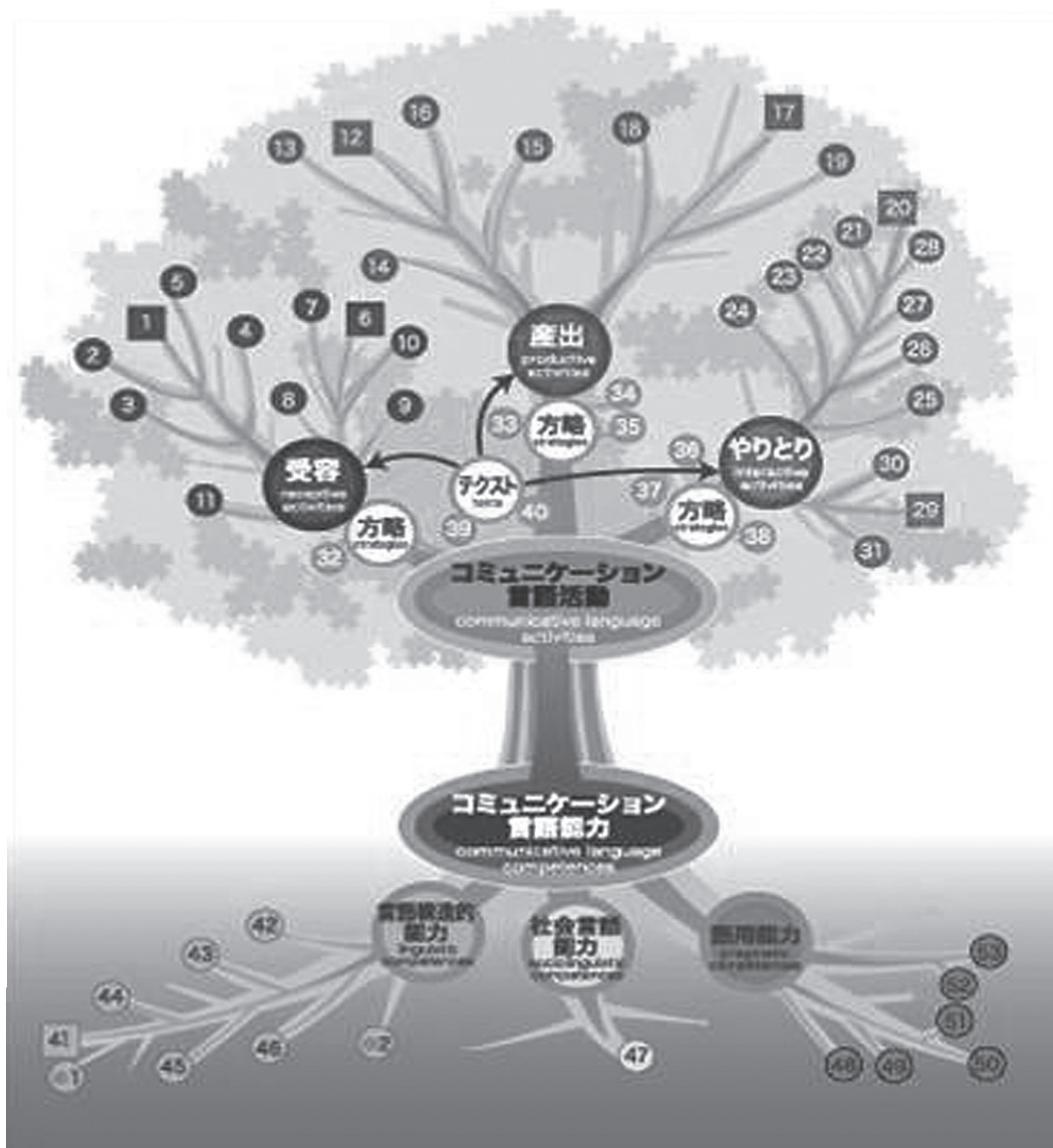
Education is the way to pass the ideas of “citizen”, “harmony”, or “virtue” to the next generation. The importance of education to realize a peaceful world is the same in both Europe and Asia. Asia does not have organizations such as the Council of Europe or the European Union and may or may not have a similar mechanism in the future. However, constructing a peaceful Asia is a paramount task and CEAFR can play an important role in engaging language educators in this critical process.

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Appendix 1 JF Standards Tree Diagram



Contextualization of the EPOSTL

within Japanese Educational System

Ken Hisamura

Introduction

The EPOSTL stands for European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages which was built on the basis of three pedagogical instruments: *Common European Framework of Reference* for Languages (CEFR), the European Language Portfolio (ELP), and the European Profile for Language Teacher Education—A Frame of Reference (Profile). It was developed as a reflection tool not for students of one specific language, but for students of languages in general. However, since the JACET SIG is a group of English language education researchers, this presentation focuses on English language education.

You would probably be doubtful about the success of contextualizing the EPOSTL for the Japanese educational setting because there are no theoretical foundations in Japan like CEFR, ELP, or Profile to build on. Some of the major principles of the EPOSTL are: it contains sets of “can-do” descriptors which identify competences for language teachers to strive to attain; it aims for life-long learning to teach; and it was developed as a frame of reference. These points underlie the *CEFR*, too, and, as Majima (2010) points out, the *CEFR* is more applicable to the Japanese context of language education than American National Standard which doesn’t have can-do statements, confined to school use only, not for life-long learning. If this is indeed the case, the EPOSTL should also be considered as an appropriate tool for language teacher education in Japan.

Taking the ten-year survey results conducted by the SIG on English education into consideration, we have developed the first adaptation of the EPOSTL. This adaptation is expected to be a springboard to the teacher education paradigm shift in Japan. Various qualitative and quantitative studies will be necessary to assess the validity and effectiveness, and improve the reliability of the list of descriptors. The list should be examined judiciously by all relevant stakeholders, including primarily language education researchers and teacher trainers. Also, large-scale surveys for collecting data from pre-and in-service teachers or supervisors at local boards of education are desirable to refine the checklist and render it more compliant with the constraints and priorities of the foreign language teacher education in Japan. Hopefully, these research activities will raise the visibility of this project among educators and education

policy-makers

Since Dr. Newby explains the purpose of the EPOSTL, I would like to focus on the background of our research project, the first adaptation of the EPOSTL self-assessment descriptors, and the challenges for future research.

1. Competences required of EFL teachers in Japan

1.1 Expectations of competences of EFL teachers

After World War II, teaching has been defined in three different ways in the Japanese political and social context (Ayabe, 2009). During the Cold War period, combined with the collision of ideology, teaching was considered as a vocation on one hand, and on the other hand, as a job. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the third concept has become dominant: that is, teaching as a profession. This concept is based on the idea that just like doctors or lawyers, teachers are professionals who have or should have every aspect of professionalism such as high-quality of professional knowledge and skills, qualifications necessary for education, good personality, self-devotion, commitment to learning community, etc. In the context of English education reform, the government has suggested the guidelines for EFL teachers' competences. The recent trend of EFL teacher education reform undertaken by the MEXT can be overviewed as follows:

The rationale behind the recent reform of English language education is to develop the student communicative ability in English at each stage of school education. English education in Japan has so far failed in producing English users who can work in today's globalized world (MEXT, 2001). Therefore, it is considered necessary to change the English education paradigm to the one in which learners can acquire communicative competence in English.

Based on this concept, MEXT stipulates in the Strategic Plan (2002) that all the teachers of English should possess English ability, equivalent to pre-1st Grade of the STEP (Society for Testing English Proficiency) test, TOEFL (PBT) 550, and TOEIC 730, and necessary didactic competences. Teachers of English are required to conduct communication-oriented lessons by utilizing various communication activities in English. This is the first time for the government to make a specific reference to English ability and to didactic competences of EFL teachers.

Regarding didactic competences, an advisory committee suggests as follows:

- to strengthen learners' motivation,

- to get learners to recognize the roles of Japan and Japanese people in the international society,
- to generate learners' incentives to communicate in English,
- to develop learners' English competences as their communication skill, etc.

The Action Plan (2003) formulated by MEXT required every EFL teacher at a secondary school to follow a retraining program designed and provided by local authorities. The objective of this policy was to improve EFL teachers' English ability and teaching skills up to the levels suggested above. The re-training system started in 2002, and ended in 2007. More than 300,000 EFL teachers participated in the programs over five years. However, the effectiveness of the programs has never been monitored or assessed.

Meanwhile, in 2006, MEXT conducted a national survey among EFL teachers at secondary schools focusing on their English proficiency. It revealed that the percentage of junior-high-school EFL teachers who had passed STEP pre-1st grade, or obtained at least a score of 550 and 730 on TOEFL (PBT) and TOEIC, respectively, was 24.8 % whereas that of senior-high-school teachers 48.4 %.

The English language education policy outlined in the action plan is still continued. The new Course of Study to be implemented in 2013 describes clearly that as a rule English lessons should be conducted in English. In practice complying with this guideline represents a huge challenge in the FL classrooms in Japan since most teachers would find it very difficult to conduct communicative lessons. This situation is not unique to Japan but is an issue in a number of other Asian countries such as Korea, or China. .

1.2 Present perceptions of EFL teachers

Otani (2007) demonstrates, analyzing the changes of linguistic and cultural values of Japanese people since the Meiji Restoration, that the pendulum has swung three times in Japan, at about 30-year intervals, from 'English-crazed' to 'anti-English' attitudes. He also points out that this is the fourth 'English-crazed' age, saying that at no other period of time except for today have we witnessed an environment in which many laymen teach English and, thus, professionals and amateurs are hardly distinguishable in the world of English education in Japan today.

The estimated number of ordinary university students who teach junior high school students English as private tutors at home or at cram school part-time amounts to 700,000, one and half times the number of EFL practicing teachers. To illustrate this point further, some unemployed Ph.Ds. specializing in science applied for the full-time position of English instructors at a certain university in Kansai. Even though English was not their major, applicants emphasized their language skills.

Even MEXT has shown inadequate understanding of the needs of the teaching profession (Hisamura, 2009). English will be a compulsory subject for 5th and 6th graders at elementary schools from the 2011 academic year, although the number of elementary-school teachers with English teaching ability is obviously insufficient. The Action Plan formulated by MEXT regarding the incorporation of English teaching into elementary school curriculum contains the following sentence: “such as special part-time instructors, members of society who are proficient in English through overseas experiences and foreign students will be promoted.” This implies that no special training or professional qualification is necessary for the classroom instructors, which goes contrary to the spirit of professionalism.

To distinguish between professional and amateurs, as Otani (*ibid*) suggests, the paradigm of initial teacher education and teacher development should be drastically altered, and he concludes that an EFL teacher is a professional who can encourage learners to foster and raise cross-lingual and cultural awareness or understanding i.e. understanding of others from different cultures.

Much can be debated about Otani’s definition of professional EFL teachers; however, his suggestion on the paradigm shift of pre-and in-service teacher education is valuable and far-reaching.

2. Reflection-oriented EFL teacher education

Reflection is considered as a key word for paradigm shift of teacher education. EPOSTL itself is subtitled ‘A reflection tool for language teacher education.’ In order to adapt the EPOSTL in the Japanese context, it will be necessary to look at how far the concept of reflection prevails in English teacher education in Japan.

2.1 Reflective approach

Reflective approach was first advocated by Hatta (2000), which attracted much attention of teacher educators. He suggests incorporating theory and practice of reflection into the English teaching methodology syllabus, which will cause the paradigm shift of pre-service teacher education. It is evident that Hatta played an important role in disseminating the concept of reflection in pre-service teacher education. We find few examples of reflective way of teaching in the results of a survey conducted by the JACET SIG on Teacher Education in 1998 and in 2002. Yet, according to the survey conducted in 2008, 92% of the respondents who were in charge of English teaching methodology classes claimed to provide micro-teaching, and 40% of them encouraged their students to engage in self-assessment and reflection using various media. Respondents also indicated that their students reflected on their teaching

experiences in writing or through a discussion.

2.2 Task-exploring type of action research

Yokomizo (2009) suggests shifting teacher education paradigm from the concept of ‘teacher training’ to that of ‘teacher development’. He claims that teachers should change themselves by following a cycle of reflection, performance, observation, and improvement through non-critical dialogs on-site with their colleagues. In the task-exploring type of action research, the effectiveness of teaching strategies used in the classroom is assessed based on field-notes, teaching logs, or diaries from the teacher’s viewpoints, not on quantitative data.

2.3 Reflective practice

2.3.1 Rationale for reflective practice

Reflective practice has been advocated by Tamai (2009a, 2009b) who has taken this method in his graduate-school course for in-service teacher students for several years. Tamai defines reflective practice as a method of teacher research which motivates teachers to advance their professional development by reflecting on their classroom teaching experiences. Teachers should set a target of observation on their own teaching, and understand themselves more deeply as well as their students. In this process of self-observation, they could become aware of the value of supporting and understanding learners and of changing teacher beliefs, which leads to teacher development. Tamai sets three pillars of theory and practice for his graduate course as follows: experiential learning through reflective cycle, KASA (knowledge, attitude, skill, awareness) as a frame of reflection, and learner-centeredness. Pedagogical instruments for this practice will be Teaching Journal, Interview, Reflective Video, and Focused Paper. Among them, Tamai has used Teaching Journal which he claimed to be effective.

2.3.2 Limitations of reflective practice

Tamai points out that there are both advantages and disadvantages in his graduate course in which he plays two different roles by himself: one as a teacher, the other as a mentor. In teacher education courses, no professors, even if they are well trained teacher trainers, could avoid this challenge. Also, Tamai’s graduate course is considered as limiting and individual because his class size is very small, most of his students are practicing teachers, and Teaching Journal is used as a pedagogical tool. In this context, reflective practice, although very effective, seems difficult to disseminate in the teacher training programs across the country. It will be necessary to develop a more practical educational tool like the EPOSTL and to train on-site as many mentors as possible.

3. The first adaptation of EPOSTL Self-Assessment Descriptors

There are 195 descriptors of competences related to language teaching at the heart of the EPOSTL. The top priority must be to adapt these descriptors to the Japanese educational context. The descriptors reflect the rationale of the EPOSTL such as self-reflection, interaction, learner-centeredness, teacher belief, autonomous learning, etc. With this in mind, and through consultation with English teacher trainers other than the members of our group, we have carefully identified which elements can be successfully emulated, and have elaborated 100 descriptors as the first adaptation of the EPOSTL self-assessment check-list. We have deleted 95 descriptors mainly for the following reasons:

- highly specific to a European context (e.g. I can understand the principles formulated in relevant European documents (e.g. CEFR, ELP).),
- do not match curricular content or pedagogical methods adopted in Japanese secondary schools (e.g. I can use peer-assessment and feedback to assist the writing process, / I can assess the process and outcome of project work in cooperation with learners. / I can plan and structure portfolio work.),
- too demanding for the Japanese student teachers who experience teaching for only two to four weeks (e.g. I can design ICT materials and activities appropriate for my learners).

In addition, we have deleted or modified descriptors if substantial modification is needed to match the reality of Japanese students in a teacher training course, we have combined descriptors if their contents overlap within the parameters of the Japanese educational settings, or we have used terms or expressions that would be understandable to Japanese students in a teacher training course.

You may think that some of the descriptors should not be deleted from the list because they are closely related to the principles of the EPOSTL. Or, you can point out that some of 100 descriptors are not suitable for the Japanese context. In this way, much can be debated about this adaptation. It is OK because this list of descriptors is a springboard for discussion.

4. Challenges

4.1 Defining the purpose of the self-assessment descriptors

This first adaptation, following the purpose of the EPOSTL descriptors, was developed as a set of competences which EFL teachers should strive to attain. However, in the light of the Japanese policy of granting teacher's license to the largest pool of qualified applicants possible and offering the better ones permanent employment, it is

not clear whether this will be a successful model in Japan. Academic levels and qualities of student teachers vary, and there are few universities which have set English literacy benchmark levels for the EFL teacher training courses. In the absence of national standards for teacher education, developing the list of descriptors which will satisfy the needs of every institution will be a significant challenge.

To ensure the effectiveness of this instrument it is imperative to provide a clear definition of the purpose of self-assessment descriptors, namely role will they serve for teacher education. The purpose of the list can be defined in several ways: for example, as:

- a set of competences language teachers should strive to attain,
- a set of competences prospective language teachers are expected to acquire,
- a set of competences attainable for prospective language teachers if they make some efforts,
- a set of baseline competences every prospective teacher must attain, or
- a frame of reference or guidelines universities and colleges can flexibly use.

The organization, contents, and numbers of the descriptors will be contingent upon its purpose. The first adaptation is just the first step in the process which should be examined and improved through action research and consultations with stakeholders.

4.2 Identifying the areas of professional competences

The EPOSTL self-assessment descriptors are sub-divided into seven categories which “represent areas in which teachers require a variety of competences and need to make decisions related to teaching (Newby et al, 2007).” As far as English language teaching is concerned, these seven categories can be adapted to the Japanese context. However, teachers’ responsibilities in Japan extend well beyond the realm of the classroom. In fact, administrative and advisory duties – be it in the capacity of a career counselor, a member of the disciplinary committee or a homeroom teacher who has to spend a significant amount of time dealing with the problems of the students’ family lives – often represent the biggest burden on the teachers’ time. In order to perform these important duties teachers have to possess certain qualities and aptitudes. However, no clear benchmarks have been established on which to base the assessment of these qualities. At the time of employment ‘personal traits’ and ‘enthusiasm for the profession’ are the two areas most stringently assessed. Also, MEXT suggests that student teachers should obtain ‘a sense of mission’ and ‘passion for education’ (MEXT, 2008). These aspects are not included in the EPOSTL descriptors. Therefore, it would be necessary to broaden the checklist in order to include personal qualities necessary to cope with the professional demands on language teachers outside the classroom.

4.3 Establishing standards for language teacher education

EPOSTL was built on CEFR, ELP, and the Profile. Some European countries have implemented EPOSTL in their own context just like ELP by “adjusting it to the national language curriculum and standards for teacher education (Little et al, 2007)”. Unfortunately, in developing EPOSTL in the Japanese context, we have no sources to build on. There are no standards or benchmarks for professional competences. We have the “Course of Study,” but it is not considered as equivalent to the national language curriculum of other countries. Therefore, it is expected that the development and dissemination of this adaptation will help researchers, teacher educators, teachers, supervisors, and other stakeholders become aware of the importance of standards for language teacher education.

A number of descriptors in this adaptation may be difficult for Japanese prospective teachers because they will need much higher ability than STEP pre-1st grade level. Through surveys and consultations, they should be refined further to identify the appropriate competence stages of teachers. If we identify the descriptors appropriate for prospective teachers as well as the purpose of the EPOSTL adaptation, then it will help establish standards of language teacher education.

Education policy is highly centralized in Japan. Therefore, MEXT, in partnership with the local boards of education, teacher training universities, and academic societies, can play a pivotal role in promoting teacher education paradigm shift. The adaptation of the EPOSTL self-assessment descriptors will surely support the policy of MEXT not only to enhance and define professional competences of language teachers, but also to create a new system of continuing professional development: a continuum which extends from initial teacher education, through induction and on throughout the whole of a teacher’s career. This project will hopefully become a stepping stone in this complex but vital process.

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